

Youth Lacrosse for Boys – Game Play Rules

A Proposal for CTYLA

by Dan St.André ~ Revised: 17. Dec. 2012

Background

~~ Warning: Dry Details Follow ~~

Central Texas Youth Lacrosse Association (CTYLA) coordinates the efforts of multiple youth sports organizations to play field lacrosse in and around Austin, TX. This proposal must be approved by CTYLA before it can be enforced.

US Lacrosse (USL) recently published a *Youth Rules & Best Practices Guidebook*¹ along with a set of *Rules*² for Youth Lacrosse. [Both USL documents are available online at the US Lacrosse web site.] These rules seem to be derived in whole or part from the Youth Rules published by the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS).

In most of the USA, High School and younger lacrosse players use NFHS³ rules. This is not the case in Texas for a variety of historical and practical reasons. In Texas, we follow the National Collegiate Athletic Association⁴ (NCAA) Rules at all levels from college teams through the youngest youth teams. Of course there are differences⁵ between NCAA and NFHS rules.

To further complicate matters, high school teams in Texas, use Rules Waivers published by the Texas High School Lacrosse League⁶ (THSLL).

Since many youth lacrosse programs serve to feed experienced players into one or more high school programs, the various youth lacrosse associations, including CTYLA, publish their own *Rules Waivers*⁷.

Are We Confused Yet ??

How Can We Expect Our Officials to Avoid Confusion?

For these reasons, CTYLA requested this proposal to discuss and clarify rules for playing the game. Administrative rules will be handled separately. We separate the rules this way to make it easier for young and new officials to concentrate on the on-field aspects of the games and leave the off-the-field details to CTYLA, Member Association, and facilities administrators.

1 Boys Guidebook – <http://www.uslacrosse.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=O60JhtDoRZY%3d&tabid=14314>

2 US Lacrosse Youth Rules – <http://www.uslacrosse.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=1rKL4FgUjxc%3d&tabid=6209>

3 NFHS web site – <http://www.nfhs.org>

4 NCAA web site – <http://www.ncaa.org> and Rules –

<http://www.ncaa.org/wps/wcm/connect/public/NCAA/Playing+Rules+Administration/NCAA+Rules+Sports/Lacrosse/Mens/Playing+Rules/Mens+Lacrosse+Index>

5 NCAA vs. NFHS differences – http://www.ohsla.net/officials/2012_NCAA_vs_NFHS.pdf

6 THSLL – <http://www.thsll.org> and

Waivers – <http://www.thsll.org/rules.php>

7 CTYLA Rules – http://my.illfiles.com/00261479/2012_CTYLA_Rule_Card.pdf

CTYLA Youth Rules

Administrative Rules (off the field)

Administrative Rules govern off-the-field topics such as team divisions and flights, approved fields, teams, and officials and a host of other details. Another set of administrative concerns involves discipline and sanctions when troubles arise. While these details may have some effect on game play, their primary impact happens before teams take the field and after the game is over.

Young and new officials have a tough job with game play details without the need to worry about “legal fields”, “coach's credentials” or other administrative matters. They should be able to refer such matters to an available Administrator or Commissioner who will take charge of those situations. To this end, this proposal will not discuss matters that have little or no direct bearing on game play.

Code of Conduct

We propose that all CTYLA administrators, commissioners, and coaches read and agree to the *Appendix F – Coaches Code of Conduct* stated within the THSLL Rulebook.

CTYLA Member Associations are free to use additional codes of conduct as they feel appropriate.

Game Play Rules (on the field)

The current valid NCAA Lacrosse Rulebook will be used unless a specific modification is listed in the current THSLL Waivers or this document. Where practical, refer to the original NCAA rule and THSLL Waiver when making modifications. There is no requirement to reference rules that are restated for clarity or ease of reference.

Teams

- Teams of ten(10) players take the field at any one time:

- One(1) Goal Keeper
- Three(3) Attack-men
- Three(3) Mid-Fielders
- Three(3) Defense-men

Bantam Division -- teams field a 4th defender instead of a keeper.

A “full team” consists of a maximum of twenty(20) players – two groups for each position.

- After a coin toss, team starters line-up at mid-field to meet their opponent.

Bantam Division – all players line up at mid-field.

- After the game
 - all players remove their helmets and gloves
 - offer a cheer: “Rah! Rah! (opponent)! Rah! Rah! Officials! Rah! Rah! Fans!” or similar

- all players line up and shake hands with the other team and their coaches.
- Each team gathers off the field for a brief chat with Coaches, Players, and Parents/Fans

At all times, the Officials control the safety and pace of the game.

General Observations

The rules describe situations where one team takes an unfair advantage over another team. In many cases, they correct this disadvantage by taking the ball from the offending team. In more serious cases, they remove the offending player from the field to serve “penalty time.”

- Procedural Infractions, called Technical Fouls, serve 30-seconds of penalty time
- Conduct Infractions, called Personal Fouls, serve 1-3 minutes of penalty time. The exact time is based on the Official's judgment of the severity of the infraction.

When the offended team scores a goal, the disadvantage is overcome, and the penalty time is “released”.

If a personal foul is serious enough, the Officials may declare that penalty “Full Time” or “Not Releasable.” This means that the player will serve the entire time, regardless of goals scored.

Playing Time

- 2-minutes between quarters 1-2 and 3-4
- 10-minute half-time
- Clock stops and starts on Official's whistle
- Two, 2-minute time outs per half
- One, 4-minute sudden victory overtime, with one time out

NOTE – A “running clock” only stops for Official's Time Out. The final 2-minutes of the 4th quarter are always played under a stop clock.

- Bantam & Lightning Division
 - 12 minute running time quarters
 - clock stops for time out and Official's (injuries)
 - no overtime

Safety

- Any player whose head strikes the ground or another player's helmet must sit out a minimum of 10 minutes and have parent or guardian permission to return to play.

NOTE – CTYLA urges all member associations to follow UIL Middle School guidelines when there is a chance of player concussion. <http://www.uil texas.org/health/info/concussions>

Substitution

- Teams may substitute players through the substitution area at any time.

- Bantam, Lightning, and Junior Division – Teams may use free substitution during any dead-ball situations.

Equipment

- Per NCAA rule and THSLL waivers
- All players must wear a “cup”
- Junior Division – Defenders crosse 37-inch to 72-inch

Clearing

- Goal Keeper – Four(4) seconds in the crease
- No limit on time to cross mid-field; Official's may enforce stalling

“Mercy Rule”

- Senior Division – If both head coaches agree, teams may face-off regardless of the score. However, if the leading team gains possession, award the ball to the trailing team.
- When a team trails by at least five(5) goals, they are awarded possession at mid-field [a free clear] instead of a face-off.
- When a team trails by at least ten(10) goals, implement a running clock.

Penalties

- Technical Foul – loss of possession; 30-second time served; always releasable
- Personal Foul – 1 to 3 minutes [Official's choice] time served; Releasable or Full-Time [Official's choice]
- Releasable – Time is over when the offended team scores.
- Full Time – [also “not Releasable”] Time continues until expired regardless of goals scored.
- NOTE – Under a running clock, time served is 1-½ time:
 - Technical – 45 seconds
 - Personal – 90 seconds to 4-½ minutes

Ejection

- Any one player who accumulates a total of 4-minutes of personal foul time.
- The 3rd player called for Roughness foul against the same team
- Anyone who throws a punch or pushes someone, even defending themselves or others.
- Anyone directing foul language at players, coaches, fans, or officials
- Anyone refusing to follow directions from site Administrators or Security staff.

NOTE – In the event of an ejection of a player, the team in-home will serve any penalty time.

The ejected player must leave the vicinity of the field and bleachers and retire to the parking lot. They may not return until after that game and only with permission from the site Administrator.

Checking

Body Checks

- All Player-on-Player contact must be: (a) focused on the ball not the opponent, (b) within 5-yards of the ball, (c) from the front, (d) above the waist, and (e) avoid the head and neck
- Loose Ball
 - Contact among players is legal. Contact + Extra-effort is a “push.”

NOTE – Unless the player is extremely skilled, it is almost impossible for the 5th or subsequent player to enter a loose-ball scrum without that extra effort “push.”

- Un-necessary Roughness
 - player takes more than three(3) strides before making contact
 - any player, whom the Officials decide focused on the opponent more than the ball and applied more force that seems justified for the apparent objective.
 - 1st team infraction – 1-minute, Full Time
 - 2nd team infraction – 2-minutes, Full Time
 - 3rd team infraction – in-home serves 3-minutes, Full Time; offender EJECTED

Cross Checks

- A “cross check” involves that portion of the stick that is between the players hands.
- Simple Contact across the back of an opponent is an illegal body check because it is not from the front.
- Otherwise legal contact, becomes illegal when there is extra-effort – especially when there is an upward thrusting motion

Stick Checks

- All stick checks must be delivered with the reasonable expectation to reach the opponent's crosse, and have the opportunity to make contact with their crosse or gloved hand on the crosse.
- All crosse movement must be in control everywhere on the field. With or without contact, Official's may enforce slashing on any wild swinging of the crosse.
- Senior Division – Players may deliver stick checks with one hand.
- At no time may player elbows be higher than their shoulders.
- No stick check may be delivered with the butt-end of the crosse [ice pick].
- A “wrap check” must land on the opponents crosse or gloved hands holding the crosse. Any other impact with the opponent is a slash, subject to reach and opportunity considerations.

Stick Contact with Head

- A player runs into a group of defenders rolling and dodging. In the process his helmet or neck makes contact with one or more sticks. NO FOUL.
- A player runs into a group of defenders rolling and dodging. A defender attempts a stick check and contacts his helmet or neck. SLASHING – Flag Down (slow whistle).

NOTE – In the second situation, one attacker might suffer more than one slash against an energetic defense. It is the defenders responsibility to control their stick away from other player's head and neck.

NOTE – Rules to avoid stick contact with the head and neck are not limited to contact between opponents. By rule, every player must avoid contact with all other player's head and neck.

Stalling

- The team in possession of the ball must deliberately press their attack and keep the game moving. At their discretion, the Officials may enforce “Delay of Game” or “Stalling”
- “Delay of Game” is a Technical Foul resulting in loss of possession. A defending player who causes a delay will serve time.
- “Stalling”
 - can be called at any time by the Officials
 - activated automatically during the final 2-minutes of the 4th quarter
 - the attacking team must keep the ball within the attack zone
- There is no timer running that affects clearing the ball across mid-field from defensive end into the attack end, or from the mid-field line into the attack zone

Coach Dan's “Rules”

1. **Have fun.**
We play games to have fun and share experiences with our friends. If we are not having fun, why are we doing this?
2. **Respect the Game.**
Always behave in a way that honors the rules of play, your team, your organization, your coaches, the other team, the officials and fans and exhibits sportsmanship at all times.
3. **Strive to do better NEXT time.**
Every time you take the field – whether for games or practice – bring one activity then work to improve that activity. If you don't have any ideas, then ask a team mate or coach.
4. **Win or Lose, Learn Something.**
Whatever the final score, identify something you can work improve for next time. Every contest is three teams: “us”, “them”, and “the officials.” Each team brings their best game to the field. How can your efforts be better as an individual or team next time out? Consider the skills, X's and

O's but also your preparedness, behavior, conditioning and sportsmanship.