

The purpose of this e-mail is to better inform the players, parents, coaches and administrators as to the contact rules in CTYLA with the goal of preventing players from being injured. With the extreme growth of the game in Central Texas and elsewhere, CTYLA has deemed it critical, for the safety of the children playing, that every participant understand what appropriate contact at the youth lacrosse level is.

The growing trend in lacrosse is focusing less on hard hits with stick or body. At the highest levels, the game is played more like basketball than football, even though a helmet is worn. The following are the details for contact in youth lacrosse as described by US Lacrosse. We encourage each parent to discuss these rules with their player and coach. CTYLA will be encouraging its officials to not hesitate in issuing very strict penalties including ejection and suspension for penalties, violent in nature, which in prior years may have been considered worthy of a lesser penalty.

2015 US Lacrosse Points of Emphasis

VIOLENT COLLISIONS – Some body contact is permitted at all levels of boys' youth lacrosse, with progressively more age-appropriate contact permitted as players become more physically mature and learn proper checking techniques. However, sports medicine research indicates that the severity of certain injuries may be reduced if a player can anticipate and prepare himself for an oncoming hit, and other sports medicine research indicates that the necessary peripheral vision to avoid such hits may not be fully developed in many boys before approximately age fifteen.

Therefore, there is no justification for deliberate and violent collision by any player at any youth level, especially intentional player-to-player collisions with defenseless players (so-called "blind side" and "buddy-pass" checks), checks involving the head and/or neck, and excessive body-checks ("take-out checks").

The 2015 NFHS Rules and US Lacrosse Boys Youth Rules more clearly define such violent collisions and in many cases increase the severity of the penalties that prohibit them. All participants must work together to reduce or eliminate such violent collisions from the game.

Therefore, US Lacrosse and CTYLA urges that:

- 1) **Officials apply these violent collision rules and utilize the more severe penalty options**, and reminds them that body-checks that might be acceptable in high school play may be excessive in youth lacrosse, and should be penalized accordingly.
- 2) **Coaches teach players to avoid delivering excessive or illegal checks**, and support the officials when they penalize such checks

Rule 5 — Personal and Ejection Fouls

In keeping with the overarching emphasis on player safety and sportsmanship **at the youth level, US Lacrosse and CTYLA expects stricter enforcement of the Cross Check, Illegal Body Check, Checks Involving The Head/Neck, Slashing, Unnecessary Roughness, and Unsportsmanlike Conduct rules than is common at the high school level.**

Illegal Body-Check

RULE 5 SECTION 3

US Lacrosse calls special attention to NFHS RULE 5 SECTION 3, ILLEGAL BODY-CHECK, ARTICLE 5, which addresses the concept of a **DEFENSELESS PLAYER**:

ART. 5 A body-check that targets a player in a defenseless position. This includes but is not limited to: (i) body checking a player from his “blind side”; (ii) body checking a player who has his head down in an attempt to play a loose ball; and (iii) body checking a player whose head is turned away to receive a pass, even if that player turns toward the contact immediately before the body check.

PENALTY:An excessively violent violation of this rule may result in an ejection.

ART. 6 ... TAKE-OUT CHECK/EXCESSIVE BODY-CHECK. Take-Out Checks/Excessive Body-Checks are prohibited at every age level. A Take-Out Check/Excessive Body-Check is defined as:

- a) Any body-check in which the player lowers his head or shoulder with the force and intent to put the other player on the ground.
- b) Any body-check considered more aggressive or more physical than necessary to stop the advancement of the player carrying the ball or to keep or move a player away from a loose ball. This includes but is not limited to: (i) any check in which a player makes contact with sufficient force and intent to knock down the opposing player; (ii) any check in which a player makes contact with sufficient force and intent to injure the opposing player; and (iii) any check made in a reckless or intimidating manner.

PENALTY: An excessively violent violation of this rule may result in an ejection.

ART. 7 ... LATE HIT. An avoidable body-check of an opponent after he has passed or shot the ball is an illegal body check.

CTYLA Senior and Junior Divisions

Limited Body Checking is permitted. Note that body-checks that might be acceptable in high school play may be excessive in youth lacrosse, and should be penalized accordingly.

CTYLA Lightning and Bantam

No body checking of any kind is permitted.

Legal pushes and holds are allowed. In all loose ball situations players should “play the ball,” but incidental contact, “boxing out”, or screening techniques during such play shall not be considered a violation of this rule.

Checks Involving the Head/Neck

RULE 5 SECTION 4

US Lacrosse calls special attention to NFHS RULE 5 SECTION 4, CHECKS INVOLVING THE HEAD/NECK:

ART. 1 ... A player shall not initiate contact to an opponent’s head or neck with a cross-check, or with any part of his body (head, elbow, shoulder, etc.). Any follow through that contacts the head or neck shall also be considered a violation of this rule.

ART. 2 ... A player shall not initiate an excessive, violent, or uncontrolled slash to the head/neck.

ART. 3 ... A player, including an offensive player in possession of the ball, shall not block an opponent with the head or initiate contact with the head (known as spearing).

PENALTY: An excessively violent violation of this rule may result in an ejection.

Slashing

RULE 5 SECTION 7

ART. 4 ... Any one-handed check shall be considered a slash, whether or not it makes contact with the opposing player.

Unnecessary Roughness

RULE 5 SECTION 9

US Lacrosse calls attention to the NFHS Rule 5 Section 9, UNNECESSARY ROUGHNESS, quoted below, and the US Lacrosse PENALTY modification for boys' youth lacrosse:

ART. 1 An excessively violent infraction of the rules against holding and pushing.

ART. 2 Deliberate and excessively violent contact made by a defensive player against an offensive player who has established a screening position.

ART. 3 Any avoidable act on the part of a player that is deliberate and excessively violent, whether it be with the body or crosse. This may include a legal body check.

ART. 4 A check delivered with the gloved hand or hands may not be delivered with a punching blow

PENALTY: Any penalty for Unnecessary Roughness shall be non-releasable and may include ejection.