



# Welland Raiders Minor Lacrosse Association

## Basic Lacrosse Rules

This is directed to people new to Lacrosse or to those who have been asking for a guide to the rules. Although Lacrosse is very complimentary to hockey it really is more similar to basketball. The main similarities and differences are as follows:

- Like basketball and unlike hockey to some degree the game of Lacrosse involves a full team offence. There are no defencemen in Lacrosse!
- The 5 offensive players are referred to as left crease (like leftwing in hockey), left corner (like left defence), right crease (right wing), right corner (right defence) and point (centre).
- Like basketball, there is no offside, nor icing. This keeps the pace of the game fast. There are rules, regulations and features that are unique to Lacrosse and most of these are used in House League play. Many other rules are the same as in hockey.
- The minimum length of the Lacrosse stick is 36" up to Bantams and 42" thereafter. When one team offends, and no penalty is called, the other team is awarded possession; i.e.; if a player shoots or bounces the ball into the stands the other team is given possession, and a whistle signifies the start of play.
- There is always a face-off after a goal, penalty, or when the ball strikes the goalie in the helmet area. However, a goal is counted if the ball goes directly into the net off the goalie's helmet or facemask.
- Checking from behind will be dealt with severely as it is one of the leading potential injury factors. Penalty shots can be called in extreme cases. Checking is an important part of the game but checking from behind and violent checks into the boards is enforced. It is a "judgement" call, by the referee and it is enforced differently at Rep levels.
- High sticking is another area of confusion for parents. Incidental contact with the helmet by an opposing player's stick is not automatically a penalty. It is again a referee's judgement call. Also, if a player ducks into a player's cross-check, no matter how severe that check is, it is not a penalty unless it is from behind. Cross-checking in Lacrosse is both legal and a very important and proper method of checking.
- Players and goalies out of their creases, will be penalized if they catch the ball in their hand. If they just contact it with their hand it is possession to the other team.

- Face-offs are taken with the open face of the stick facing your own net. The ball must come out of the 2' face-off circle before other players can enter the larger circle. An offence against this does not cause another face-off as in hockey. It results in immediate possession to the other team.
- A player with the ball cannot push off with his free hand or arm. If he does, possession is awarded to the other team. This rule is very often misunderstood by parents. Remember, you can check an offensive player whether he has the ball or not. However, if you are on the offensive team you cannot check back; you must take the checking without responding. Any response or checking back by any member of the team with possession results in loss of possession. Many times spectators will not notice freehand or arm pushing and checking by offensive players away from the ball. As long as the player with the ball keeps both hands on the stick he can usually push, or shoulder or resist the checker.
- The ball can be kicked but not for a goal. If the ball is stuck in a stick, the referee will free it and play continues.
- When a team is shorthanded they have 10 seconds to get the ball over centre and once over cannot go back, or change of possession occurs. When a player is awarded possession by the referee he must be given at least 9 feet clear by the opposing player until the whistle signifies restart of play.
- If 2 players are going after a loose ball they must play the ball and not check the other player until he has possession. This can be a common infraction, which causes many turnovers of possession. This rule takes longer for new players and parents to understand.
- Another big difference between Lacrosse and hockey is the goal crease. If a player enters the opposing goal crease to shoot or run through, his team loses possession. If you enter the opposing goal crease to check, or you touch the goalie, it is a penalty. You can be pushed into the goal crease and leave it quickly without a penalty or loss of possession.
- When defending your own net you can only pass the ball back to your own crease area once during each possession. Your goalie or a player has 5 seconds to get the ball out of the crease after stopping and gaining control of it. Both feet must be out and once out no player other than the goalie can re-enter the crease during your possession. You can pass to the goalies as much as you want if the goalie is out of the crease.

In House League the rules are enforced with the intent of teaching the game. The referee's judgement is an important factor and is guided by Executive Board policy, Referee-in-Chief's directions and Convenors guidance. Violent hitting or infractions are usually strictly enforced at all levels.

**"LOVE THE GAME ABOVE THE PRIZE"**