

## 2012 Rules for Boys Youth Lacrosse

SNLA has elected to adopt the US Lacrosse 2012 Rules for Boys Youth Lacrosse for Middle School lacrosse programs. This will ensure SNLA players are coached and officiated to nationally respected standards.

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) 2012 Boys Lacrosse Rules Book shall govern US Lacrosse boys youth play, except as amended below. The US Lacrosse Men's Game Committee has approved these exceptions to the NFHS Rules. Send questions about the US Lacrosse Rules for Boys Youth Lacrosse to the US Lacrosse Men's Game Rules Subcommittee at boysyouthrules@uslacrosse.org. Please do not contact NFHS about the following rules.

### OVERARCHING PRINCIPLE

The game is to be played with emphasis on the proper development of individual stick skills, team play, player safety, and sportsmanship.

### Grade and Eligibility Guidelines

SNLA has divided the middle school program into three divisions. **D-1** is open to 8<sup>th</sup> grade and below and is a competitive division and will conclude with a championship game. **D-2** is open to 8<sup>th</sup> grade and below and is intended for player development and season will conclude with a Jamboree styled tournament. **D-3** is for 6<sup>th</sup> grade and below and is intended for brand new or (novice/returning players) who lack the size or skill to play at a higher level. Programs should organize teams by age, and consider physical, cognitive, and emotional maturity when grouping players.

SNLA bylaws outline player eligibility requirements and should be consulted to determine if a player is eligible to participate for a middle school program.

**Format of the following Section:** Existing NFHS Rule Section reference, followed by the corresponding US Lacrosse Boys Youth Rule section modification. All divisions will follow NFHS Boys Lacrosse Rules with the following modifications:

### Rule 1 — The Game, Field & Equipment

#### The Game - Number of Players

##### RULE 1 SECTION 1.

Boys youth lacrosse is played by two teams with 10 players per side on the field. However, games can be played with as few as seven (7) per side on the field if both coaches agree to it due to lack of manning.

#### The Field – Dimensions

##### RULE 1 SECTION 2.

Play on regulation size field is preferred; however, the coaches and officials may agree to play on any size field available. If a game is played with reduced numbers (e.g. 7 per side) it is recommended that field size be reduced as well.

#### The Field – Spectator Restrictions

##### RULE 1 SECTION 2, ARTICLE 11 a, b & c

- a. Spectators and media, including photographers, are not allowed behind the end lines except in stadium structures where permanent seats exist which are also protected by a fence or netting.
- b. Spectators must be on the side of the field opposite the table and bench areas or in permanent stands separated from the bench area by a barrier and/or a buffer distance such as a track.
- c. Where possible, limit lines will be used. Spectators and media, including photographers, are not allowed within the limit lines at any time during a contest. If the field is laid out in a manner that does not allow spectators and media to be located as prescribed by paragraphs a, b and c of this rule, as modified here, the game official can waive one or more of these requirements.

#### Crosse Dimensions

##### RULE 1 SECTION 6

Crosse dimensions will conform to NFHS or NCAA requirements, with the following modifications:

##### **D-3**

**The length of all crosses for all field players shall be 37 to 42 inches. NO LONG POLES.**

## **Crosse Prohibitions**

### **RULE 1 SECTION 8**

Any strings or leathers are limited to a hanging length of 2 inches.

## **Player Equipment**

### **RULE 1 SECTION 9**

Equipment shall conform to NFHS requirements, including gloves, arm pads, shoulder pads, mouth piece, shoes, and NOCSAE - approved helmets, which must be properly fitted and worn, with the following modifications:

- **All goalies are required to wear arm pads and a protective cup.**
- A protective cup is recommended for all players.
- Rib pads are recommended for all players.
- Game Jerseys: The provisions of RULE 1, SECTION 9, ARTICLE 1.g need not be strictly enforced at the youth level. A team's game jerseys should have numbers centered on the front and back of sufficient size to be clearly visible by game officials anywhere on the field and opposing teams' jerseys should have contrasting dominant colors. Home teams are responsible for contrasting jersey colors and will provide and wear contrasting color numbered pinnies or pinnies that allow jersey numbers to be clearly seen, if needed. The jersey, pinnie, or an under jersey should completely cover the shoulder pads, which will help hold them in place.
- The color provisions of RULE 1, SECTION 9, ARTICLES 1 and 2 for helmets, uniform shorts, under-jerseys, compression shorts, and sweatpants need not be strictly enforced at the youth level.

## **Game Administration – Sideline Managers**

### **RULE 1 SECTION 12**

Each team will provide a designated Sideline Manager (one adult per team, on site, per game-day contest) to help encourage, maintain, and manage the sportsmanlike behavior of spectators and fans and assist the coaches and officials in keeping spectators and media an appropriate distance from the sideline. If used, it is the responsibility of each team administration to ensure that the Sideline Manager is present and in place to perform his/her duties; however, this is not a game day rule to be enforced by the officials.

## **Rule 2 — Game Personnel**

### **Coaches**

#### **RULE 2 SECTION 3**

**Point of emphasis: Only the designated head coach will communicate with the officials.**

## **Rule 3 — Time Factors**

### **Length of Game**

#### **RULE 3 SECTION 1**

##### **D-1 & D-2**

Game will consist of four 10-minute stop-time quarters. **In the event of a tie, 4-minute sudden-victory overtime periods will be played until a winner is determined (provided time permits and coaches and officials are in agreement).** In sudden victory overtime, each team is entitled to one timeout per period.

##### **D-3**

Game will consist of four 12-minute running-time quarters (clock stops only for a team timeout, an official's timeout, or an injury timeout). **In the event of a tie at the end of regulation time the game should end as a tie.** (If tournament play requires that a winner be determined, overtime should be played in accordance with D-1 rules).

## **Final Two Minutes of Regulation Play**

### **RULE 3 SECTION 3**

#### **D-1 & D-2**

The Final Two Minute stalling rule shall be ENFORCED for these Divisions

#### **D-3**

The Final Two Minute stalling rule shall be WAIVED for these Divisions. (This rule also modifies "Final Two Minute" provisions of RULE 4, SECTION 34.C.1)

## **Rule 4 — Play of the Game**

### **Lineup**

#### **RULE 4 SECTION 2**

Before the lineup, game officials will meet with both teams, separately or together, near the team areas or mid field to explain any special ground rules, emphasize safety and fair play, and remind players that they must be properly equipped with mouthpiece in place at all times on the playing field.

### **Facing Off**

#### **RULE 4 SECTION 3**

#### **D-1, D-2, D-3**

\*\* At any point during a game when there is a six-goal lead, the team that is behind will be given the ball at the midfield line in lieu of a face-off as long as the six-goal lead is maintained, unless waived by the coach of the trailing team.

### **Not Offside**

#### **RULE 4 SECTION 11 ARTICLE 3**

If a team momentarily has fewer than the required number of men on either end of the field while players are exiting and entering the field through the special-substitution area, this is not considered to be an offside violation. However, if a team delays its substitution and that causes it to have too few players on either half of the field, it may be called for offside or illegal procedure.

### **Advancing the Ball**

#### **RULE 4 SECTIONS 14 & 15**

#### **D-1**

The defensive 20-second count will be used.

The offensive 10-second count will be used.

#### **D-2 and D-3**

The defensive 20-second count WILL NOT be used.

The offensive 10-second count WILL NOT be used.

### **Official's Time-Outs**

#### **RULE 4 SECTION 27 ARTICLE 6**

If the player in possession of the ball loses any piece of required equipment the official should stop play immediately regardless of proximity of opposing players.

### **Team Time-Outs**

#### **RULE 4 SECTION 28**

Two (2) team timeouts - of a maximum duration of two minutes each - are permitted per team per half.

### **Get It In/Keep It In**

#### **RULE 4 SECTION 34**

#### **D-3**

Section not enforced at these levels.

### **3- YARD RULE for MS D3**

All stick checks, body checks, legal holds, and legal pushes must be on a player in possession of the ball or within 3 yards of a loose ball or ball in flight. This applies to MS D3 and is a change from the 5 yards specified in RULE 4 SECTION 17, Checking With Crosse; RULE 5 SECTION 3, Illegal Body Check, ARTICLE 1; RULE 6 SECTION 3, Holding, ARTICLE 3.a and d; and RULE 6 SECTION 9, Pushing. (NOTE: This change from five to three yards does not apply to a free play restart under RULE 4 SECTION 5, Play of the Ball Definitions, ARTICLE 1, in which no player may be closer than five yards to the player awarded the ball.)

#### **Rule 5 — Personal and Ejection Fouls**

In keeping with the overarching emphasis on player safety and sportsmanship at the youth level, US Lacrosse 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**

**\*\* Add to Rule 5 Section 3: An avoidable body check of an opponent after he has passed or shot the ball is an illegal body check.**

The definitions below supplement, but do not supplant, all aspects, points of emphasis, and Play Rulings of NFHS Rule 5-3.

#### **NO TAKE-OUT CHECKS ARE PERMITTED BY ANY PLAYER AT ANY AGE LEVEL.**

A take-out check is defined as:

- **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.**
- **Any body checks 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.
- **Any body check on 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.** NOTE: 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. Other sports medicine research indicates that peripheral vision may not be fully developed in many boys before approximately age fifteen. Game officials should be especially alert to blind side checks at all youth levels.

#### **D-1 and D-2**

Body Checking is permitted. To be legal a body check should be delivered in a generally upright position with both hands on the stick and the player initiating the check may not use his lowered head or shoulder to make the initial contact.

#### **D-3**

##### **No body checking of any kind is permitted.**

- Legal pushes (RULE 6 SECTION 9, Pushing) and holds (RULE 6 SECTION 3, Holding, ARTICLE 3 a & d) 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.
- If a loose ball is not moving, stuck, or the players are having difficulty picking the ball up the referee may re-start play following the alternate possession rule.

## Checks Involving the Neck/Head

### RULE 5 SECTION 4

US Lacrosse calls special attention to the new (2012) NFHS RULE 5 SECTION 4, CHECKS INVOLVING THE HEAD/NECK, which is modified to state:

ARTICLE 1 ... A player shall not initiate contact to an opponent's head or neck with a slash, cross-check, or with any part of his body (head, elbow, shoulder, etc.), including any follow through to the head or neck.

ARTICLE 2 ... Blocking of an opponent with the head or initiating contact with the head, including by an offensive player in possession of the ball (known as spearing).

PENALTY: One, two, or three minute non-releasable foul, at the official's discretion, for violation of either article 1 or 2. An excessively violent violation of this rule may result in an ejection foul for flagrant misconduct.

## Slashing

### RULE 5 SECTION 7

#### D-1, D-2, D-3

\*\* Slashing shall be called per NFHS rules. Additionally, There are no one handed checks in the Middle

School divisions. Any one-handed check will be considered a slash, whether or not it makes contact with the opposing player.

## Unsportsmanlike Conduct

### \*\* RULE 5 SECTION 10

Unsportsmanlike conduct by coaches and/or players will not be tolerated. Obscenities need not be used for language to draw a penalty. Tone, intent, and body language can all contribute to unsportsmanlike conduct. Players and coaches will exhibit the highest level of sportsmanship at all times. This means that in addition to the unsportsmanlike examples contained in NFHS Rule 5-10, any player or coach who uses derogatory or profane language on the field or bench, whether addressing a player, coach, or official may receive: first offense, 3-minute non-releasable unsportsmanlike conduct penalty; second offense, a 3-minute non-releasable expulsion foul.

## Fouling Out

### \*\* RULE 5 SECTION 11

#### D-1 and D-2

Any player who accumulates 3 personal fouls or 5 minutes in personal foul penalty time shall be disqualified from the game. A substitute for that player may enter the game when the disqualified player would have been permitted to re-enter had he not fouled out.

#### D-3

This level will intentionally be penalized differently. The intent is to teach the 'New' players to play under control. All personal fouls will result in a 3 minute penalty. Offending player must leave the field and remain out of the game for 3 minutes but his team may replace him with a substitute on the field. No man up situation should occur. Any player who accumulates 3 personal fouls shall be disqualified from the game.

## Ejection

### RULE 5 SECTION 12

Any player or coach ejected from a game by a game official (Note: this does not include fouling out per Rule 5-11) shall be suspended for his next regularly scheduled game (at the time of the ejection). The second time a player or coach is ejected in the same season or tournament he will be suspended for the next two regularly scheduled games (at the time of the ejection). A third ejection in the same season or tournament will result in a suspension for the remainder of the season or tournament.

## **Rule 6 — Technical Fouls**

### **Stalling**

#### **RULE 6 SECTION 10**

##### **D-1**

All NFHS Stalling and Advancing the Ball rules are in effect, including Rule 4, Section 34.

##### **D-2 and D-3**

ARTICLE 2. Not used at these levels. However, if a game official detects an effort to stall the advancement of the ball in either the defensive clearing area or the offensive zone outside the goal area, the official will give a verbal command to “advance the ball” followed by a visual 5-second hand count. If the team so warned does not attempt to advance the ball within the 5-second count to within five yards of an opposing player, a turnover will occur with restart at the point of the stalling infraction (or laterally outside the goal area).

## **Rule 7 — Penalty Enforcement**

### **Time Serving Penalties**

#### **RULE 7 SECTIONS 1, 2 & 3**

In all “Running Time” games and situations, penalties will also be running time, and will begin with the next whistle resuming play. The running time penalty clock will stop for all timeouts and at the end of periods.

##### **D-1 and D-2**

Time serving penalties are enforced per NFHS rules.

##### **D-3**

Offending player must leave the field and remain out of the game for 3 minutes but his team may replace him with a substitute on the field. No man up situation should occur. Ball is awarded per NFHS rules.

### **Game Termination**

Officials will have authority to terminate a boys’ youth game in response to flagrant acts of unsportsmanlike behavior including excessively rough play or the encouragement of excessively rough play by coaches, athletes, spectators, or fans. A game termination will be the last resort in ensuring the players’ safety and preserving the integrity of the game. If possible, game officials will issue at least one strong warning that the game is in danger of being terminated. However, it is conceivable that games may be terminated on the first instance of a flagrant unsportsmanlike act. Every effort should be taken to avoid game termination, including the enforcement of existing rules for team-conduct penalties, unsportsmanlike-conduct penalties, and ejection fouls. Mechanics for terminating a game for flagrant unsportsmanlike behavior can be found at [www.uslacrosse.org](http://www.uslacrosse.org) (Programs & Grants, Sportsmanship Card). All games terminated by an official will result in a 1-0 victory for the team that is innocent of the terminal offense(s). Game will count in league statistics as a full game, and all goals, assists, saves, and other team statistics will count toward team and league records.

## **Rules Changes and Modification**

- a. NFHS rules and the supplemental rules are reviewed annually by US Lacrosse Men’s Game Rules Subcommittee, which may adopt any changes or modifications deemed necessary to ensure safe play at all levels.
- b. Coaches, officials or other parties may submit comments or suggestions regarding the Rules for Boys’ Youth Lacrosse at any time before June 1, 2012 for consideration by the USL Men’s Game Rules Sub Committee. Any changes or modifications that are recommended by the Rules Subcommittee and approved by the USL Men’s Game Committee will be effective for the Boys’ Youth Rules in the 2013 NFHS rules book.
- c. Please send all comments or suggestions regarding the Rules for Boys’ Youth Lacrosse to the US Lacrosse Men’s Game Rules Subcommittee, at the address below, or to [boysyouthrules@uslacrosse.org](mailto:boysyouthrules@uslacrosse.org). Please do not contact NFHS about these rules.