The La Crosse Lightning Lacrosse Club

Parent-Player Handbook

Lacrosse Rules!

If this is your first season, this little "primer" will help a lot! Thanks for your interest in the La Crosse Lightning Lacrosse Club's teams, our City, and area are named after this exciting sport-enjoy the game!

The fastest game on two feet…..a combination of the speed of basketball, agility of soccer, and the contact of football and hockey….. a game in which a scoring opportunity on one end of the field can be transformed into a goal at the other end in a matter of seconds….skill, power, speed, endurance and intelligence….This is Lacrosse.

Originally called baggataway, lacrosse was played by Native Americans for a variety of purposes: religious rituals, training of warriors, or to settle inter-tribal disputes. The game acquired its present name because the sticks originally resembled the staffs, or crosiers, carried by the French Jesuit missionaries who first observed the game. Thus, we have lacrosse.

The Game

The Field: lacrosse is played on a field approximately the size of a football field: 110 yards long by 60 yards wide. The goals are 6 feet square and are placed in a crease, which is a circle with a 9-foot radius. Offensive players are not allowed in the crease at any time during the game. The sticks used today are generally made of molded plastic with either a nylon mesh or a leather and nylon woven pocket, with either an aluminum, titanium or alloy composite handle. The sticks vary in length from 40 to 72 inches, depending upon the position played.

The Players: There are 10 players in action at one time on a lacrosse team: a goalie, three defensemen, three midfielders, and three attackmen. At all times, a team must have three men on its offensive half of the field and four men on its defensive half.

The Goalie: The goalie uses a wider stick and wears a chest protector, as his job is to stop the opponents' shots, which may come flying at him at over 100 mph. The best goalies are either brave or crazy…or a little of both. After making a save and gaining possession of the ball, the goalie is allowed to stay in the crease for only 4 seconds. During that time, no one is allowed to touch him.

Defensemen: Defensemen use a longer stick (72 inches) and generally stay on the defensive half of the field. Their job is to guard the opponent's attackmen and take the ball away from them. Defensemen need to be quick, aggressive and tough.

Midfielders: Middies, as they are also called, play both offense and defense, thus they must run the length of the field. They are usually substituted frequently in units so as to keep them fresh. Speed and endurance are essential for middies. Sometimes coaches use "long-stick middies"--middies with defense sticks--as defensive specialists.

Attackmen: Attackmen use the shortest stick so as to limit the chance of losing the ball. They generally stay on the offensive half of the field and coordinate the offense. They are usually the best stick handlers and must be quick and agile.

All players must wear helmets, shoulder pads, gloves and mouthpieces. Arm pads are usually worn, especially by middies and attackmen, and rib pads have also become popular in more recent times. In addition, goalies wear a chest protector and a throat protector.

Lacrosse Terminology

Face-off: The game begins with the ball placed at the middle of the field between the sticks of two opposing midfielders. At the sound of the official's whistle, the two players try to clamp the ball under their sticks and gain control of it. Face-offs also occur after each goal. Attack and defensemen must stay in their "restraining area" until someone has possession of the ball.
Clearing: Trying to get the ball from your defensive end of the field to the offensive end.
Riding: Trying to stop an opponent's effort to clear.
Slide: When a defender moves from his offensive man to another to help a teammate double-team threatening to score.
Checking: Using your stick to hit the stick of an opponent in possession of the ball or within five yards of a loose ball.
Body Checking: Using your body to hit an opponent in possession of the ball or within five yards of a loose ball.
EMO: EMO means extra-man offense. When the opposing team has a player in the penalty box, the offensive team goes to its EMO.
Man-down: When a team has a player in the penalty box then it is in man-down situation.

Playing the Game

Offensively: On offense, the attacking team will run set plays and formation just as a basketball team would, with cutters, picks (no moving picks allowed), and feeders. They will usually go one-on-one, or free-lance. Naturally, there are numerous opportunities for fast breaks, or unsettled situations.

Defensively: On defense, teams usually play man-to-man with a team concept of backups and slides to assist a teammate. When a person has the ball, a defensive player may check (hit) his stick or his hands in order to try to dislodge the ball. He may also deliver a body check to the player from the front between the waist and the shoulders. In addition, in a loose-ball situation, a player may hit any opponent within 5 yards of the ball in the same manner.

Goalie –Crease Rules: There are all kinds of rules about the crease. Players may not step into the crease in their offensive half of the field. Defensive players may step into the crease, but they may not carry the ball into it. You may hear the official refer to the "cylinder". This is an imaginary cylinder formed by extending the crease line vertically. Offensive players may not interfere with the goalie, including touching his stick, at any time inside the cylinder, nor outside the cylinder if the goalie has possession of the ball and at least one foot inside the crease. On a loose ball, players may check the goalie's stick outside the cylinder. If the goalie gets possession of the ball with at least one foot inside the crease, then he has four seconds to either run out of the crease or pass the ball. For crease violations: if the defensive team had possession, the defensive team gets the ball at midfield; if the offensive team had possession or if a loose ball, then the defensive team gets the ball even with the goal outside the restraining box.

Penalties: Penalties are classified as either technical or personal fouls.

Technical fouls either cause the offending team to lose possession of the ball, award the other team the ball, or place the offending player in the "penalty box" for 30 seconds if the opponents had possession of the ball at the time of the infraction. Personal fouls result in a one-minute penalty. Severe abuse (fighting, etc.) may resulting either a three-minute penalty or expulsion from the game. In the case of a time penalty, the offending team must play a man short, thus yielding the opponents and "extra-man" opportunity.

Personal Fouls:
Slashing: Striking an opponent's body other than his hand with your stick. (To an extent, striking the arms is allowed)
Tripping: Obstructing the opponent below the knee with your body or stick.
Illegal body checking: Hitting an opponent from the rear, below the waist, above the shoulders, or when the opponent neither has ball nor is within 5 yards of a loose ball.
Crosschecking: Hitting the opponent with the part of the stick between your hands.
Unsportsmanlike conduct: Official's discretion.

Technical Fouls:
Offside: Failure to have either three players on your offensive half of the field or four players on your defensive half. The normal position of these players is not significant, only the number is.

Holding: Holding an opponent or his stick with your body or stick. This does not eliminate body checks or holding your position, but you may not wrap your stick around an opponent and thus stop his movement.

Pushing: Pushing an opponent from the rear, or when he is not within five yards of the ball. All body contact must occur with both hands on your stick. You may not use your free hand to push off.

Interference: Moving picks, preventing cutters free movement, etc. Also, hitting the goalie in the crease when he has possession of the ball will get an interference call.
There are also technical fouls from throwing the stick, lying on a loose ball, illegal substitutions, playing with out a stick, delay of game, etc.

Other Information:
Can a player touch the ball? It's like soccer: no hands. Kicking is legal, and a ball kicked into the net is a goal.

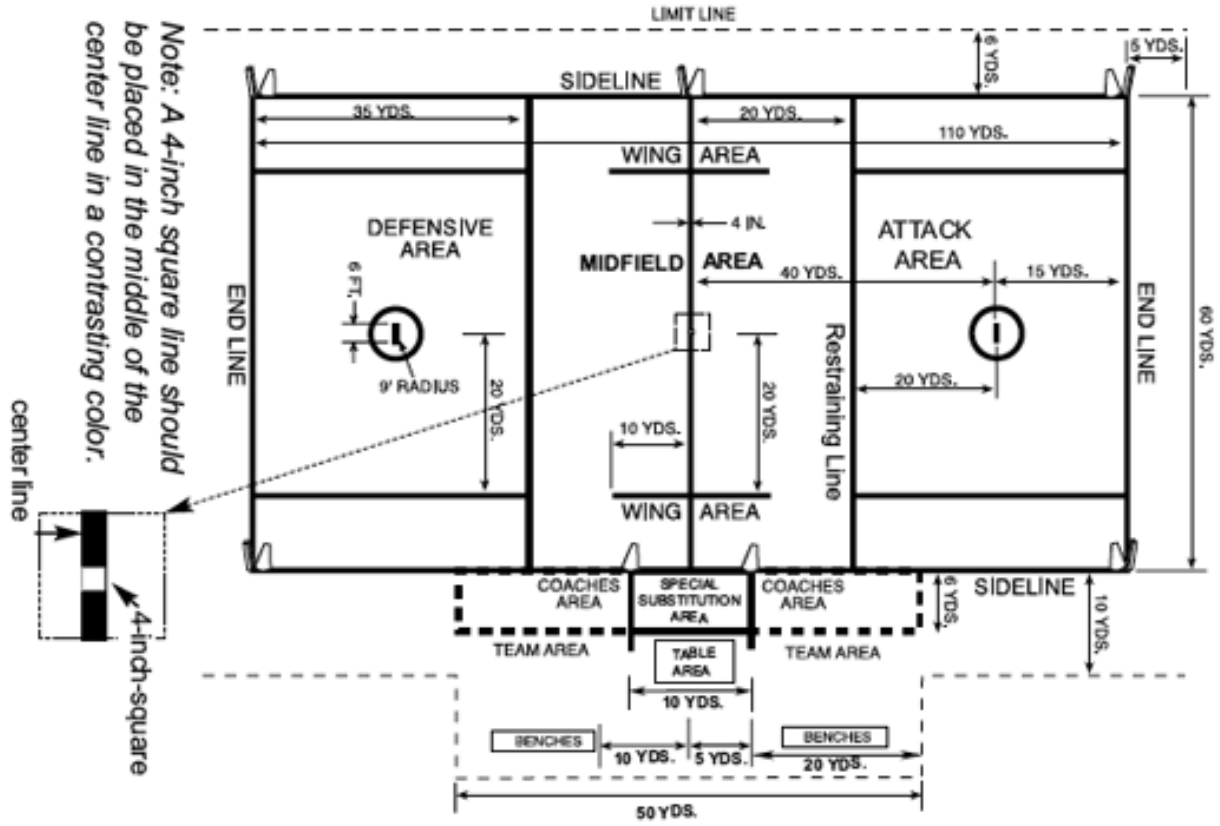
Why do they chase after shots? Normally, possession after the ball goes out of bounds is awarded to the team that did not touch it last. On a shot, however, the ball is given to the team that is closest to the ball when it leaves the field.

How long are the Periods? Generally, high school games are 48 minutes long, with 12-minute quarters. Each team is given a two-minute break between the first and second quarters, and the third and fourth quarters. Halftime is ten minutes long. Teams change sides between periods.

Men's Lacrosse Skills

Catching: The act of receiving a passed ball with the Crosse.
Checking: The act of attempting to dislodge the ball from an opponent's stick.
Poke Check: A stick check in which the player pokes the head of his stick at an opponent's stick through the top hand by pushing with the bottom hand.
Slap Check: A stick check in which a player slaps the head of his stick against his opponent's stick.
Wrap Check: A one-handed check in which the defender swings his stick around his opponent's body to dislodge the ball. (This check is only legal at the highest level of play.)
Cradling: The coordinated motion of the arms and wrists that keeps the ball secure in the pocket and ready to be passed or shot when running.
Cutting: A movement by an offensive player without the ball, toward the opponent's goal, in anticipation of a feed and shot.
Feeding**:** Passing the ball to a teammate who is in position for a shot on goal.
Passing: The act of throwing the ball to a teammate with the Crosse.
Scooping: The act of picking up a loose ball with the Crosse.
Screening: An offensive tactic in which a player near the crease positions himself so as to block the goalkeeper's view of the ball.
Shooting: The act of throwing the ball with the Crosse toward the goal in an attempt to score.

Men's Lacrosse Field of Play



Sources of Additional Information

Websites:

http://www.laxinlax.com
La Crosse Lightning Web site. Team information available here…..

http://www.uslacrosse.org The National Governing Body of the Sport of Lacrosse
Eventually all players will have to register with this affiliation.
A great site for in-depth information and news pertaining the great sport of lacrosse.

http://www.wisconsinlacrosse.com The State of Wisconsin's Lacrosse Federation
Supports the growth of the sport in our state. This site lists all the teams and their websites many of which La Crosse Area Lacrosse Associations team will be competing against.

http://www.maxlax.org The Madison Area Lacrosse Association (MALA) League website. This is the league that our Lightning Club teams currently play in.

http://www.facebook.com Facebook: The La Crosse Lightning Lacrosse Club has several Facebook pages….check them out for postings on current information and events.

Of course, please feel free to ask Lightning Board members and coaches any questions that you may have. We love the game and will talk about it until you run out of questions or patience, whichever comes first!