



# Western Pennsylvania Youth Lacrosse Association (WPYLA) 2012 Season League Mission, Structure, Rules Clarifications

## MISSION

The Western Pennsylvania Youth Lacrosse Association exists to develop, promote and facilitate a positive, safe, fun, developmental and competitive lacrosse experience for boys in the eighth grade and under. It will play games according to NFHS Rules **and US Lacrosse Recommendations with the structure and clarifications that appear below for the 2012 Season.**

## STRUCTURE

There will be four basic grade-based playing groups as follows:

### 8<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Group

- Level A – more competitive
- Level B – more developmental

### 6<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Group

- Youth Level A – more competitive
- Youth Level B – more developmental and less competitive

### 4<sup>th</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Group

- Youth Level A – more competitive
- Youth Level B – more developmental and less competitive

### 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> & K Grade Group

- Novice Level A – developmental

This structure establishes a league-wide uniform method to assist coaches and club representatives with determining what competitive level to place their players and teams.

### *8<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Group*

- Level A – more competitive
- Level B – more developmental

Levels A and B play under the same Federation Rules. Less experienced eighth graders can play at the B level. Likewise, more experienced seventh graders can play at the A level. Organizations that have combined teams--for example, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders, or 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders--will assign



their team either as an A or B based on the team's collective ability. Game scheduling will be according to level. "A" level teams only play "A" level teams and "B" level teams only play "B" level teams. Exceptions are permitted as long as both opposing coaches are in agreement. Organizations can choose to continue to play all 8th graders as level A and all 7th graders as level B.

*Teams in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Group, regardless of skill level, will play four-quarter games with a 10-minute stop clock per quarter.*

### **6<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Group**

- Youth Level A – more competitive
- Youth Level B – more developmental and less competitive

**Long poles are now permitted in both the A and B levels of the 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade Group. Long poles used in 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade Level should be no taller than 2 inches taller than the visor of the helmet of properly equipped player using the long pole. If pole does not meet this criteria player will not be allowed to use it.**

**Moreover, NFHS Rules for 5<sup>th</sup> graders will govern Youth Levels B games. In short, this means body checks will *not* be permitted in Youth Levels B games. In the event a 5/6A team plays a 5/6B team, body checks are *not* permitted. Body checks will be permitted for Youth Level A games when a 5/6A team plays another 5/6A team.**

The expected skill level composition of this grade group appears below:

- Youth Level A – 6/5 or 6 only
- Youth Level B – 6/5 or 5 only

Once again, organizations can choose to play as 6th only, or 5th only, or as a combination of grades according to the levels described above. This structure allows more advanced 5th graders to play up and less experienced 6th graders to play down.

*Teams in the 6<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Group, regardless of skill level, will play four-quarter games with an 8-minute stop clock per quarter.*

### **4<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Grade Group**

- Novice Level A – more developmental and less competitive
- Novice Level B – developmental

*Teams in the 4th and 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Group, regardless of skill level, will play four-quarter games with an 8-minute stop clock per quarter.*

### **2<sup>nd</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> & K Grade Group**

- Novice Level A – developmental



*Teams in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> & K Grade Group, will play four-quarter games with an 8-minute stop clock per quarter.*

As with the preceding grade group, long poles are **not** permitted in any **Level below 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade**. Likewise, NFHS Rules for these two levels will govern the entire Grade Group 4<sup>th</sup> through K. This means body checks are **not** be permitted in these levels.

#### **RULES AND CLARIFICATIONS: 2012**

1. Level A games will be played prior to Level B games, unless a change has been agreed upon in advance with the officials and opposing coaches.
2. Time allocated for halftimes will be five minutes, regardless of grade group or skill level.
3. Two full time-outs will be permitted per half, regardless of grade group or skill level.
4. A 30 second count will be enforced for 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade levels. Upon turnover in defensive end the clearing team must move the ball from their defensive end into the attack box within 30 seconds or results in a turnover to the riding team where ball is at 30-second whistle. If either team achieves a six-goal lead, this rule will be waived. Should the lead drop to five goals, the rule will again be enforced.
5. “Stalling rule”. During the last two minutes of play, the team with the lead must keep the ball in the attack box. If the team with the lead fails to maintain possession in the attack box during the last 2 minutes of the game, possession is awarded to the opposing team. This rule applies only to the 7/8A, 7/8B, 5/6A and 5/6B Groups only and does not apply to 3/4A, 3/4B or K-2<sup>nd</sup>.
6. If the score is tied at the end of regulation play, a four-minute, “stop clock,” sudden-death overtime will be played, with one full time-out allowed for each team. If the game is not decided during this ONE (only) overtime period, the contest will end in a tie. This rule applies to all grade groups and skill levels.
7. The home team will be responsible for providing a trainer or EMT. The trainer or EMT must be seated at the scorers’ table during game play. No game will begin without a trainer or EMT present.
8. The home team is responsible for maintaining a scorers’ table, three clocks (one game clock and two penalty clocks), and adult staffing. Only persons involved with game play will be allowed in the table area. Referees will be given authority to penalize the home team for any table violations with a bench technical foul.
9. Home teams are responsible for wearing contrasting jerseys and will wear “pinnys” if needed. Team jerseys must cover the player's shoulders.



10. Spectators and players will not be permitted on the playing field during halftimes and time-outs, nor will they be permitted on the field between games, unless they are participating in pre-game warm ups.
11. If goalie equipment breaks, play stops, regardless of whether the goalie is in goal or advancing the ball down the field.
12. Line-ups are not required to be submitted to the officials prior to the game for WPYLA games.
13. Referees are required to be paid PRIOR to commencement of games. Fees for this year are: \$55 for 8<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade games, \$50 for 6<sup>th</sup> grade and down games, per official.
14. Games will be refereed with two man crews.
15. 5th quarter or 6th quarters will not be permitted.
16. If either team achieves a six-goal lead, the team that is behind will be given the ball at mid-field in lieu of a face-off for as long as the six-goal lead is maintained. The coach of the team that is behind has the option to waive this rule. Should the lead drop to five goals, face-offs will be reinstated. There will be no change in game time.
17. A mercy rule—that is, running clock--will be implemented in the second half only if one team achieves a 12-goal lead. If the lead drops to 11, the game will revert to stop-clock.
18. White or clear mouthpieces are not permitted. Full colored mouthpieces are required. Mouthpieces must cover all teeth, not just the front. Mouth guards do NOT have to be attached to helmet.
19. A score will not count if a stick's (Crosse) head flies off the shaft during the shooting of the goal.
20. Rule 7.5-2 Clarification for player serving simultaneous multiple penalties: *Penalized player must first serve the full-time of all non-releasable penalties before serving any releasable penalties.*
21. Take out checks are strictly prohibited for all grade groups and skill levels. Take out checks can be grounds for immediate game ejection.

**22. TAKE OUT CHECK DEFINED: USL Rule 5, Sec. 3:A take-out 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 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.

(c) 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.*

**24. CHECKS INVOLVING THE HEAD/NECK USL RULE 5, SECTION 4: US Lacrosse and WPYLA call special attention to the new (2012) NFHS RULE 5, SECTION 4, Checks Involving the Neck/Head, which is modified to state:**

(a) 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.

(b) 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) is considered an automatic penalty. **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.

**25. 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. (USL Rule 5, Sec. 3)**

**26. An avoidable body check of an opponent after he has passed or shot the ball is an illegal body check. (USL Rule 5, Sec. 3 )**

**27. 3- YARD RULE: 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 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.)**

- 28. Slashing-USL Rule 5, Sec. 7: At the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade level and below, any one-handed check will be considered a slash, whether or not it makes contact with the opposing player**
29. The crosse must be an overall length of: (i) For 7th/8th grade group- 40 - 42 inches for attackmen and midfielders and 52 - 72 inches for defensemen; for 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade Level, 40-42 inches for attackmen and midfielders; **for defensemen, long poles can be used in 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade Level provided the long pole should be no taller than 2 inches taller than the visor of the helmet of properly equipped player using the long pole.** (ii) For 4th Grade Level and below- 37-42 inches for attackmen, midfielders and defensemen. The head of the crosse must be 6.5 - 10 inches wide, except a goalie's crosse which may be 10 - 12 inches wide. The pocket of a crosse shall be deemed illegal if the top surface of a lacrosse ball, when placed in the head of the crosse, is below the bottom edge of the side wall.
- 30. Each team must have a properly equipped goalie on the field at all times. All goalies are required to wear chest and throat protectors, helmet, gloves, arm pads, a goalie stick and a protective cup. (USL Rule 1, Sec. 9:)**
31. The personal conduct of all players is to be taken seriously by referees, coaches, spectators and the players themselves. Foul and/or derogatory language and flagrant, unnecessary roughness will not be tolerated.
  - a. Intentional physical attacks on opposing players, including take-out checks, will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct. The severity of the penalty will be based on flagrancy and the judgment of the referees. If, in the opinion of a referee, an attack is intentionally vicious, the player in question will be immediately ejected from the game and instructed to leave the field, including the area set-aside for spectators.
  - b. Any player, coach or spectator who uses derogatory language to attack the character of a referee, player or coach will be ejected from the game and instructed to leave the field, including the area set aside for spectators.
  - c. Ejected players who have traveled by bus must return to the team bus for the duration their game provided there is a responsible adult to accompany that player and stay with the player until the game is over, and any subsequent games, unless arrangements can be made to have him taken home by a responsible adult. If there is no responsible adult available to go with the player, then the player must stay on the bench and the coach is then responsible for the player's conduct.



- d. Ejected players and coaches must also serve a one-game suspension. It is the responsibility of the ejecting referee to notify the ALOA assignor with the player or coach's name and number. The referees for the subsequent contest will be notified about the suspension, and can make certain that the one-game suspension is served.
  - e. **Any player ejected from a second game in the same season must serve a three (3) game suspension beginning with the next scheduled game for that player's team.**
  - f. **Any player ejected from a third game in the same season shall be immediately suspended and prohibited from participating in any WPYLA game or WPYLA sanctioned event for the balance of the season.**
32. All players and coaches must be current and registered member of US Lacrosse to play or coach games.