

DLA Playing Time Guidelines

Mission

The mission of the Davis Lacrosse Association (DLA) is to develop a true and lasting love for the game of lacrosse. DLA is dedicated to developing lacrosse skills, good sportsmanship, teamwork, accountability and respect in a healthy and fun environment. DLA promotes the belief that winning is just a by-product of team character and individual effort and growth. The DLA coaches focus on developing the character of each player to create a team, rather than emphasize the importance of winning.

Purpose of Fair Play Guidelines

DLA wants to insure that all club players participating on teams designated “B” or “Rookie” by the Northern California Junior Lacrosse Association (NCJLA) receive as reasonable playing time as possible. “Rookie” level lacrosse is the entry (developmental) level for competitive lacrosse, and the “B” level is the intermediate level for competitive lacrosse.

Teams that are designated “A” by the NCJLA are competitive, thus players must try out for these teams. The Head Coach shall fully explain to the players, and their parents, making this team what their roles might be for the team. Not all players on A teams will receive equal playing time, but all will get some play time.

What is Reasonable Playing Time

U9 & U11 Teams Goal

DLA considers teams at these age levels to be “entry” level teams. This means that all players will be encouraged to play at all different positions. It is the goal of DLA to not have players focus on one position at this age. This means that every player, regardless of ability, should have approximately the same amount of playing time relative to other players over the course of the season provided the players are attending practice and putting in reasonable effort.

U13 & U15 Teams Goal

Every player, regardless of ability, should have the same opportunities to play as other players at his position. At this age group, DLA coaches will begin recommending players for certain positions, based upon their skill levels and composition of the team.

Factors Affecting Playing Time

There are many factors that determine playing time. The first is the number of players on a team’s roster. A lacrosse roster will consist of 14 players on up. When there are more players on a roster, playing time will be reduced and some of the “Restrictions on Playing Time” (*see below*) could further reduce game play time.

Secondly, playing time depends on the position that a player plays. For example, it is typical for a team to have 3 or 4 “lines” of midfielders that are rotated throughout the game every few minutes. By rotating 4 lines of middies, it means that each line plays roughly $\frac{1}{4}$ of the game. If a team is rotating 6 defensemen or attackmen, those players will play approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ of the game each. If there is only one goalie, that goalie will play 100% of the game.

Third, there are special situations when a penalty occurs where the team employs “extra man offense” or “man down defense” plays. If there are high number of penalties in a game, those units may play more in one game than another, and may replace a player who was just substituted into the game. Coaches will make an effort to replace the special play units at the earliest possible time based on the gameplay.

Restrictions on Playing Time

1. **Attendance and Participation at practice.** All players are required to attend and participate in practice. Failure to attend and participate in practices can result in reduced playing time. Some absences from practice are excusable (illness or injury with a note from a doctor). When a player will not be attending a practice for any reason, it is the player's responsibility to contact the Coach directly, not the parent. Attendance and participation for the entire year is taken into consideration for each game, not just the week of a game. If a player is unsure whether a missed practice will be considered excusable or not, they should discuss with the Coach.
2. **Lack of effort.** If a player isn't working hard and giving 100% effort at practice and/or in a game. The lack of effort by an individual player creates unnecessary mistakes and limits the player's and his teammate's ability to learn and the coach's ability to teach. Each player should take the time and effort to hone their skills on their own time with wall ball, friends and other means. Through effort, players learn how to be accountable to themselves, their teammates and coaches.
3. **Becoming a Distraction.** This is when a player becomes a distraction to the team or coaches at practice or at a game by goofing off, not listening or following instructions. Lacrosse is a contact sport and distractions can cause injury to the player, his teammates and coaches. Also, distractions cause the inability for the coaches to coach and players to learn.
4. **Discipline problems.** If a player is not following team rules during practice or games, the Coaches may limit the player's game time, including suspension from a game. Discipline problems include verbal or physical disrespect for teammates, opponents, coaches and officials. Discipline problems will be discussed with the parents, so that all parties are aware of the situation.

Special Situation U13 & U 15

Exceptions to the playing time guidelines are tournaments and "A" level games/teams. Coaches may use their discretion in choosing players in such situations as needed. Not all players will receive equal playing time, but all will get some play time.

Steps to Clarify Playing Time:

The following steps should be utilized to clarify playing time questions. These steps should be followed in this order until resolved.

1. Player discuss with Coach
2. Parent with Player discuss with Coach
3. Parent and Coach discuss with Coach Coordinator