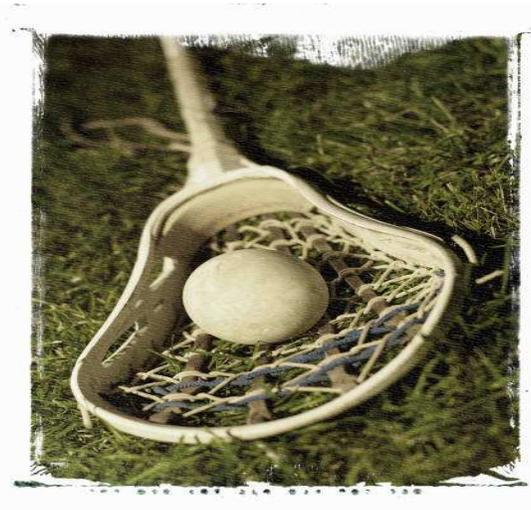




Spring 2007

A Quick Guide to Lacrosse



The Game:

Lacrosse is sometimes referred to as “the fastest game on feet” and the speed of the game should be intense. Obviously the object of the game is to put the ball in the net. And that is where the similarities between hockey and lacrosse end!

Lacrosse is much more like basketball than hockey in the philosophy of the game and the way the game is played, but because of the nets and the equipment to protect the players, people think it is like hockey. If you were to watch a high level lacrosse game either on the college or pro level, one thing you with notice is that there is actually very little physical contact. And that is the way we try to teach and play the game in Medfield.

The game is played in 4 quarters, either running or stopped time decided at the beginning of the game.

The fundamentals:

The game is played with 9 players plus a goalie on the field at one time. 3 attack men, who play in the offensive zone, 3 midfielders that play on the entire field, and 3 Defense men that play in the defensive zone. There always has to be 3 team members in the offensive zone past midfield, and there always has to be 4 team members in the defensive zone including the goalie. The midfielders run the whole field, and which players stay in what zone doesn't matter as long as the numbers match.

The start of the game:

At the start of the game, there is a faceoff. All players line up in their respective positions. The attack men are in the offensive zone, the midfielders are at midfield, and the defense men are in the defensive zone. There is a face off at midfield, and until the referee says “possession” only the midfielders can go after the ball. The attack and the defense must stay in the boxes at either end of the field called restraining boxes. Once the referee calls “possession” the entire team is involved in the game.

Once one team gets the ball, the offensive and defense plays are very much like basketball with screens and picks, and the ball moving around until there is an open player.

In our league, once one team get 5 goals ahead, there is no more face offs, and the team that is trailing is awarded the ball after every goal even in they score, until the score is within 5 goals.

When the ball goes out of bounds, it is just like basketball, whoever touched it last, the ball is awarded to the other team.

On a shot, whoever is closest to the ball when it goes out of bounds is awarded the ball. This is why we always try to keep an attack man behind the net, known as the “x” player, and you will sometimes see the goalie running for the ball after a shot to try to be closest.

When a penalty is called, they are either for 30 seconds or 60 seconds. This is known as a man up or man down situation. The team that is man up is awarded the ball. And the penalty in most cases is ended

when the team that is man up scores. On any of these 30 or 60 second penalties, if the referee determines the infraction was flagrant or intentional, they will call 60 seconds.

Substitutions can be made at pretty much any time, and also on the fly. When the ball goes out of bounds on the side, the refs want the game to start up very quickly, and don't like substitutions then.

Calls you will hear from the referee during the game:

Offsides: This occurs when one team does not have the required number of team members on either side of the midfield. This will occur when a defenseman takes the ball over the midfield line and a midfielder forgets to stay back for him, or when there is a close play at the midfield line and someone steps over when they are not supposed to. Offsides is not a penalty causing a man down situation, it is a possession penalty, where the team that is offsides loses possession of the ball. And the ball is started in the offensive zone of the team awarded the ball.

Crease violation: This occurs when a player from the offensive team steps in the crease. When this occurs, the ball is awarded to the other team at midfield (otherwise known as a free clear (clearing the defensive zone))

Goalie interference: Once the goalie has possession of the ball, when they are in the protection of the crease (which they can only stay for 5 seconds after they get the ball) the goalie cannot be interfered with. Which means that they can't be poked at, are interfered with in any way. If this interference occurs, the team whose goalie was interfered with is awarded the ball at midfield (again a free clear).

Holding: Just like in hockey, a player cannot be held in any way. This results in a 30 second man down situation.

Cross check: Just like hockey, a crosscheck can be 30 seconds or 60 seconds depending on the severity.

Tripping: a 30 second penalty

Slashing: Hitting the player's stick is legal. Hitting the player other than a tap is not legal. Slashing is a 30 second or 60 second penalty.

On the head: Any time a stick hits the player's head, there will be a 30 or 60 second penalty.

Intentional roughness: any rough act, 30 or 60 seconds.

Physical contact during the game:

U13 which is the division we are playing, is the first division where any contact is allowed. As such, at the beginning of the game the coaches and referee's decide what type of hitting will be allowed. In general, there should be no hitting that results in a player falling to the ground aggressively. And there are no "take out" hits allowed. We are trying to team the kids the finesse of lacrosse, not the physical play of hockey. Please do not encourage the kids to be physical, get them to have better skills, speed, and teamwork.

I hope this makes your time on the fields more enjoyable.