

## Competition Committee Results for 2017 MBYLL Season

Each year the town representatives from every town in MBYLL discuss rule change submissions at our fall meetings. This is followed by a meeting and vote of the Competition Committees from all six regions. While it is true that people will tend to want to stick with the rules that we had “last year”, the rules are constantly evolving. This evolution is to make the game safer and more fun for the kids. And to answer a comment, just because it was fun before does not mean it cannot be improved. The game, our game, the Creators game, rests in the hands of coaches willing to teach the game right.

The 2017 US Lacrosse rules changes were announced in September. The link to the announcement is at this link <http://www.uslacrosse.org/blog/us-lacrosse-announces-new-boys-youth-rules>

Mass Bay Youth Lacrosse has actually played a leading role in getting US Lacrosse to adopt many of the changes we introduced. Each year we have a few MBYLL specific differences which are highlighted in our coaching clinics and our pre-game checklist. Below is the refresher of some key points from US Lacrosse which are worth emphasizing.

### US Lacrosse Rules for Boys Youth Lacrosse

#### Overarching Principle

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

#### **Points of Emphasis**

US Lacrosse endorses the points of emphasis in the NFHS Boys Lacrosse Rules, and adds the following points of emphasis for youth play:

**VIOLENT COLLISIONS** – Some body contact is permitted at all levels of boys’ youth lacrosse, with progressively more age-appropriate contact permitted as players become more physically mature and learn proper checking techniques. However, 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, and other sports medicine research indicates that peripheral vision may not be fully developed in many boys before approximately age fifteen.

***Therefore, there is no justification for deliberate and violent collision by any player at any youth level, especially intentional player-to-player collisions with defenseless players (so-called “blind side” and “buddy-pass” checks), checks involving the head and/or neck, and excessive body-checks (“take-out checks”).***

The NFHS Rules and US Lacrosse Boys Youth Rules more clearly define such violent collisions and in many cases increase the severity of the penalties that prohibit them. All participants must work together to reduce or eliminate such violent collisions from the game.

**Therefore, US Lacrosse urges that:**

- **Officials apply these violent collision rules and utilize the more severe penalty options,** and reminds them that body-checks that might be acceptable in high school play may be excessive in youth lacrosse, and should be penalized accordingly.
- **Coaches teach players to avoid delivering uncontrolled, excessive, or illegal checks,** and support the officials when they penalize such checks.

**NOTE: US Lacrosse 3-Yard Rule** requires that all legal body checks, holds, pushes, and stick checks 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 the NFHS Rules. This rule further protects against violent, unnecessary, and unexpected collisions.

**SLASHING** – **There is a concern that slashing is too common in boys' youth lacrosse.** The ONLY permissible check with the crosse is on the opponent's crosse or his gloved hand on his own crosse. Thus, *any blow with the crosse anywhere else on an opponent is SLASHING*, and must be called. A slash to the head or neck may be a violation of NFHS RULE 5-4, Checks Involving the Head/Neck, and incur a two- or three-minute non-releasable penalty. **US Lacrosse urges coaches to teach proper and legal checking techniques with the crosse, and officials to strictly enforce the slashing rules.**

RULE 5 SECTION 7 from the rule book

Add the following US Lacrosse Boys Youth Rules Article to NFHS Rule 5 Section 7:

**ART. 4 ... Any one-handed check shall be considered a slash, whether or not it makes contact with the opposing player.**

NOTE: If the defensive player's hand comes off his stick in his legitimate follow-through motion after, or during his recovery from, a controlled poke check, this need not be considered a slash solely because his hand came off the stick.

**SPORTSMANSHIP – Players, coaches, and spectators should exhibit the highest level of sportsmanship at all times.** Coaches and officials should be partners in providing the best possible lacrosse experience for youth players. Unsportsmanlike conduct by coaches and/or players and/or spectators degrades the experience of youth players, discourages people from becoming or continuing as officials, and erodes the integrity and appeal of the sport. Therefore, unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Obscenities need not be used in order for language to draw a penalty. Tone, intent, and body language can all contribute to unsportsmanlike conduct.

**US Lacrosse expects officials to enforce the Unsportsmanlike Conduct rules without hesitation.**

**Coaches must model appropriate sportsmanlike behavior and promote good sportsmanship among players and anybody associated with the team, including spectators.** In particular, coaches must support officials in maintaining an environment of civility and sportsmanship.

## **The specific MBYLL changes approved by our Towns are the following:**

1. U9 Team size will play with 7 players per team. This is a change with the intention of players getting more touches and hopefully be more fun.
2. U9 goals shall be 4x4 in size, or towns may use blockers to shrink the net from a full 6x6 size. To be clear, blockers does not mean the “Hector the Rejector” type shooting trainers. This continues to follow the Athlete Development Model USLacrosse and most other youth sports have gone to.
3. U9 stick checks must be either lift checks or poke checks. No downward checks with the stick are allowed.
4. U11 pass requirement has been changed to need one completed pass, not just attempted, once the attacking team crosses midfield prior to shooting. They also need one completed pass after a whistle on the offensive end.
5. U11 no long poles of any length are allowed. All U11 players must play with Attack/Middie length sticks.
6. Game Jerseys or Game Pinneys require numbers on both front and back, big enough to read (not 3”) and in a contrasting color to be seen (blue on blue with a contrasting outline is not conforming). This is simply an effective way for the Officials to officiate properly and the coaches to be able to teach the kids who to cover. We had many complaints about this which is why the rule.
7. Officials shall not enforce the eye black rule which was put in place for high school players. That rule only allows a single stripe of eye black. The committee felt that if kids wanted to paint their faces like the college kids there was no harm.
8. Finally, where USLacrosse has chosen to return to the age group names from 15 years ago, MBYLL will continue for one more year to call the age groups U15, U13, U11 and U9. USLacrosse has not changed who plays in each age grouping, just the label.