



## 2018 Playing Time Guidelines

The Mars Youth Lacrosse Association Board believes strongly in providing players of all ages and skill levels the opportunity to experience and learn the great game of lacrosse, while being offered the opportunity to meaningfully contribute to the success of his team. As our program has grown in both the number of participations as well as the age groups covered, the Board has recognized the need to address our philosophy with respect to playing time in the form of these Guidelines. The following are some of the factors strongly considered in developing these Guidelines:

- The structure of our 2018 program: Equally divided teams at the 8U (Little Aliens), 10U (3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grades), & 12U (5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grades) levels. Competitive and Developmental teams anticipated for the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade level.
- The natural progression of player/team development: focus is initially on individual skills but must move towards team strategy as player's progress.
- Life lessons to be learned: there are plenty of great lessons to teach to all the players from Kindergarten to 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and significant playing time attracts more kids to teach. However, once a player reaches the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade level, it's appropriate to begin teaching some of the tougher life lessons such as: (i) those who work the hardest and perform the best will often get more opportunities, and (ii) the success of the whole (team) most often has to be put ahead of the individual.
- This Guideline has been developed with the best interest of the entire program in mind, rather than one player or one category of players.
- The current "maturity level" of our program.
- These Guidelines should be simple, flexible and realistic.

Should you have questions regarding your child's playing time, you should first speak to the head coach of your child's team. ***These conversations are generally most productive if they are private and NOT immediately after a game.*** If you remain dissatisfied and believe the matter is of enough concern, then you should contact either Brad Saver (MYLA Coaching Coordinator), Brian Yoshioka (MYLA President), or Sallie Paracca (MYLA Member Elect) to discuss. Visit the [www.marslax.org](http://www.marslax.org) 'Contact Us' tabs for contact information.

Lastly, while the Board believes these Guidelines have been created to optimize this year's program, we are also learning with each new step the program takes. Therefore, we "reserve the right to get smarter" and modify these Guidelines in the future if they prove less than optimal.

Thank you for your patience, understanding and dedication to MYLA.



## 2018 Playing Time Guidelines

### 8U (Little Aliens – Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades) - (primary focus is on the individual)

All players are expected to get roughly equal playing time and equal opportunity at all positions. Shifts may vary in length based on player stamina and opportunity to substitute.

### 10U (3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grades) - (primary focus is on the individual)

All players are expected to get roughly equal playing time and equal opportunity at all positions. Game situation (*i.e.* score) should generally not affect playing time in the first three quarters. Shifts may vary in length based on player stamina and opportunity to substitute. Optimally, there should be 2-3 goalies per squad, each playing one half in goal and the other in the field. Goalies who don't get adequate playing time outside the goal, may be offered playing time outside the goal on the other Mars 10U squad.

### 12U (5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grades) (focus is balanced between the individual and team)

Although players are not expected to necessarily get equal playing time, every player should be given a meaningful opportunity to contribute to the success of the team (which is not less than one quarter, 10 minutes, per game). Coaches should reward exemplary effort and attitude, as well as practice attendance. Game situation (*i.e.* score) should have a moderate impact on playing time in the first three quarters and may have a greater impact during the final quarter. Due to the nature of the position, one minute at midfield should be considered equal to 2 minutes at attack or defense. Shifts may vary in length based on player stamina and opportunity to substitute. Returning players may begin to specialize and new players should be given the opportunity to try each position. Optimally, there should be 2-3 goalies per squad, each playing one half in goal and the other in the field. Goalies who don't get adequate playing time outside the goal, may be offered playing time outside the goal on another Mars 12U squad.



## **2018 Playing Time Guidelines**

### **14U (7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grades) Developmental (primary focus is on the team)**

Playing time will be based to a greater extent on performance and game situation; however, every player who regularly attends practice is expected to be given a meaningful opportunity to contribute to the success of the team (which is not less than one quarter, 10 minutes per game). Due to the nature of the position, one minute at midfield should be considered equal to 2 minutes at attack or defense. Shifts may vary in length based on player stamina and opportunity to substitute. Coaches should reward exemplary effort and attitude, as well as practice attendance. Returning players will most likely be specialized based upon the needs of the team. New players should be given an opportunity to try each position; but, a primary position assignment may be based upon the needs of the team. Optimally, there should be 2-3 goalies per squad, each playing one half in goal and the other in the field. Goalies who don't get adequate playing time outside the goal, may be offered playing time outside the goal on another Mars 14U B-level squad.

### **14U (7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grades) Competitive (primary focus is on the team)**

Playing time will be based on performance and game situation; however, every player who regularly attends practice is expected to be given a meaningful opportunity to contribute to the success of the team (which is not less than 8 minutes per game). Due to the nature of the position, one minute at midfield should be considered equal to 2 minutes at attack or defense. Shifts may vary in length based on player stamina and opportunity to substitute. Coaches should reward exemplary effort and attitude, as well as practice attendance. Players will most likely be asked to specialize based upon the needs of the team.