

Thunder Lacrosse

To help you understand the game:

This is directed to people new to lacrosse or to those who have been asking for a guide to the rules.

Although lacrosse is very complimentary to hockey it really is more similar to basketball. The main similarities and differences are as follows:

Like basketball and unlike hockey to some degree the game of lacrosse involves a full team offence. There are no defensemen in lacrosse.

The 5 offensive players are referred to as left crease (like left wing in hockey), left corner (like left defense), right crease (right wing) right corner (right defense) and point (center).

Like basketball, there is no offside or icing! This keeps the pace of the game moving very quickly! There are rules, regulations and features that are unique to lacrosse and most of these are used in our House League. Many other rules are the same as in Hockey.

The minimum length of a lacrosse stick is 36" up to Bantam and 42" thereafter. When on team offends and no penalty is called the other team is awarded possession. IE if a player shoots or bounces the ball into the stands the other team is given possession, and a whistle signifies the start of play.

There is always a face-off after a goal (a goal is counted if the ball goes directly into the net off the goalie's helmet or face mask). After a penalty, or when the ball strikes the goalie in the helmet area, there will be a change of possession only, and not a face off.

Checking from behind will be dealt with severely as it is one of the leading potential injury factors. Checking is an important part of the game but checking from behind and violent checks into the boards will be strictly enforced. Remember it is a "Judgment" call by the referee and is enforced differently at Rep Levels.

High sticking is another area of confusion for parents! "Incidental" contact with the helmet by an opposing player's stick is not automatically a penalty! It is again a referee's judgement call. Also, if a player ducks into a player's cross check, no matter how severe that check is, it is not a penalty unless it is from behind! Remember crosschecking in Lacrosse is both legal and a very important and proper method of checking! Again, the only way to enforce high –sticking is the referee's judgment. There is no other way.

Players or goalies out of their crease, will be penalized if they catch the ball in the hand. If they just contact it with the hand it is possession to the other team.

Face-offs are taken with the open face of the stick facing your own net. The ball must come out of the 2' small face-off circle before other players can enter the larger circle. An offence against this does not cause another face-off as in hockey, it results in immediate possession to the other team.

A player with the ball cannot push off with his / her free hand or arm. If he/she does, possession is awarded to the other team. This rule is very misunderstood by new parents. Remember as well, you can check an offensive player, whether he/she has the ball or not! However, checking of an offensive player is restricted to the area within the dotted crease, and if you are on the offensive team you cannot check back, you must take the checking without responding! Any response or checking by any member of the team who has possession will result in loss of possession. Many times spectators will not notice freehand or arm pushing (by the way, as long as the player with the ball keeps both hands on his stick he can usually push, or shoulder or resist his checker) and often will miss the checking by offensive players especially action away from the ball.

The ball can be kicked but not for a goal.

When a team is shorthanded, they have 10 seconds to get the ball over centre and once over cannot go back, or change of possession occurs. When a player is awarded possession by the ref he/she must be given at least 9 feet of room by the defending player until the whistle signifies restarting of play.

If 2 players are going after a "loose" ball they must play the ball and not check the other player until he has possession. This again is a very common occurrence in House League which causes many possession calls. Neither new players nor parents adapt to this rule very quickly!

Another big difference between Hockey and Lacrosse involves the goalie's crease. If you go into the other team's crease to shot or cut through it, you lose possession. This again is very common in House League. If you go through the other teams crease to make a check or you touch the goalie while he is in his crease it results in a penalty. If you are pushed into the crease you are OK but you must make every effort to get out ASAP.

Your goalie or player has 5 seconds to get the ball out of the crease after stopping and gaining control of it. He / She must have both feet out to be considered out and once out, he/she or any other player cannot go back in or through. You can pass to the goalie as much as you want if he/she is out for the crease. The goalie in Lacrosse can function just like any other player (remember, there is no centre red line for off side purposes and a goalie can go anywhere on the floor).

In the House League, these rules will be enforced with the idea of teaching the kids! Referee's judgment is an important factor and guided by executive board policy, Referee-in-Chiefs directions. Again, any violent hitting or infractions are intended to be strictly enforced.