



## LAREDO Expectations

By Hank Friedman, US Lacrosse LAREDO Manager

*You have been a lacrosse official for a few years and enjoy it, but now you feel that your game has stagnated and needs a boost. Or, you're an official ready to make the jump to the ranks of the Collegiate Officiating Committee (COC) and have had some informal training in 3-man mechanics, but you need a solid understanding of the mechanics. What to do?*

Since the late 1980s, the LAREDO (LAcrosse REferee DevelOpment) program has been providing training for lacrosse officials around the country. Originally designed to teach 3-man mechanics (now know as Level 3 LAREDO) to officials in the western United States at events like the Vail Lacrosse Shootout and the Texas A&M fall ball lacrosse tournament, the program has grown to four events geographically spread across the US.

The Level 3 events are designed for officials ready to make the jump from 2-man to 3-man mechanics and are ready to join the ranks of the COC. In 2009, US Lacrosse created the Level 2 LAREDO aimed at the third or fourth year high school official looking to improve their game and have a better schedule. LAREDO events are primarily focused on mechanics, but game management and overall officiating philosophy are also discussed.

*You have identified which event you want to go to, submitted your name through proper channels and have been selected. Now what?*

### **Ensure you have support at home.**

Is your wife/significant other okay with you taking a weekend (or longer) to go *work* on your officiating? Depending on where the event is and whether or not they pay game fees outside of the games in the training, you might either make a few dollars or spend upwards of \$500 (these costs include LAREDO fee, hotel, transportation and food). Make sure that everyone on the home front is on board before deciding to make the investment.

### **Be willing to learn and improve.**

Each LAREDO event will be taught by a Senior Clinician and depending on the event, will have Crew Chiefs and/or Assistant Clinicians as Sideline Observers. All of these people have decades of experience. Listen to them! Their feedback and critique is for your benefit. Internalize it, integrate it into your game and make yourself a better official. The key to becoming a better official is to put your ego aside and use the information presented to you to improve. If you think you know it all, don't waste your time. This training is not designed to stroke your ego.

### **Bring a great work ethic.**

Each assignment deserves your best effort. One of the worst statements a Senior Clinician or other LAREDO staff can say is that you are a lazy official. You will set the pace of a game, so always make sure you are working hard on the game.

**Share what you have learned.**

You learn a great deal at these events, and a big part of the LAREDO experience and legacy is sharing this knowledge with the officials in your area. Don Balch, a Senior Clinician, from Vero Beach, Fla., summed up the experience this way: "LAREDO is a big confidence builder. You are taught to do it one way and because of that training, you know you are in the right position to make the call."

Look for announcements of Level 2 & 3 LAREDO events in editions of the US Lacrosse MDOC newsletter, and the US Lacrosse MDOC web pages. Good luck with your season and I hope that you can attend a LAREDO event in the near future.