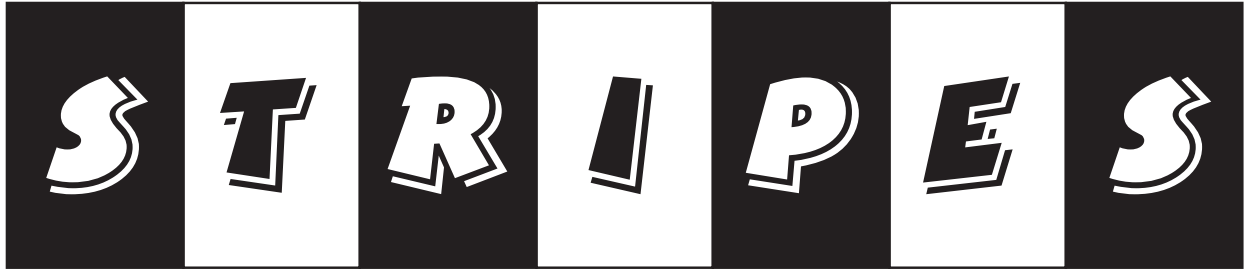




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The official newsletter of the Men's Division Officials Council

LEVEL 1 AND 2 OFFICIALS TRAINING

The US Lacrosse Training Committee has developed a training program for officials. It consists of Level 1 training, which is primarily for youth officials, and Level 2 training, which is aimed at officials who wish to officiate high school. A Level 3 training program for college-level officiating is currently under development.

Training packages, which include the US Lacrosse MDOC Officials Training Program Level 1 & 2 Manual, a rule book (choice of NCAA or NFHS), and a "US Lacrosse Official" patch, can be ordered through the US Lacrosse Sport Development office. The packages can only be ordered by district governors, DLTCs (District Liaisons to the Training Committee), Youth Officiating Committee Representatives, and certified US Lacrosse Trainers.

Training packages are \$20 each. In some cases where lacrosse is a sanctioned sport in a state and US Lacrosse membership is not required of officials, it is possible to order the training manual only (without the patches or rule books) at a reduced rates. Typically, officials in those states are given rule manuals as part of their membership in the state association. The actual student cost for the training is set by the local association after accounting for the cost of room rental, clinician fees, and other expenses.

To become certified as an official and to be covered by US Lacrosse insurance while officiating, the candidates must:

- Become members of US Lacrosse as an official or as a cross participant/official.

- Enroll in and complete a Level 1 or 2 Training Course.

Several updates to the program are now available. First, there is a new version of the Level 1 written test available on the MDOC Resources Page at "tinyurl.com/yj7x5k". This is a 100-question test consisting almost entirely of true-false questions, and it emphasizes material that youth officials need to know.

Also, an update document is posted at the same site, detailing the changes from last year's version of the manual to this year's. This should allow people taking this year's course to use last year's manual and still have access to the same information that people using the new manual will have.

If you have comments on the training manual or the test, please send them to lax.ref@comcast.net



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E-mail

Electronic mail is the primary method that US Lacrosse and the MDOC use to contact you, and having a valid e-mail address on file is the only way to receive this newsletter. If your e-mail address changes, be sure to let us know by e-mailing membership services at epiper@uslacrosse.org

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Letters to the Editor

I just want to thank you and whoever at USL is responsible for the *Stripes* newsletter. I look forward to frequent future issues.

As a three-sport official, I avidly read Referee magazine as a similar resource for reffing football, but of course they don't even mention lacrosse. The e-mailed newsletter is an excellent substitute.

Please forward my appreciation to whoever is responsible for this.

Gary Patterson
West Chicago, IL

Thanks! It started out as pretty much a one-man show, but we're starting to get some contributions from other officials and hope to see more and more of that in the future.

Quick Tips

If you have short officiating tips that can be explained in a paragraph or so, send them to lax.ref@comcast.net with the subject line "Quick Tip." We'll work them in as space allows. Be sure to include your name and city so we can give proper credit.

John Mack Memorial Fund

John Mack of Binghamton (N.Y.) High School tragically passed away in November 2006, two days after suffering an injury that was a result of a legal stick check in a lacrosse game. Thanks to his friends, family and local lacrosse community, Mack was remembered with the John Mack Southern Tier Shoot Out at the Great Binghamton Sports Complex, February 10–11.

The John Mack Memorial Fund, also established in his name, will support academic and lacrosse scholarships in addition to the provision of defibrillators and defibrillator training for sports clubs in the area. A benefit party in the name of the fund was held on Saturday, February 10, in Binghamton, N.Y.

Quick Tip

If you have trouble remembering the dimensions of legal crosses, print them out on a small piece of paper and tape them onto your tape measure.

Corrections

The CollegeLax lacrosse rules and officiating forum is at forums.collegelax.us, not at collegelax.com.

The NFHS does have a searchable rule book online, but it is available to NFHS members only.

Game Management

Part 2



by Harold Buck

This is the second in a series of articles about game management in men's lacrosse. It will eventually be adapted for use with the US Lacrosse Level 1 and 2 Training Manual. If you have additional suggestions or ideas about game management, please send them to lax.ref@comcast.net

Keeping the game moving

One complaint of many coaches and players is that some officials interrupt the flow of the game. Sometimes, that's coach-speak for "We wish they'd never call any fouls and just let them play," but other times they have a legitimate complaint, because the officials are supposed to keep the game moving as much as possible.

The most glaring example of this occurs during dead-ball situations. Dead-ball situations are not a rest time for officials: the officials need to work hard to make sure that play gets restarted quickly and appropriately. However, we tend to focus our training on what to do during live-ball play, so when play stops many officials aren't sure what to do, thus slowing down the game. This is not the only problem, since the coaches and players can sense when the officials aren't sure what to do, and that undermines their confidence in the officials. This is especially true in three-man

mechanics, where the delays can be longer if the officials aren't working hard during the dead-ball situations. Good officials know how to anticipate the restart requirements during a dead ball or time-out so delays are minimal.

When there is a loose-ball technical foul, the officials need to stop play, report the foul quickly, and restart play. When reporting the foul, only the barest details need be communicated (i.e., say and signal "Loose push! Blue ball!"; not "White, number 39, loose ball push in the back, blue ball!") unless there is something specific that needs to be explained because the call is unusual (and even then, keep it short). This is not a time for counting players or connecting with your partners; because the foul occurred during a loose ball, the proper number of players should already be on the field and your partners should be focused on the play. If the ball needs to be moved outside the attack area, do so quickly; if not, you should blow the whistle as soon as the ball is in the crosse of a player from the correct team and there are no other players within 5 yards. In fact, good, well-coached teams will be eager to start play and will pick up the ball and be ready to go as soon as you make the call; if you aren't ready when they are, they'll be asking, "Whistle? Whistle?" At the same time, remember there are

no "running restarts" (i.e., the player with the ball must be stationary when the whistle blows). Also, if the player with the ball is fairly close to the correct restart location, let him start. Constantly stopping the game to get the player to stand exactly where they should is irritating to both teams.

This brings up another point: if you call a loose-ball push on player B1, and B1 wants to argue with you about it, you could warn him, ask him to address his concerns to his coach, or give him a conduct foul. However, sometimes a more effective way to end the discussion is to just start play while he's trying to argue with you. By doing so, you accomplish two things: you keep the flow of the game moving, and you punish B1 for arguing (since he's out of the play while trying to argue with you, essentially forcing his team to play man-down for a short time) without interrupting the flow of the game!

When there's a whistle for a non-time-serving foul (e.g., a ward, an illegal offensive screen, a loose ball push followed by the fouling team gaining possession), the rules require the offending team to place the ball on the ground or to give it to the nearest official. If a team tries to gain an advantage by rolling or throwing the ball away, thus making it harder for the other

team to get a quick restart, this is illegal procedure and should be penalized. Of course, you need to use your judgment, because if the ball rolls a few yards there's really no advantage gained, and if they roll it a little bit farther you can let it slide with a warning (to the player, and repeated to the coach). But if they throw the ball far enough away that it slows down

A crew of officials can live with a missed offside call, but a missed late hit or off-ball high hit brings a game down quickly.

the game, it deserves a 30-second penalty. In this case, you interrupt the flow of the game once in order to ensure the game keeps moving later.

For any time-serving penalty, the officials need to communicate the penalty to each other quickly and then communicate in detail to the scorer's table. Take your time communicating with the table area; this is your time to shine. Make eye contact and make sure they know what is happening. You're an official until you blow the whistle; at that time, you become a salesman. While the trail reports the penalty to the table, the other official or officials should get the ball to the right spot on the field. As soon as the trail finishes reporting the penalty and is sure the bench understands the foul, he should click his timer, after which the teams have 20 seconds to substitute if they desire. As soon

as they are done subbing and are in position—or when the timer goes off, assuming the teams have the right number of players on the field—the officials should signal each other and play should resume. The players should not have to wait for the officials in this situation unless the officials need to correct a problem.

This is not to say that the officials cannot huddle to get things right if there is a complex penalty situation (e.g., B1 slashes A1, flag down; A1 passes to A2 who shoots and scores, but A1 slashes B1. Was the slash live-ball or dead ball? Is possession awarded or is there a face-off? What is the penalty situation?). In such a situation, it is more important to get things right than to keep the game moving. However, situations like these should not happen often, and if the officials must delay the game to huddle more than once or twice a game it can be a sign of poor officiating.

Dead-ball officiating

While one important aspect of dead-ball officiating is keeping the game moving, there are others. Often, when the officials stop play, they immediately look to each other to find out what the call is since they are concerned about getting the play restarted. However, if you turn to each other too quickly, you will eventually miss some residual action after the play such as a late hit or a slash after the whistle. These incidents have a huge impact on your game management, since often everyone sees them but you (and you often know that something happened but can't

make the call because you didn't see it). Or, as often happens, you might see only the retaliation and not the act that precipitated it.

One key to dead-ball officiating is to make sure all residual activity from the play has stopped before you turn to take the call from your partner. Your partner should wait for you to make eye contact before starting to signal, so you shouldn't miss anything. Someone should always be watching the field and players at all times. A crew of officials can live with a missed offside call, but a missed late hit or off-ball high hit brings a game down quickly. Work just as hard at officiating in dead balls as in live balls. Watch the players cross during time-outs and the ends of periods before looking at your scorecard. Watch them cross again as they break from their huddles and go to their field positions.

Another key is that the trail official must focus on the shooter after the shot—and not the ball entering the goal—to make sure there are no late hits during the dead ball. If you miss these fouls, it leads to a high level of frustration among the coaches and players, which can lead to an out-of-control game.

Mistakes by Officials

All officials will occasionally blow a call, with, of course, the better officials making fewer mistakes. This can be because of a rule misunderstanding or misapplication, because the official was out of position to make the correct call, or because the official just didn't see what actually happened. Whatever the reason, how you handle mak-

ing a mistake can have a huge impact on your management of the game.

The best way for the crew to handle a mistake is to huddle and correct the mistake before it has an impact on the game. Often, one official will realize that a call is incorrect but won't want to "show up" his fellow official and will keep his mouth shut, but most coaches and players will have much more respect for the crew if they meet and get the call right. For example, the lead official might think that B1 tripped A1 and throw a flag, but the trail official might have had a different angle and seen that A1 tripped over his own foot. When the lead signals the foul for the trip, the trail should meet with him to discuss the call. Unfortunately, since the officials have different coverage responsibilities, they

How you handle making a mistake can have a huge impact on your management of the game.

often aren't watching the same things and aren't always able to correct each other's calls.

In other situations, where you blow a call and realize it (or you call a play that was close enough that you realize you may or may not have gotten the call right), honesty is often the best policy. If the coach is mad because he says you blew the call, and you say, "You're right coach, I'm sorry, it

won't happen again," it's very difficult for them to keep up a tirade. Just don't put yourself in a position where you need to do this too often!

It's also important to know what to say to the coach by your side when the far-side official makes a marginal call. Never "throw your partner under the bus." Practice responses such as:

- "Coach, he was right there."
- "Coach, it's hard to tell from 50 yards away where we are."
- "He had a good angle there, Coach, he must have seen something we didn't."

If your partner makes a call that the coach doesn't understand and you don't know what the call was either, tell the coach you'll check with your partner and ask what about the call when there's a break in the action, then remember to follow up with your partner and the coach.

Thanks to the crew from the LacrosseForums.com Lacrosse Rules and Officiating forum, who provided numerous suggestions for this article. Special thanks to Eric Evans and Rod Korba, who provided numerous suggestions and revisions to an earlier draft.

Write for Stripes!

Stripes is for MDOC members, but we also want it to be written *by* MDOC members! Please submit:

- Game situations and rules/quiz questions.
- Articles about officiating principles.
- Articles about specific men's officials.
- Photos and graphics relevant to officiating.
- News from your area.
- Articles about training or recruiting techniques or programs.
- Amusing anecdotes about officiating.
- Humor pieces, jokes, and cartoons.
- Letters to the editor.

In short, if it has to do with men's lacrosse officiating or will be of interest to men's lacrosse officials, send it in. All submissions we use will be credited, and—for feature articles and significant contributions that we use, or even for several smaller ones—we'll send you a "Stripes" T-shirt.

Send all submissions to
lax.ref@comcast.net

REFFING SHORTS

Corrections to the 2007 NCAA Men's Rule Book

These updates come from Chuck Winters, NCAA Rules Editor, and Walt Munze, US Lacrosse Rules Interpreter. They were e-mailed to all COC officials, but other officials working under NCAA rules may not have received the update.

On page 50 AR 84, the final sentence should be changed to read: "...before the shot is in flight." and **not** "before the goal."

On page 62 AR 5 the last sentence should be changed to read: "If a goal was scored by the aforementioned player before the adjusting..."

On page 78 the second exception in Section 11 change deflected pass to read: "... a shot or due to a deflection off the defense, either team may recover."

On page 94 AR 63 the ruling would be changed to read: "Ball is awarded to the team in possession at the time of the error or, if the ball was loose, by alternate possession." This would have to be added to Page 42 i fourth sentence to read: "...left on his own) or to the team in possession at the time of the error or, if the ball was loose, by alternate possession (for a timer's error)..."

On page 65 AR 24 Delete AR 24 because it should have been removed when f was removed from the Unsportsmanlike Conduct section on page 65.

On page 74 j. Change 4-22 to 4-23.

On page 17 the head diagram should have lines drawn from the wording "side wall" to the side walls of the head.

On page 90, delete 7-8-j.

Summary of the 2006 Observers Program

Bob Curcio, head of the COC Observers Program, gives the following report on the program:

- 353 officials were observed in 2006. This represents 81% of our target population who were observed and received some feedback.
- There are innumerable reasons why some officials do not get observed while others are seen more than once each season. If anyone has questions regarding this (or anything else related to the program), they should feel free to contact me.
- This past Fall approximately 30 officials were invited to work in various tournaments; about half of them received upgrades in their 2007 based on their performances in 2006 and in the Fall.
- 19 officials were selected to work in the NCAA tournament in 2006 for the first time; many of these officials were recom-

mended via the Observer Program.

- In an attempt to increase the pool of officials we are considering a project where in June good high school officials would be invited to work at a team camp (on a college campus) and based on their performances some of them would be invited to join the college ranks. At this point it is a possibility but something that we are looking at and hopefully can bring to fruition.
- Lastly, I am most appreciative of the financial support of the COC and want to thank everyone for all they do to make this happen.

NCAA versus NFHS Rules Differences

The annual lists of rules differences have been posted on the MDOC resources page at "tinyurl.com/yj7x5k". There are two lists: a one-page list with the most important differences and the full four-page list with all 98 known differences. Please contact lax.ref@comcast.net to report differences that are not listed.

Emergency ID for officials by Karen Kandola

My umpire partner had a heart attack on the field during our girls' high school lacrosse game last spring. An ambulance was called; but as he lay on the ground I realized I was his "team" and yet had no knowledge of or access to his medical or emergency contact

information.

umpIDea manufactures and sells emergency contact and medical information cards to umpires nationwide. umpIDea is a two-sided card with space for your emergency contact information on one side and medical information on the other. The included self-seal laminating pouch (luggage tag with loop or business card pocket size) protects your card from wear and tear.

The product debuted nationally at the 2007 US Lacrosse Convention and spurred a lot of conversation about our vulnerability at games and discussion of other incidents which occurred to officials all over the nation. For more information, please visit our website at www.umpIDea.com or email kkandola@verizon.net to receive a marketing packet.

In the Crease Podcast by Sonny Pieper

MCLA NAA Bob Duggan asked me to put together a brief note about the new CollegeLAX web site and our recent phone interview on the *In the Crease* podcast. During our interview at the end of last month, we were able to touch on many pertinent officiating topics, including the new NCAA rules and the growth of the MCLA as it impacts the officiating community at large.

In case you are wondering what a podcast is, they are basically radio-style audio programs available for free through the Internet. I produce the *In the Crease* podcast, as webmaster for the new CollegeLAX web site.

You can listen to the *In The Crease* show online on your computer, 24 hours a day at the CollegeLAX web site: www.CollegeLAX.us. You can listen to a podcast with free audio programs such as Quicktime, Windows Media Player, or RealPlayer right in your computer's web browser.

The beauty of podcasts is that you can take the show with you on the road. You can listen to the podcast on your iPod or other mobile MP3 Player—or burn them to a CD and use a CD player—while you are working out, driving to work or taking the dog for a walk.

There are several other *In the Crease* podcasts already available online, including interviews with MCLA President John Paul and interviews with top MCLA Coaches from around the country from this past summer and fall. We have plans for more exclusive interviews in 2007, including live coverage from the MCLA National Championship Tournament in Dallas, Texas.

If you have an idea for a future interview, please feel free to contact me. You can also leave a question or a comment on the CollegeLAX Voicemail line at 206-339-4LAX (or 206-339-4529). Your feedback maybe used in a future *In the Crease* podcast. Be sure you leave your name and hometown.

The new CollegeLAX web site replaced the old USLIA.com site last August and will continue to primarily cover the 200 teams and 9 conferences of the new Men's Collegiate Lacrosse Association (MCLA) with up-to-date scores, stats, photos, and news items.

I would also like to take this opportunity to invite officials from around the country to get involved with the CollegeLAX site via the Lacrosse Rules and Officiating Forum on the active CollegeLAX Message Board. It is a good opportunity to discuss rules interpretations, game situations, and more in a spam-free, moderated online environment with players, coaches, and other officials.

The Answer (#1)

Last month's question was "What is the most interesting thing you've ever penalized—or wish you'd penalized—with an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty?" Some of the answers:

In a college club game, one of the teams had an extremely large goalie who occupied a considerable amount of the net. During a clearing play, this goalie was quickly run down by a pursuing attackman who dove in attempt to check the goalie's crosse. The attackman missed the crosse and his arm wrapped the goalie's body, bringing his sweat pants down to his ankles. He was butt-naked beneath. A flag was thrown, the whistle quickly blown, and I scrambled to compose myself while making the call. The attackman was called for a "hold," but I wished I would have called an unsportsmanlike conduct on the goalie for "calling undo attention to oneself." —*Jim Shaw, District 7*

In the last 25 years lacrosse has really evolved in the state of Texas. I grew up with the "old school" clubs where everyone, including the officials, headed for the ice-

house (that's a bar without air conditioning) to down a few cold ones after the game. The men's clubs today are the last remnants of this "good ole boy" mentality and occasionally they will take you back.

Several years ago Dallas is playing a club from Houston on a hot summer day, the game is going fine, everyone looking forward to the after-game activities. Late in the 4th quarter I look back downfield and notice the Houston goalie taking a drink from a bottle he has in the net. No big deal, club game, it's 100 degrees and everybody needs water. Dallas fast breaks to the other end, shoots and scores. Houston goalie is noticeably upset, not about the goal—the ball knocked over his bottle, which was not water, but a beer! Everyone was laughing so hard I didn't have the heart to penalize him again. —*Guy Grosgebauer, District 8*

I officiated a middle school team where the players refused to tie the drawstrings on their game shorts. Wearing pants low and showing under was "cool." One participant was running with his pants below his crotch, exposing his underwear, cup, etc. so I flagged him for a uniform violation — undergarments were not white, gray or a team color and did not match the other players. I told the coach that if his players did not tie their pants so they didn't come down that I would flag his team every time I could see a player's underwear. The coach had no control of the team and they pants kept coming down, so after three USC penalties they finally began to tie their pants and the game continued. —*Michael Williamson, District 1*

Other comments: The guy who scored a goal, threw his glove in the air, and pretended to use his stick to shoot it down like a duck. ...The team that instructed its attackmen to take advantage of the barren field by kicking up a cloud of dust so the goalie couldn't see the shot by the middle The player who dropped the ball on the ground during a dead ball and drove it 50 yards like a golf ball.

US Lacrosse Collegiate Officials Committee Newsletter

This update came from Chuck Winters, NCAA Rules Editor, and Warren Kimber, NCAA National Coordinator of Officials on February 14, 2007. The update was e-mailed to all COC officials, but other officials working under NCAA rules may not have received the update. It was received shortly before press time, so some of these changes are not reflected in other articles in the newsletter.

If a head coach sends over half of his team before the game to have their sticks checked, notify him that you will do only a maximum of four (4) stick checks before the game. Coaches need to be reminded that they certify before the game that ALL of the equipment used by their team meets rule book specifications.

Before the game, notify the head coach that if any of his players adjusts the strings of his crosse after an official asks for the crosse and a goal is scored, there will be an immediate flag, loss of goal, one (1) minute penalty and loss of ball.

After a goal is scored the head official conducts a random check of A1's crosse. A1 pulls his strings before handing his crosse to the lead official. The lead should immediately throw his flag and this will be the only penalty assessed. The trail and single side officials should delay a second to see if the lead has a penalty for pulling strings. At that time they would hand the crosse they were going to inspect back to the player and move to midfield for the restart.

A1 scores a goal and the lead official asks for his crosse to do a random check. At the same time, the crosse of B1 is checked and both crosses are found to be illegal, (tampered with). RULING: Goal is disallowed, A1 and B1 serve three (3) minute non-releasable penalties. The penalties are simultaneous so you go to alternate possession (AP). The ball is awarded to team by AP, twenty (20) yards laterally from the goal.

A1 scores a goal and the lead official asks for his crosse to do a random check. At the same time, the crosse of B1 is checked and both crosses are found to be illegal. A1 for a tampered crosse and B1 for a deep pocket. RULING: Goal is disallowed, the ball is awarded to B twenty (20) yards laterally from the goal due to less penalty time being served by B1.

It is strongly suggested that six (6) stick checks be conducted throughout the game and the last one (1) to be completed before the middle of the fourth (4) quarter. Remember the coach always has the right to request a stick check in addition to those you conduct.

The stick checks are to be random. They are to be done during the game without interfering with the flow or the momentum of the game. Appropriate intervals: team time out, TV time outs (when applicable) injury time outs, between periods and just before the start of the second half. The officiating crew is to decide the times during the game when they plan to do the stick checks in their pre-game meeting.

Under-19 World Games Officiating Tryouts

Officiating tryouts will be held in July for the American representatives to the Under-19 World Games, to be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, from July 3–12, 2008. Officiating résumés should be sent to Al Blau, the International Officials Committee chairman, at “aballax@hotmail.com” by April 15, 2007. All COC and SOC officials are invited to apply for a position in the tryouts.

The tryouts will be held at the University of Maryland at Baltimore County from July 12–15, 2007. There will be a \$200 fee for those participating in the tryouts.



Convention Report

The 2007 US Lacrosse Convention—held in Philadelphia from January 10–13—featured the most successful program ever for men’s lacrosse officials. The number of sessions continues to expand, and between training sessions, seminars, and business meetings, there were four extremely productive days.

The program kicked off on Thursday evening and Friday morning with Collegiate Officials Committee (COC) Clinicians Training. This 8-hour course trained and recertified clinicians to teach three-man mechanics. Candidates gained entry to the course via a recommendation from their district governor. There are plans to add a Scholastic Officials Committee (SOC) Clinicians Training to next year’s convention program to teach clinicians who wish to focus on training of high school officials.

The bulk of the business meetings were held on Friday, including meetings of the MDOC Board of Governors, the COC Executive Committee, the SOC, the Youth Officials Committee (YOC) and the International Officials Committee (IOC). Friday also featured the NFHS rules interpretation meeting. Finally, there were two seminars on Friday evening: Rich DeMayo presented “Be the Best: Becoming a Better Official,” and Phil DiDomenico and Buzz Lynn presented “Officials and Their Relationship to the Game.”

On Saturday morning, the COC General Meeting and NCAA Rules

Clinic were held. After a short break, the afternoon sessions included:

- On-Field Crew Communications (Jim Carboneau).
- The “R” Position: What Makes a Crew Chief (Terry Cullen).
- 14 Tips for the Newer Official (Eric Evans).
- How to Become a Lacrosse Rules Expert (Harold Buck).
- The Modern Assignor: A Balancing Act (Andre Sanders).

Finally, on Sunday morning, there were three more sessions:

- Training the Trainers (David Seidman).
- Running a Great Junior Officiating Program (Chase Howse and Greg Simon).
- Dynamic Officiating: A Different Way to Look at Common Situations (Steve Hinchey).

While the speakers and programs this year were excellent, the MDOC Training Committee is committed to continuing to expand educational opportunities for men’s officials at the convention each year. Look for even more programs at the next convention, which will be held in Philadelphia for the last time in 2008 before moving to Baltimore in 2009.

The Question (#2)

In each issue of the newsletter, there will be a question for MDOC officials. The best responses will be published in the next issue of the newsletter. You can also e-mail questions you'd like to see asked here. Please e-mail all submissions to lax.ref@comcast.net with the subject line "The Answer."

What's the most interesting thing you've heard a coach or player say during a game?

Basic Rules Quiz

This quiz can be attempted by anyone, but it is especially appropriate for newer officials. In each situation listed below, tell whether you would

- (W) Blow your whistle
- (F) Throw a penalty flag
- (P) Call "Play on!"
- (N) Do nothing

Some questions require multiple answers. Also give the name of the foul committed, if any, in each case. Give the best answer you can give the information provided, with the understanding that what you would actually call depends on what you saw in the game. Assume that there are no other fouls involved other than what is described below.

- (1) A1 is driving toward the goal with possession, and B1 hits him hard in the helmet with his stick.
- (2) During a loose ball, A1 pushes B1 from behind.

(3) During a loose ball, A1 runs up at full speed, lowers his shoulder, and crashes into B1 from behind.

(4) A1 is being pursued by B1, and A2 sets a legal screen. B1 sees the screen, lowers his shoulder, and plows A2 over so he can continue pursuing A1.

(5) A1 is being pursued by B1, and A2 jumps in front of B1 at the last second. B1 cannot stop himself from contacting A2 before A2 has landed.

(6) Goalkeeper B1 has possession in the crease when B2 steps on, but not over, the crease line.

(7) A1 has the ball. Across the field, A2 tries to make a cut toward the goal and B1 steps in front of him, initiating contact and blocking A2 from making the cut.

(8) A1 has the ball and B1 attempts to check his stick. A1 pushes B1's crosse away with his free hand.

(9) A1 shoots. The ball goes into the goal, then A1 steps into the crease.

(10) During a face-off, A1 clamps and the ball becomes caught in the back of his crosse.

Officiating a Game with Jim Brown Playing

by Eric Evans

The mid 1950s were the college lacrosse years for Jim Brown of Syracuse University, who went on to national fame as the fullback for the NFL's Cleveland Browns. Some observers claim Brown was the greatest lax player of all time: an unstoppable force of 6'2" and 225 pounds. He came to Syracuse out of Long Island's Manhasset High School, and former Williams Coach Renzie Lamb still has the scars from trying to tackle Brown during a high-school game. Brown played a lacrosse game in 1957 at New England College, a 13-7 Syracuse win. Can you imagine the look on players' faces at NEC if the Syracuse bus arrived in Henniker, New Hampshire, for a game!

In 1957 Brown became the first African-American to play in the North-South All-Star game, and he scored five goals by halftime in a show that still has the Baltimore faithful, including longtime Johns Hopkins coach Bob Scott, shaking their heads. Veteran referee Clark Mercer of Syracuse was Brown's roommate on the road: "Jimmy would play basketball all morning and then suit up for lacrosse and score at will. It was a man against boys. He had an underhand worm-burner that was incredible." A football coach and a lacrosse coach were comparing notes in the 1950s and discovered a mutual connection with Jim Brown. The football coach was incredulous: "You're telling me that there's a sport where they give that man a stick?"

Two "facts" about Brown have

persisted over the years. One was that he used a very short stick; reports have it as short as 30" in length. A close look at the 1955 rule book reveals that the minimum measurement allowed was 40 inches. Was Brown's stick really that short? Illegal? If so, why weren't teams calling for stick checks on him? Coach Lamb: "Jim Brown used a wooden stick with a defenseman's head on a very short shaft. But no one did 'stick checks' in those days; that came in with the plastic heads later."

The second "fact" was that one of Brown's moves was to clamp the ball to his chest and power his way to the goal and that the clamping/withholding rule was introduced upon his departure from Syracuse. A close check of both the 1959 and 1964 rule books indicates no wording of clamping/withholding the ball against the body. New Hampshire referee Bill Coleman: "In the late spring of 1957, Bill Wyman and I worked the Syracuse-Dartmouth game in Hanover, New Hampshire. Jim Brown was one of the centers. He was going to the Cleveland Browns right after school and the Browns apparently had given him a huge red convertible along with other things and he was riding around Hanover with the top down and half the team hanging onto it. During the game he seemed to be able to bore in and score whenever he wanted to. I don't recall anything special about his stick and I can assure you that there was no clamping of the stick and ball against his body when Wyman and I were around!"

Brown's lacrosse statistics are misleading. Often he was sitting out the second half because Syra-

cuse was far ahead. Other days he had just arrived from a Syracuse track meet (where he also lettered in the spring) or was just about to head off to one after the lax game. A year or so ago Brown was on a sports talk show hosted by the former Virginia defenseman now playing in the NFL (his names

escapes me). The host handed him a modern attack stick and they played catch on the set. Brown seemed to adapt quite quickly to a type of stick he had never seen and threw it back both righty and lefty without a miss ... almost 50 years after his last lacrosse game.

Advanced rules quiz

This quiz focuses on new situations that can arise due to the new mechanic for NCAA stick checks discussed at the convention; it does **not** address any changes from later bulletins. Assume NCAA rules and the "usual" penalties for fouls (i.e., they don't warrant extra time served). In each case, be sure to include all penalty time, releasability, possession, the position of the restart, and any other relevant information. Be aware that this quiz is difficult and requires a solid understanding of Rule 7; however, these are situations that could easily arise in actual play. Also, as always, this is simply one author's well-reasoned quiz and has not been approved or endorsed by the NCAA in any way.

(1) A1 scores a goal and the officials conduct a stick check on A1 and B1. After the official requests the stick from A1, he pulls on a drawstring. A1's stick is legal, but B1's crosse has a deep pocket. Ruling? (6 pts.)

(2) A1 has possession and is slashed by B1 while he is clearing the ball, flag down. A1 runs the ball into the attack area and drops it, creating a loose ball. While the

ball is loose, A2 slashes B2. The officials stop play, and then Team B calls for a time-out. The officials grab A3 and B3's crosses for a stick check. Both sticks measure 6.25 inches at the widest point in the head. Ruling? (11 pts.)

(3) A1 shoots and scores. Before the face-off, the face-off official requests A2 and B2's crosses for an inspection. A2 pulls his strings and the face-off official throws a flag. The face-off official then turns to B2 and tries to obtain his crosse, and B2 jams the head of his crosse into the ground, drawing another flag. Both sticks measure 6.25 inches at the widest point in the head, and both pockets are too deep. Ruling? (11 pts.)

(4) A1 has possession and is slashed by B1 while he is clearing the ball, flag down. A1 throws the ball down the field, and it lands in the attack area, creating a loose ball. While the ball is loose, B2 illegally pushes A2. A2 scoops up the ball, shoots, and scores. The officials run in and grab A2 and B2's crosses for an inspection. Both sticks measure 6.25 inches at the widest point in the head. Ruling? (13 pts.)

NCAA Rule Changes

There were a number of changes in the 2007 NCAA Rule Book that were not highlighted in gray as being new, including the following:

Rule 1

A.R. 17 (reworded)

1-21 (adds “official team” before color)

Rule 2

2-8 (changed “half” to “period”)

Rule 4

A.R. 8 (clarified)

A.R. 18 (almost all new)

4-5-i. (adds “or kicked”)

A.R. 37 (new)

A.R. 38 (new)

4-9-k (adds “before the ball enters the goal”)

A.R. 43 (change to “inside the plane”)

4-13 (rewritten after first paragraph)

4-14 (all new after first three sentences)

A.R. 64 (new)

A.R. 65 (new)

A.R. 66 (new)

4-18-c (mostly rewritten)

4-18-e (changed second half of first sentence)

A.R. 84 (new)

A.R. 85 (new)

A.R. 86 (new)

A.R. 101 (mostly rewritten)

4-24 (changed to “time-out on the endline”)

4-27 (changed first sentence in par. 4)

4-28-a (added “and only one request may be made by each head coach during each dead ball.”)

4-28-b (sentences 2 and 3 are new)

Rule 5

5-4-e (combines old e and f into one point)

5-7 Note (added “or the ground”)

Rule 6

6-6-b (Exception new)

6-6-c (paragraph 2 rewritten)

6-6-f-7 (adds “at the start of each period”)

6-6-0 (new text: “in the half or OT period”)

6-6-t (changed “feinting” to “feigning”)

6-7 (changed end of second paragraph to “in their respective team areas”)

6-11 (added “unless warned to keep it in”)

Rule 7

7-1-a-3 (adds “directly in front of the scorer’s table”)

7-2-b (moved “Exceptions” to where it makes sense)

7-2-d (cut out quite a bit and simplified by changing the last 3 lines)

A.R. 2 (new)

7-4 (added “or if the in-home is already serving a penalty”)

A.R. 29 (added sentence at end)

7-13 (minor changes to a and b)

There were a few deletions as well. For example, A.R. 113 from 2006 (with the goalie pulling the goal down to avoid a goal) was deleted; this removal implicitly allows the more-appropriate penalty of expulsion for flagrant misconduct, since this old A.R. tied our hands with a 3:00 non-releasable unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. They also deleted a number of A.Rs in the sections on advancing the ball (10- and 20-counts) and on the flag down, as well as some on the “goalie breaks equipment” situation; most of these deletions make sense because the rewritten rules spell things out clearly and made the deleted sections redundant.

Quick Tip

During his presentation at the US Lacrosse Convention, Terry Cullen offered this suggestion: When there’s a time-out late in a close game, rotate your fastest official to the trail position. That way, if there’s a turnover and a fast break, you give your crew the best chance possible of being in position to cover the other goal.

Quiz Answers

Basic Quiz

When scoring your quiz, give yourself 1 point for each W, F, P, or N you got correct (with the exception of question 9, which is worth 2 points if you got it right). Take off 1 point for each incorrect W, F, P, or N. Also, give yourself 1 point each for correctly naming the foul involved or for correctly stating “no foul.”

(1) F. This is a personal foul (slash) against the team in possession, so a flag is thrown and play continues.

(2) P. This is a loose-ball technical foul (push), although under some circumstances and immediate whistle might be appropriate.

(3) W, F. This is a loose-ball personal foul (illegal body check), which results in an immediate whistle.

(4) F. This is a personal foul against Team B (unnecessary roughness) when Team A has possession.

(5) W. This is a technical foul (illegal offensive screen) on A2 when Team A has possession.

(6) N. This is a legal play; B2 can step into the crease when B1 has possession there.

(7) F. This is a technical foul by B1 (interference) when Team A has possession.

(8) W. This is a technical (ward) by A1 when A1 has possession.

(9) W (or W, N). Sound the whistle for the goal, which is good. No foul on the play.

(10) W. This is a technical foul (the rules are not entirely clear, but most officials would call this “withholding the ball from play”) on A1; award the ball to Team B.

Basic Quiz Scoring:

≥ 20	You have potential!
15–19	High School Official
10–14	Youth Official
6–10	New Youth Official
< 5	Rule books are available through the US Lacrosse website.

Advanced Quiz

(1) These are not considered simultaneous fouls. To be simultaneous, they must either occur during the same live ball (even if sequence can be determined) or occur during a dead ball such that sequence cannot be determined. Here, the sequence can be determined.

If there are illegal sticks on both teams then these fouls are considered simultaneous (because it shouldn't matter whose stick is measured first), but here there is dead ball USC for adjusting and then the sticks are subsequently measured and one is found to be

illegal. Thus, you need to treat this as a sequence of dead-ball fouls. So:

A1 adjusts the crosse, resulting in an automatic dead-ball USC violation. (1 pt.)

The goal by A1 is disallowed for adjusting the crosse since he was the player to score the goal. (1)

A1 serves 1:00 non-releasable. (1)

Award possession to Team B because of the dead-ball foul on Team A, free clear. (1)

Sticks are measured and B1 has an illegal pocket, resulting in a 1:00 non-releasable deep pocket penalty on B1. The stick can return to the game if adjusted. (1)

Award possession to Team A because of the subsequent dead-ball foul on B1, free clear. (1)

(2) B1 serves 1:00 for the slash. (1)

A2 serves 1:00 for the slash. (1)

These are live-ball simultaneous fouls with equal penalty time; since Team A was entitled to possession by the flag down, Team A is awarded possession. (2)

Penalty time on B1 and A2 is non-releasable by rule 7-2-d. (2)

No free clear is awarded because of the live-ball simultaneous fouls (see the second exception to Rule

7-3). (2)

A3 and B3 each serve 3:00 non-releasable for the illegal sticks. These are dead-ball simultaneous fouls with equal penalty time; since Team A was previously entitled to possession, there is no change and Team A maintains possession by Rule 7-6-c-2-a. (2)

Recognizing that the rules do not specifically address resuming play after dead-ball simultaneous fouls, the common enforcement is that the dead ball simultaneous fouls do not change the previous restart location. The exception to Rule 7-3 indicates that for live ball simultaneous fouls where time is served by each team—which is what we have with the two live-ball slashes on B1 and A2—the ball is put in play at the spot where the ball was when the whistle blew or 20 yards laterally from the goal since the stoppage of play occurred when the ball was in the attack area. Since the ball was in the attack area when the whistle blew, the restart location was to be outside the attack area before the dead-ball simultaneous fouls occurred, so that's where the restart will take place. (1)

(3) The goal by A1 is good. (1)

A2 is assessed a 1:00 non-releasable unsportsmanlike conduct penalty for pulling the strings after the official requested his stick for a stick check. (1)

Team B is awarded possession and a free clear. (1)

B2 is assessed a 1:00 non-releasable unsportsmanlike conduct penalty

for jamming the crosse after the official requested his stick for a stick check. (1)

Team A is awarded possession and a free clear for the dead-ball foul by B2. (1)

These are not considered dead-ball simultaneous fouls since the sequence of dead-ball fouls can be followed. Note that while in practice it may not always be possible to determine the sequence when there are multiple fouls of this type, in this case there was a clear sequence observed. (1)

Now there are simultaneous dead-ball fouls for the illegal crosses by A2 and B2. It is possible to interpret Rule 5—A.R. 5 to say that A2 and B2 each serve an additional 4 minutes, but Rule 5—A.R. 3 gives the intended ruling: 3:00 non-releasable on each A2 and B2 for the illegal crosses (and ignore the deep pockets). (2)

Since we have simultaneous fouls with penalty time equal and Team A due possession, Team A will be awarded possession. (2)

Team A will restart just over the midline on their offensive side of the field, since that was the location of the ball after the dead-ball foul for jamming the crosse on B2. (1)

(4) There is a flag down, slow whistle for the slash by B1, and B1 serves 1:00. (1)

There is a second flag down, slow whistle for the push by B2 during the extended flag down since play does not stop for a loose ball in the

attack area during a flag down. (1)

B2's 30-second penalty is waved off by the goal (but only temporarily; see below). (1)

Simultaneous dead-ball fouls on A2 and B2 for the illegal crosses, and each serve 3:00 non-releasable for the illegal crosses. (1)

The goal by A2 is waved off by the illegal crosse. (1)

Because the goal was disallowed, the 30-second penalty on B2 is no longer waved off by the goal and must be served. (2)

The longest common penalty time on players of opposing teams from the initial flag until the restart is 3:00, so all penalties of 3:00 or less are non-releasable by rule 7-2-d. Since the total penalty times are 1:00 for B1, 3:00 for A2, and 3:30 for B2, the penalties on B1 and A2 are non-releasable and the penalty on B2 is non-releasable for the first 3:00. (3)

The flag down denoted possession, so Team A was due possession. There were then simultaneous dead-ball fouls for the illegal crosses with penalty time equal, so—by rule 7-6-c-2-a—Team A is awarded possession. (2)

Recognizing that the rules do not specifically address resuming play after dead-ball simultaneous fouls, the common enforcement is that the dead ball simultaneous fouls do not change the previous restart location. Here, the ball was inside the attack area when play was stopped, so the restart location would normally be outside the attack area if the offensive team

did not score a goal (which is ultimately what happened when the goal was waved off). Since the pending restart location was outside the attack area before the dead-ball simultaneous fouls occurred, that's where the restart will take place. (1)

Special thanks to Peter Boyd, Eric Evans, Eric Rudolph, Wayne Sanford, and Michael Williamson for providing the proofreading and critiquing necessary for any quiz this complicated.

Advanced Quiz Scoring:

- ≥ 40 Rules interpreter
- 34–39 Referee
- 27–33 Umpire
- 20–26 Field judge
- 10–19 COC rookie: must always be assigned to work with an experienced crew chief.
- < 10 We hope you only work games where the coaches really mean it when they certify that all of their players' equipment is legal.

The Shirt Guy

By Clint Bond

Here's a short story about the type of official I know will always work hard, and he's the kind of guy I want to work with.

Within the last 2 years, District VIII has increased the requirements to become a college official to match those of District I–IV. Qualified candidates can apply for the Collegiate Officials Committee on-field tryout. One particular candidate this year was also a football official and a DIII basketball official. He had to drive three hours, at his own expense, to reach the tryout site. Like any good official he left early. In fact, he left the night before, arriving in the tryout city at almost dark. As he was laying out his gear for the next day, he realized he had left his striped shirt at home. He got back in his car and drove three hours home to get the shirt and then another three hours back to the tryout city. This official drove a total of 9 hours.

Yes, he probably should have double-checked his gear before he left home the first time. And he probably will from now on. It really impressed me, though, that this young man knew he needed to look good when it really counted. He easily could have called another similar-sized official in the tryout city and borrowed a shirt. But if he did, he was afraid, the evaluators might learn about it and allow it to factor into their opinions of his on-field performance. He never told any of the evaluators, but nevertheless, the story got around.

I have watched this official grow for several years. He enjoys the field work, he's good at it, and he knows when to take it seriously. He has earned membership in the Collegiate Officials Committee. He is also the type of passionate, dedicated official we are looking for in all levels of our sport.

This young man is also the type of guy who will eventually work his



way into a lacrosse leadership position. I'm sure you know someone just like that in your ranks. There's always someone who reveals that glimmer of light ... someone who has a demeanor about them ... someone who, for some reason, attracts your attention. Those are the type of officials who we need to mentor. In a successful organization, each successive generation of leadership needs to carefully replace itself. New ideas, new perspectives and new approaches are essential to an organization's heartbeat. Change is inevitable. Look for those young people who exhibit the potential and encourage them to reach new heights by standing on your shoulders. The payback is when they in turn help someone else. I look forward to the new season and the hope that I can find yet another young official who might forget his shirt.

District Governor Reports

If you have a news item or announcement for your district, please submit directly to your district governor, who will send them to the newsletter as a single report from the district.

District 1

MA, ME, NH, RI, VT, CT
Dave Pinciario
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The Vermont Lacrosse Officials Association (VLOA) is conducting its annual New Referee Clinic on Sunday, March 25, at 11 a.m. at Hartford High School, Hartford, VT. Contact Jim Manahan (timaigh@yahoo.com) for more information.

District 2

Upstate NY
Jim O'Hara
johara4405@hotmail.com

District 3

CT, NJ, NY, PA
Robert Lynn
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District 4

DE, MD, NC, VA, *Washington, D.C.*
Charles Baber
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Local official associations have begun to meet to review rules and play situations in preparation for the upcoming session. The associations are responsible for training new officials and improving the knowledge of existing members as they progress to more competitive games. Here are highlights from some of the local groups:

The Hampton Roads Chapter
23 new and 59 total officials

Washington, D.C. metro area, which includes the District of Columbia, Central and Southern Maryland, and Northern Virginia regions. PLOA will assign officials to over 3,000 youth and high school games this spring, having recently been awarded contracts for the Virginia High School League's Northwest Region.

Southern LOA
21 new and 172 total officials



Photo by Justin Wetterer

The association works 1,500 youth and 1700 high school spring games in the Baltimore region. The SLOA also work college and post-collegiate club games.

District 5

AL, FL, GA, MS, NC, SC, TN
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District 6

IL, IN, KY, MI, OH, PA, WI, WV
Rob Quinn
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In Memory of Tom Bensman

District 6 lost COC member Tom Bensman this past winter after a short but intense battle with cancer. Tom was 49. To honor Tom and his devotion to the game of

The association will work 300 youth games and 200 high school games from Williamsburg to the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

Potomac LOA

51 new adult, 137 new student, and 495 total officials.

PLOA is the largest LOA in the

lacrosse, District 6 will reserve from any future assigning of the uniform number, "17," in honor of our friend and colleague. We will miss you, Tom!

District 6 adds nine new college officials to their COC memberships ranks for the 2007 season:

Illinois (GLLOA)

Archibald Beaton (Algonquin, IL); Craig Peterson (Hawthorn Woods, IL); Patrick Slein (Chicago) ; John Vetter (Carpentersville, IL)

Indiana (ILOA)

Steve Hood (Carmel, IN); Michael Sieferman (Crawfordsville, IN)

Michigan (MichLOA)

Michael Rossman (Canton, MI)

Southern Ohio (SOLOA)

Mark Daudistel (West Chester, OH); Rance Stilphen (Cincinnati)

District 7

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Bob Schulte
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District 8

AR, LA, OK, TX
Clint Bond
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On Saturday January 20, 2007 District 8 conducted its annual clinic for collegiate officials. The important fact about this meeting that while collegiate officials are required to attend, we had a number of SOC officials who also attended. This speaks well of their desire to improve their game

performance and perhaps, one day, to advance to the COC level. In the meantime, these officials are working hard on the job at the high school level.

The lacrosse season in District 8 gets underway early compared with many parts of the country. 2007 will represent the earliest our scholastic teams have ever started regular play, with the first games on February 7. Previously league play hasn't begun until the end of February. Early season tournaments are also planned.

Officials in District 8 are represented by only one association, the Southwest LOA. You can get more information on that group at www.swloa.org. The bulk of the scholastic games are in the Texas cities of Dallas, San Antonio and Austin. Shreveport, Louisiana is a growing hot-spot and New Orleans has several new high school teams. If you travel to Texas for business, a call to one of the local assignors might get you on a game or two.

District 9

CO, NM, UT, WY
Hank Friedman
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District 9 held two successful COC NCAA rules meeting, one in Salt Lake City, UT, and the other in Denver CO. Among other USILA teams visiting Colorado this spring are NCAA DI nationally- ranked UMBC and NCAA DIII Roanoke.

Hank Friedman, District 9 Governor, names a new Youth Officials Committee representative for Colorado, Jim Read. Jim replaces long time YOC rep Lloyd Cisneros,

is recovery from a serious injury. I wish Lloyd a full recovery and Jim much success in his new position.

District 10

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District 11

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Fred Zensen
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Erin Smith, the US Lacrosse Manager of Education and Training, is currently on maternity leave after giving birth to a 6 pound, 13 ounce, 20-inch-long girl named Avison Victoria Smith on January 28, 2007, at 5:30 p.m. Both mother and daughter are doing well.

Erin works with a number of US Lacrosse constituencies, but her work with the MDOC Training Committee is invaluable. Though her duties are being ably handled by a number of other fine US Lacrosse staff members in her absence, we all look forward to working with her again when she's ready to return.

NCAA Equipment Check



Mechanics for 2007

Written by Harold Buck and approved by COC Mechanics Committee Chair David Seidman

The mechanic for stick checks at the NCAA level has changed dramatically this year. This change was implemented at the request of the NCAA Rules Committee because the coaches want to get the illegal sticks out of the game; the previous procedure (involving checking the sticks at the end of the first and third periods) was not effective because the players knew when the checks were coming and could get the illegal sticks off the field before the inspections took place. This article details the mechanics as they were presented at the US Lacrosse convention; some of these mechanics may change as updates from the NCAA are released.

When to check

The new mechanic calls for six crosse inspections per team per game; these are to be done at unexpected times. It is important that the players and coaches be unable to predict when the inspections will occur, since that would allow them to remove the illegal sticks to avoid inspection, but it is also important to do them when they will cause the least interruption to the flow of the game.

Because of this, the following times are recommended:

- *After a goal is scored.* Normally, the lead or center (or the lead or trail in a two-man game) will grab the goal

It is important that the players and coaches be unable to predict when the inspections will occur, since that would allow them to remove the illegal sticks to avoid inspection.

scorer's stick and the other will grab a long pole, depending on circumstances (e.g., on the position of the goal scorer). It may be necessary to grab the goal scorer's stick before signaling the goal to make certain the crosse is not adjusted after the goal. The lead will get the ball from the goal and check for pocket depth and rollout while the center measures. The lead then transfers the ball to the center,

and they complete the check. In a three-man game, the trail monitors the rest of the field during the equipment check.

- *Prior to a face-off.* In this case, the lead and center officials should discreetly agree to do the check while transferring the ball after the goal is scored or between periods. In most cases, the face-off official will grab both face-off sticks and the center official will run to midfield to inspect one of the sticks, but it is possible to inspect wing players. The center must watch the players as he runs in to make sure they do not adjust their crosses after the face-off official requests them. The bench-side official should watch the rest of the field while the inspection takes place.
- *During a charged time-out, an injury time-out, a TV time-out, or any other significant break in the action.* In this case, two officials grab sticks as the players are leaving the field—being careful to coordinate to avoid getting two sticks from the same team—while the third monitors the field. Any players may be inspected,

although these times provide a good opportunity to inspect non-face-off midfielders, who are less likely to be inspected than other players in the first two scenarios.

In the first two situations, you are attempting to take advantage of the natural time delay after a goal and prior to a face-off to keep the stick check from adding to the length of the game. In most situations, a check conducted in the third situation will not add any time to the game. Officials are expected to practice this procedure and to be able to inspect a stick in less than 30 seconds.

You must conduct at least one inspection per team immediately after a goal is scored, being sure to get the goal scorer's stick, each game (unless one team scores 3 or fewer goals). Never inspect a team after a goal if that team has had more after-goal inspections than their opponent. Your goal is to have inspected each team after a goal the same number of times by the end of the game (although it is possible that you will, say, check the goal scorer from Team A, then Team B, then Team B, and then have Team A get shut out for the rest of the game). In most cases, that means inspecting each team's goal scorer once or twice during the game, with the remaining two to four checks done at other times.

These checks are not to be done prior to the opening face-off (since the game has not begun at that point, it is questionable whether you could penalize an illegal crosse if you found one), just after the end of the first or third periods, or in the last 5 minutes of the game. If

a coach wants a stick checked in the last 5 minutes of the game or in overtime, he has the usual option of requesting an inspection during a dead ball. It is recommended that four of the six checks be completed in the first half if possible.



Performing the inspection

As previously mentioned, officials are expected to be able to inspect a crosse within 30 seconds. This is easily accomplished with a bit of practice.

When you are going to request the stick from a player, the first thing to do is to tell the player not to touch his stick (e.g., "Number 21 red, don't touch your stick. Please hand it to me"). Any adjustment to the stick prior to you telling him not to touch it is not to be penalized. If the player adjusts it after you tell him not to touch it (by pulling the strings, pounding the pocket, or jamming the head of the crosse), he is penalized with a 1-minute non-releasable unsportsmanlike conduct foul, and if that player scored a goal and play has not restarted yet then the goal is wiped out. This penalty is in

addition to any foul for a deep pocket or an illegal crosse.

A good rule of thumb is that if it is taking you more than 5 seconds to complete any one aspect of the test because the stick is borderline, pass and move on to the next part of the inspection; if it's that hard to tell whether the stick is illegal, give it the benefit of the doubt and assume it is legal.

It can be difficult to measure the length of a long pole without assistance; to speed the check, determine points on your body that corresponds to heights of roughly 52 inches and 72 inches (or, if you are shorter than that, how far above your head the point is); ask your partner for assistance only if the pole length is questionable. You can also use the height of the goal, which should be 72 inches from ground to crossbar, to get an approximate measure of a long pole. It should be noted that lacrosse sticks over 72 inches are exceedingly rare, so don't worry too much about this measurement.

When checking the stick, test the pocket depth, ball rollout from the throat and both sides, the head width from the front, the head length, and the stick length. A directive from the NCAA indicates that the back of the head is *not* to be measured despite a note to the contrary in the 2007 rules. The tabletop test is never performed except during a coach-requested equipment check when the coach specifically asks for that test.

Illegal crosse found

If a crosse is illegal due to a deep

pocket or because the bottom portion of the mesh is not firmly attached to the crosse, it is a 1-minute non-releasable penalty. All other violations are 3-minute non-releasable penalties, including the ball rollout tests, unless (1) the pocket is also too deep and (2) you believe that the deep pocket is the reason the ball will not roll out; in that case, the officials *may* assess a 1-minute penalty and the crosse may return if adjusted.

A stick with a deep pocket may return if corrected. An otherwise illegal crosse is confiscated and left at the table area; make it clear to the table personnel and both head coaches that no one is to touch that stick until the game has concluded.

If a crosse doesn't have an end cap, has strings hanging longer than 6 inches, or is broken, that is **not** an illegal crosse. These instances do not result in a penalty for an illegal crosse, nor can they negate a goal (although a broken crosse could result in an illegal procedure foul if the officials determine that the player was using it in live-ball play). Note that NCAA rules no longer require a ball stop.

Because you will be often be inspecting goal scorers, it is important to remember that the goal is wiped out of the goal-scorer's crosse is found to be illegal before play restarts or if the goal-scorer adjusts the crosse after you ask for it. This is true even if the inspection happens just prior to the next face-off.

When reporting the penalty to the table area, explain exactly what was wrong with the crosse (e.g., "The head of the crosse was not at

least six and a half inches at the widest point.""). However, you should not demonstrate the measurement for the coaches, since that can lead to a debate about how you performed the measurement.

Awarding possession

The awarding of possession may be complicated, since you may enter a simultaneous foul situation (when we inspect crosses from opposing teams and they are both illegal, they are considered to be simultaneous dead-ball fouls because the result of the fouls shouldn't depend on the order we complete the measurements). The following rulings apply:

- If one or both players adjust their crosses after the officials request them, dead-ball unsportsmanlike conduct fouls are assessed in the order that



they occur; these fouls award possession and, if applicable, free clears. If you cannot determine the order the fouls occurred, treat them as dead-ball simultaneous fouls.

- If only one player's crosse is found to be illegal, it is a dead-ball foul and the opponent is

awarded possession (and a free clear, if applicable).

- If both crosses are found to be illegal and Team A has more total penalty time than Team B, then Team B is awarded possession. There is some debate about where the rules say play should be restarted, but the consensus is that it should be started outside the attack area (in other words, no free clear is awarded unless a goal has been scored and that goal has not been wiped out by an illegal crosse).
- If both crosses are found to be illegal and the total penalty times are equal, the ball is awarded by alternate possession (if no one is entitled to possession) or to the team entitled to possession (if a team is entitled to possession due to a live-ball flag down or a dead-ball adjusting-the-crosse foul or other dead-ball foul). However, under NCAA rules only, if a face-off is pending in this situation, the face-off will still be held.

Pre-game planning

The plan for executing the equipment inspections should be discussed during the pre-game. It will normally not be possible to plan all six inspections prior to the game, but a few plans include:

- Checking after the first goal of the game, then checking the other team after their second goal, plus checking during the first two time-outs in the game.



Photo by Justin Wetterer

Whenever possible, equipment checks should be done so they do not interfere with the flow of the game.

- Checking after the second goal of the game, then checking after the other team's next goal, plus checking before the face-off after the first goal is scored in the second period and when the second team time-out is taken.
- Checking after each team's second and sixth goal, plus during the second team time-out and before the face-off after the second goal in the third quarter.

You will need to keep track of the game situation and be flexible to make sure you complete all six checks before the five-minute mark of the fourth period.

It is important to vary the plan from game to game, since there may be coaches and players looking for patterns in when the checks occur so they can use illegal sticks when they are unlikely to be checked. It is also important to

avoid tipping the players and coaches off to the fact that an inspection is coming. A discrete signal, agreed upon in the pre-game, may be helpful here.

Other comments on stick checks

- If a player adjusts the crosse before you ask for it, there is no foul.
- Remember that—under NCAA rules—the routine inspections conducted by officials are only for the crosse, not for other equipment (under NFHS rules, all inspections are “full service”). It is possible to penalize a player for illegal equipment other than the crosse if you notice it, the officials are not to go out of their way trying to find it. However, if a coach requests an equipment inspection, all equipment is inspected, not just the crosse,

even if the coach only asks about a particular piece of equipment.

- We are expected to make these inspections visible without making a show out of it.
- One important change is that the referee is no longer the final arbiter on stick checks. If the umpire or field judge has a questionable stick, he must make a decision about whether it is legal or illegal. He simply can't call the referee in for a consult, because doing so will force one coach to conclude he's getting the raw end of the call.
- It is not necessary to keep track of the numbers of the players inspected. In fact, it is desirable that sometimes the same player be inspected twice in the same game since many players believe that they can't be checked again and will switch to an illegal stick once they've been checked.
- Never check a goalie stick unless the opposing coach requests it (or unless there is something so blatantly illegal that you are forced to do so). There are few ways in which a goalie stick can be illegal, and they don't concern the coaches nearly as much as the other sticks since an illegal goalie stick does not confer the same competitive advantage as other sticks.

Beginner's Corner

As a newer official, one of the hardest things to figure out is calling live-ball fouls. It's easier if you break it down to two questions: (1) Is the foul technical or personal? (2) Which team, if any, has possession?

Question (1) is most easily answered by memorizing the personal fouls, since there are fewer of them than technical fouls. They are: cross check, slash, illegal body check, tripping, unnecessary roughness, unsportsmanlike conduct, illegal equipment or crosse, and fighting/flagrant misconduct. Anything else is a

technical foul.

For question (2), you must determine whether the ball was loose at the time of the foul, in possession of the fouling team, or in possession of the team that was fouled.

Once you answer those two questions, there are only six possibilities, detailed in the table below.

There are actually a few situations this chart doesn't cover. There are special rules governing goalie interference and crease violations with defensive possession; these will be covered in a future Beginner's Corner. Also, while this chart is accurate for the first foul at all levels, it does not correctly cover all cases when a second foul is committed (particularly loose-ball fouls when there is already a flag down under the NCAA flag-down rule).

	Technical Foul	Personal Foul
Loose ball foul by B1	Play on. If Team A gains possession, the play-on ends and play continues. If Team A doesn't gain possession within a few seconds, blow the whistle and award possession to Team A.	Immediate whistle and flag. B1 serves a 1- to 3-minute penalty. Team A is awarded possession (and, if necessary, a free clear).
Team A has possession, foul by B1	Flag down, slow whistle. Allow play continue until one of the conditions for ending a slow whistle is met. If Team A scores, B1 serves no penalty time and there is a face-off; otherwise, B1 serves 30 seconds and Team A gets possession (and, if necessary, a free clear).	Flag down, slow whistle. Allow play continue until one of the conditions for ending a slow whistle is met. B1 serves a 1- to 3-minute penalty. If Team A scores a goal, there is a face-off; otherwise, Team A gets possession (and, if necessary, a free clear).
Team A has possession, foul by A1	Immediate whistle and award possession to Team B.	Immediate whistle and flag. A1 serves a 1- to 3-minute penalty. Team B is awarded possession (and, if necessary, a free clear).

The various rules about illegal crosses and other equipment are in various places in the NCAA and NFHS rule books, and it can be difficult to keep them straight. The following summary can be used to make sure you're on top of all of the equipment check rules, which is especially important with the new emphasis on equipment checks this year.

overall length. There is no rule regarding the length of shaft alone, only the crosse as a unit.

- The ball must roll freely from the throat and each sidewall when the head is rotated toward the ground. No specific angle is specified. A diagram shows the ball rolling out at about 15° from vertical, while an A.R. states that it is illegal
- The stick, when placed face-down on a table, may have no part more than 2.75 inches above the table (the "table test").
- The circumference of handle may not exceed 3.5 inches.
- Under NFHS rules only, a crosse may not have two ball stops.

Equipment Requirements

Stick requirements

Violation of the following rules results in a 3-minute non-releasable illegal crosse penalty (plus the crosse is confiscated and the goal disallowed)

- The head must be 6.5"–10" wide (field stick) or 10"–12" wide (goalie stick) at the widest point, inside measurement.
- The head must be at least 10 inches long from the outside edge of the top of the head to the furthest unexposed edge of the ball stop. A goalie crosse may be a maximum of 16.5" when measured the same way.
- The crosse must be 40"–42" (short stick), 52"–72" (long pole), or 40"–72" (goalie stick)

if the ball is still in the crosse when it reaches horizontal it is illegal, whether the ball subsequently rolls out or stays lodged (exception: if the pocket is deep *and* the officials feel that the deep pocket is the reason the ball will not roll out, a 1-minute non-releasable penalty may be assessed and the crosse may return if adjusted).

- The sidewall may not be more than 2" high.
- There may be no lip or hook in the mesh that might ensnare the ball.
- The shaft may not be bent or cambered (although STX Crankshaft stick is legal for NCAA play when used as sold per 2006 COC Rules Bulletin).

- Under NFHS rules, the crosse may not have a hole in its mesh designed to ensnare the ball on face-offs.

Violation results in 1-minute non-releasable illegal crosse penalty (plus goal disallowed; crosse may return if adjusted)

- The pocket of a non-goal-keeper crosse may not be deep enough for the top of the ball to be visible below the sidewall.
- The bottom part of the weaving must be firmly attached to the throat of the crosse.

Note: There is no rule that states when the adjustment can begin in this situation, so he can adjust it while serving his penalty

Stick must be corrected, but no penalty assessed unless stick is brought back without being corrected (which results in a USC penalty)

- A hole in the bottom hollow shaft not properly covered.
- Hanging strings or leathers more than 6 inches long.
- No ball stop (NFHS only; no ball stop is required under NCAA rules).

Violation results in a 1-minute non-releasable USC penalty

- Multiple colors in mesh (this rule is intended primarily to cover a player trying to deceive the opponent by making it look like there is a ball in the stick when there is not; a traditional pocket may have multiple colors, and shooting strings may be of any color).

Violation results in 1-minute non-releasable USC penalty (plus goal disallowed)

- Adjusting the crosse after an official requests to see it, either by pulling a string or otherwise altering the pocket or by jamming the crosse into the ground.

If a player scores a goal and then is found to have a violation labeled “goal disallowed” before the next live ball, that goal will be disallowed. Previous goals are allowed to stand. This only applies to the crosse used by the goal scorer and not to any other player. Other crosse or equipment violations do not disallow a goal.



Photo by Justin Wetterer

The rules say that helmets must be of the same dominant team color or colors, but they don't explicitly state that the visors have to match.

Note: There is no rule that states an official is to test if the ball gets stuck in the back of the head of the crosse. However, if this occurs in the game, it is an immediate whistle and the ball is awarded to the opponent. This is most commonly seen after face offs. This does not *by itself* mean the crosse is illegal in any manner, although a crosse that allows the ball to become lodged in this manner may well fail other aspects of the field test.

Player equipment

Helmet

- The helmet must bear the NOCSAE seal and a visible printed warning.
- The helmet must have a chin pad and chin strap.
- The dominant helmet color must match teammates'.

- The helmet must be a lacrosse helmet (NFHS) or a lacrosse or football helmet with a lacrosse facemask (NCAA).

- If chinstrap is not buckled, warn player to fix before getting involved in the play; violations can be a technical foul.

- All decals on helmets must be school issued (NFHS).

- If worn, an eye-shield must be clear unless it must be tinted for a documented medical reason (NCAA).

- If worn, an eye shield must be clear, molded and non rigid. It may not be tinted even with medical approval (NFHS).

Mouth guard

- The mouth guard must cover all upper teeth (cannot be trimmed to cover only front teeth).

- The mouth guard must be worn inside the mouth (leaving it hanging from the facemask or simply biting on one or both corners does not serve the intended function of preventing concussions).
- The mouth guard must be: yellow or another highly visible color unless the head coach certifies that it must be clear for a medical reason (NCAA); a readily visible color other than white or clear (NFHS).
- The mouth guard need **not** be attached to the facemask.
- If a player attempts to deceive the officials by making it appear that he has a mouth guard when he does not (e.g., a string from the facemask to the mouth with no mouth guard attached; athletic tape

made to look like a mouth guard), either a mouth guard penalty or an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty may be assessed (this is not specifically addressed in the rule book but is a straightforward application of the unsportsmanlike conduct penalty).

- A violation of the mouth guard rules is a technical foul under NCAA rules and a one-minute non-releasable personal foul under NFHS rules.

Gloves

- Gloves may not be cut or altered. Common enforcement is to tell players to tape up the gloves if they have holes in the palms that could reasonably have arisen from normal use but to penalize a player whose gloves have the palms and/or fingers cut out of the gloves.

- Under NCAA rules, players on the same team must wear the same dominant team color (exception: the goalkeeper may wear specialized goalkeeper gloves of any color).

Shoulder pads

- All players other than the goalkeeper must wear shoulder pads.
- Shoulder pads may not be cut or altered.
- Under NCAA rules, football shoulder pads may be worn if not used to initiate contact.

Arm pads

- Arm pads must be worn by all players other than the goalie.

Shoes

- Shoes must be worn.
- Cleats must be 1/2 inch or shorter.
- Under NFHS rules, metal spikes or cleats may not be worn, but metal-tipped cleats may be worn if they cannot develop a sharp edge. (Metal spikes or cleats can be disallowed under NCAA rules under rule 1-23-a without an associated penalty.)
- The NFHS has an extensive list of technical specifications which cannot reasonably be checked by the officials
- Under NFHS rules, illegal cleats are removed from the game with no penalty for the



Photo by Justin Wetterer

There are no rules requiring socks to match, and there are apparently no limits on how ugly they can be.

first offense.

- Under NCAA rules, illegal cleats are a one-minute non-releasable personal foul.

Jerseys

- The numbers on jerseys must be at least 6 inches in the front and 8 inches on the back for 2007.
- New jersey rules go into effect under NFHS rules in 2008.

Shorts

- Under NCAA rules, players must wear shorts of the same dominant team color. There are no such requirements for NFHS lacrosse.

Goalkeeper

- The goalkeeper must wear a chest protector and a throat guard.
- The goalkeeper is not required to wear pads or shoulder pads.
- Under NCAA rules, each team must have a legally-equipped goalie with a goalkeeper crosse on the field; failure to comply is a technical foul. Under NFHS rules, it is implied—but not explicitly stated—that there must be a legally-equipped goalie on the field.

Additional clothing

- If any players choose to wear sweat pants, visible under jerseys, or visible compression shorts, all players must wear the same solid color of the

corresponding item.

- Under NCAA rules, the color must be white, gray, or an official team color. Under NFHS rules, any solid color may be used.

Prohibited equipment

- No player may wear or carry equipment the official thinks is dangerous to the player or to others.
- Under NFHS rules, no jewelry may be worn (1-minute non-releasable penalty for violation). This includes, but is not limited to, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, and body piercings of any kind. Medic-alert medals and religious medals may be worn if taped to body and are not considered jewelry; the “alert” part of a medic-alert tag may be left uncovered, but religious medals should be completely taped over.

Equipment inspections

- Under NCAA rules, routine inspections are only of the crosse. Coach-requested checks are of all required equipment.
- Under NFHS rules, at least one inspection of all of a players equipment from each team must be conducted each half. Coach-requested checks are of all required equipment.

Penalties

Officials should try to ensure

compliance with the uniform and equipment rules prior to the start of the game.

If violations are discovered during the game:

- For “uniform violations,” involving items that are not the proper color, are not solid, or do not meet other specifications, a technical foul for illegal procedure is assessed.
- For non-crosse “equipment violations,” a 1-minute non-releasable personal foul is almost always the proper penalty (exception: a mouth guard violation under NCAA rules is a technical foul).

Multiple fouls

The rules do not clearly define how to handle multiple equipment violations in all situations. Common enforcement—which is backed up by rules interpreters at some levels of play—is as follows:

- If a player has more than one crosse violation, penalize only the most severe violation.
- If a player has more than one non-crosse violation, penalize only the most severe violation.
- If a player has both crosse and non-crosse violations, penalize the most severe crosse violation and the most severe non-crosse violation.