

# **USLacrosse Officials Mentoring Program**

## **1. GENERAL**

The sport of lacrosse is growing dramatically across the land. New programs and teams are popping up in every state which is taxing the ability of the game to support itself with coaches and officials. As a result, we are recruiting and training hundreds of individuals who are interested in becoming lacrosse officials and umpires. With proper training these people become valuable contributors to their local lacrosse programs.

A key aspect of growth, however, is to retain the officials that are recruited and trained. Too often, time, energy and money is spent to find a candidate, train and equip that person, put them on the field for a season or two, and then have them drop out of participating. This occurs for many reasons, including injuries, perceived abuse from coaches, players and spectators, lack of assignments, pay, job pressures, and many more.

Experience within some of our officiating organizations and in other sports and with successful experienced officials, suggest that one key reason that officials drop out is that there was not a Mentoring program in place to encourage them to stay. Just a little bit of encouragement and career guidance has proven to be invaluable in keeping new officials involved in the game. New officials need to feel welcome; to feel that someone else is concerned about their lacrosse career and to have someone to bounce thoughts off as they go through the learning process.

USLacrosse is dedicated to establishing an Officials Mentoring Program aimed at boosting retention of officials and improving the overall quality of on-field performances.

## **2. GOALS**

The goals of the Mentoring Program include the following:

- o Each official's organization is encouraged to establish a Mentoring program for its officials and umpires.
- o Every new official should be linked with a Mentor to help promote understanding of officiating requirements and of the lacrosse officiating profession.
- o Help ease the sometimes difficult experiences that new officials face by offering a Mentor who can guide, advise and motivate them.
- o Establish useful roles for retired or retiring officials so that they can stay involved in the game.
- o Instill an atmosphere that fosters the Mentoring concept throughout officiating organizations.

## **3. ORGANIZATION PROCESS**

In order to foster and promote a Mentoring ideal each officiating organization should, as a minimum, do the following:

- o Create a position of Mentor/Mentee Coordinator who will: .
  - o Solicit Mentors from among its ranks to serve in this capacity.
  - o Assign a Mentor to all new or incoming officials.
  - o Work with respective area Assignors to inform them of the program and its goal of developing officials.
  - o Conduct periodic (at least annually) assessments of the program.

#### 4. MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Each person selected as a Mentor needs to be willing to spend time in making the program work and in working with the newer officials. While each person will mentor based on their own styles, the items below include some basic responsibilities that should be performed.

- o Contact Mentee as soon as they have joined and establish a relationship.
- o Offer advice when needed on situations that came up during games.
- o Be receptive to post-game calls and be [call once a week during season](#).
- o Observe on-field performances when possible.
- o Offer constructive suggestions after observations.
- o Discuss Mentee performance with other senior officials in the organization to promote capabilities if positive in nature.
- o Talk to area Assignors so that Mentee gets performance/capability appropriate game assignments.
- o Discuss officiating career possibilities with Mentee.
- Encourage participation and help in locating national training events (summer tournaments, [Vail, Hawaii](#) etc).
- Show Mentor resources available to them for career growth (clinics, seminars etc)

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