



2018 CLARIFICATION OF WARDING OFF RULE IN BOYS' LACROSSE

March 9, 2018

The NFHS has **issued a clarification memo** for the Warding Off rule. US Lacrosse supports this rule clarification and will adopt the clarification for the 2018 US Lacrosse Boys' Youth Rules.

Below are some questions and answers that provide further guidance on the clarification. Questions number 1 and 3 have the same answer at both the high school and youth level. Question number 2 has separate answers because some types of body contact which might be appropriate at the high school level may not be appropriate for youth lacrosse.

NFHS and US Lacrosse Rule 6-11

WARDING OFF: A player in possession of the ball shall not use their free hand or arm or any other part of his body to hold, push or control the direction of the movement of the crosse or body of the player applying the check. A player in possession of the ball may protect his crosse with his hand, arm or other part of his body when his opponent makes a play to check his crosse.

Question 1: Can an offensive player that has possession of the ball and two hands on the lacrosse stick be penalized for warding off?

Answer (NFHS and US Lacrosse Youth): No, but it could be a personal foul as discussed in questions 2 and 3.

Question 2: Can there be a foul on an offensive player that uses a "Bull Dodge" where the offensive player lowers his shoulder and runs through/over a defensive player?



Answer (NFHS): A "Bull Dodge" could be considered unnecessary roughness if an official judges that the contact was excessive or unnecessary.

Answer (US Lacrosse Youth): Body checking is only legal at 14U; however, as it states in the US Lacrosse 14U rules, "*Any excessive body check in which the player lowers his head or shoulder with the force and intent to put the other player on the ground should be penalized.*" If an offensive player uses a "Bull Dodge" that fits this description, it should result in at least a one minute personal foul.

Note: This video clip at 1:40 (<https://youtu.be/JZHiNKkPwP8?t=101>) is an example of bull dodge that is a penalty in youth lacrosse.

Question 3: How should a "Spear", where a player (offensive or defensive) lowers his helmet and initiates contact to an opponent, be penalized?

Answer: (NFHS and US Lacrosse Youth): The penalty for a "Spear" is a minimum penalty of two minutes, non-releasable. There is potential for an ejection as with any check involving the head/neck if deemed excessive or severe.

To help demonstrate the topics discussed in the NFHS and US Lacrosse memos, the US Lacrosse Officials Development Program has put together the following video: <https://youtu.be/QMJYmY0VGHg>

Further questions regarding the information contained above may be directed to boysrules@uslacrosse.org.