



# NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

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## NFHS Mandates Eye Protectors in Girls Lacrosse for 2004 Season

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Jerry Diehl**

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (July 10, 2003) — In an effort to minimize risk of injury in high school girls lacrosse, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Board of Directors voted at its meeting last month in Chicago to mandate the use of eye-protection devices in high school girls lacrosse, effective with the 2004 season.

US Lacrosse, which writes playing rules for girls lacrosse at all levels, including high school, recently amended its rules and highly recommended the use of protective eyewear for 2004 and mandated use of these devices beginning with the 2005 season.

The NCAA will begin requiring use of protective eyewear at its spring 2004 championships, with full-season implementation in 2005.

The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee and the NFHS Girls Lacrosse Committee had taken positions that eye-protection devices be implemented as soon as possible. In October 2000, the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee suggested that eye-protection devices be mandated “as soon as practicable based on scientific data as appropriate equipment becomes available.”

“I believe the NFHS has made a sound decision in mandating the use of protective eyewear for girls lacrosse in the upcoming school year,” said Carol Parsons, chair of the NFHS Girls Lacrosse Committee and assistant director of the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association. “As with injury considerations in other sports, once a concern is established, the remedy should be instituted as soon as practicable.”

Protective eyewear used in high school girls lacrosse must meet the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) test. Jerry Diehl, assistant director of the NFHS and liaison to the Girls Lacrosse Committee and the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee, said that the approximately five manufacturers of ASTM-approved eye-protection devices will have sufficient numbers by the time the spring 2004 high school season begins.

The following manufacturers have eye-protective devices for girls lacrosse that have been tested and meet current ASTM eyewear standards: Cascade, Halo/Bangerz, Leader Sport USA, Liberty Optical/RecSpecs USA and Shamrock Lacrosse.

The NFHS Board of Directors voted to require eye protectors one year earlier than mandated by US Lacrosse based largely on current trends of states that offer girls lacrosse. New York and Massachusetts already require eye protection, and New Jersey was expected to mandate use of eye protectors in 2004. Combined, those three states comprise about 60 percent of the schools and 65 percent of the participants involved in high school girls lacrosse.

“With more than half of our schools and participants already requiring use of eye protectors for the 2004 season, and with sufficient quantities of ASTM-approved protectors expected to be on the market before next season, the Board of Directors, from a risk-management standpoint, believed it was best to mandate use of eye protectors immediately rather than wait until the 2005 season,” Diehl said.

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