



Following is the press release on boys high school lacrosse rules change for 2003, as well as the actual listing of rules changes.

### NFHS Boys Lacrosse Rules Committee Makes Few Changes at Annual Meeting FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Contact: Jerry Diehl

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (August 26, 2002) - The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Boys Lacrosse Rules Committee made four rules changes at its annual meeting July 28-29 in Baltimore, Maryland. The committee also recommended four rules changes to the Women's United States Lacrosse Rules Committee, which writes the rules for all levels of girls and women's lacrosse. The most important rules change made in boys lacrosse was an addition to Rule 4-28-7, which deals with the situation of an injured player. It stipulates that if a player is determined to be apparently unconscious by the game officials, the player may not return to play in the game without written authorization from a physician. It also states that this time-out, if not charged, is counted as an official's time-out.

"With the tremendous explosion in lacrosse participation across the country, this rule is designed to give guidance to coaches and officials on these potential injuries," said Ned Sparks, Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association executive director and NFHS Boys Lacrosse Rules Committee chairperson. "There are places where lacrosse is very foreign to people, and people are not aware of how intense collisions in lacrosse can be. I think this rule provides guidance for them."

Rule 7-12 is a new rule passed by the committee this year. The rule states that if an individual is expelled, he must leave the premises for the remainder of the event. If the individual is a non-adult, an authorized schoolperson must accompany this student; otherwise, the student shall be confined to the bench. This rule was added because the committee felt that expulsion is a serious penalty, and the violator should not be permitted to have any possible effect on the contest in progress. If it is a student who is expelled, a school-authorized person needs to accompany the student, for liability purposes.

"The issues concerning what happens when players get ejected, such as where should they go and who should supervise them, are addressed in this rule," Sparks said. "This rule provides some direction for people about what should happen when a player is ejected. You cannot just say, 'get out of here,' because what does that mean? This rule provides some clear direction, so that the students are always supervised, but still offers discipline for those who get ejected."

Rule 1-6 was changed to include a statement explaining that the NFHS does not perform scientific tests on any specific items of equipment to determine if the equipment poses undue risks to student-athletes, coaches, officials or spectators. Such determinations are the responsibility of equipment manufacturers. "The reason this statement was added is to emphasize that the NFHS is a rules-writing organization, not a testing agency," said Jerry Diehl, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the NFHS Boys Lacrosse Rules Committee. "It is up to the manufacturers to make equipment that minimizes risk and follows the traditions of the game."

Rule 1-10-2, which also deals with risk minimization, specifies that jewelry may not be worn during competition. However, medical-alert medals are not considered jewelry. A medical-alert medal must be taped, but may be visible. This rule also explains that religious medals are not considered jewelry, but they must be taped and worn under the uniform.

The NFHS Lightning Policy, which is consistent with the policy for all outdoor sporting events, was also added. In addition, following are reminders of two upcoming changes:

Rule 1-9-1a: Helmet decals and external markings on helmets shall be school-issued and, beginning in 2005, all teammates shall wear helmets of the same color.

Rule 1-9-2c: Beginning in 2004, sweatpants are required to be the same, solid color.

The NFHS does not write rules for girls lacrosse; however, the committee does make recommendations to the Women's United States Lacrosse Rules Committee, which writes the rules for all levels of girls and women's lacrosse. The NFHS Girls Lacrosse Rules Committee made four recommendations this year. In Rule 3-A, the following addition was recommended: "Where space allows, the field size shall be the desirable measurements."

"The rationale for this is that some schools that have big playing areas, like three football fields, were forcing teams to play in a much larger area than they were used to," said Carol Parsons, assistant director of the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) and chair of the NFHS Girls Lacrosse Committee. "This rule forces schools to play on the designated measurements, even if they have a larger field available."

A recommended change to Rule 3-J would add "coaches and" to the beginning of the first sentence, which would prohibit coaches from walking the entire sideline. The rule change would require that coaches remain on the sideline within their respective team area, 30 yards to their side of the center line and behind the level of the scorer's table. The rule change also would delete Rule 3-K, which allows the coaches to move along the entire boundary line on the bench side of the field.

"In every other sport, there are definitive areas where the coaches must stay, so that they do not meet each other - that is not the case in lacrosse," Parsons said. "This has not been a problem, but the committee thought perhaps it could become a problem with sportsmanship between the coaches."

The recommendation to add religious medals to Rule 7-F is comparable to Rule 1-10-2 in the NFHS Boys Lacrosse Rules Book, which states that jewelry is not permitted. However, medical alerts and religious medals are not considered jewelry and are therefore permitted. Medical alerts must be taped and can be visible; religious medals must be taped to the body and under the uniform.

The recommended change of Rule 18-E-6 deals with suspended players. The committee suggests deleting the word "player" from the first sentence.

"This is important because we do not want players to leave the area alone after they are suspended from a game," Parsons said. "We just want them to sit on the bench and be quiet. We want them to still be under the jurisdiction of the coach."

The sport of lacrosse has increased in popularity over the past three years. The boys sport has seen a participation increase of about 24 percent since the NFHS started writing the rules for the sport in 2000. Boys lacrosse at the high school level had 46,206 participants in the 2001-02 season, up from 41,822 participants during the 2000-01 season, and 35,266 the year before, according to the High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS. It also saw an increase in school sponsorship with 796 schools offering the sport in 1999-2000, 938 in 2000-01 and 992 in 2001-02. Girls lacrosse has also seen an increase in participants, with 26,677 in 1999-2000 to 32,403 in 2000-01 to 35,186 in 2001-02. Last year, 819 schools offered the sport, compared to 783 schools in 2000-01 and 674 in 1999-2000.  
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## 2003 LACROSSE RULES CHANGES

1-10-2 Jewelry shall not be worn. Religious and medical alert medals are not considered jewelry. A religious medal must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical alert medal must be taped and may be visible.

4-28-7 An apparently unconscious player is determined by the game officials. The player may not return to play in the game without written authorization from a physician (M.D./D.O.). This time-out, if not charged, is an official's time-out.

7-12 NEW The individual being expelled must leave the premises for the remainder of the event. If the individual is a non-adult, an authorized school person must accompany this student, otherwise the student shall be confined to the bench.

Added NFHS Lightning Policy  
NFHS Equipment Testing Policy

#### Reminders of Future Changes

Helmet decals and external markings on helmets shall be school-issued and beginning in 2005, all teammates shall wear helmets of the same color. Beginning in 2004, sweatpants are required to be the same, solid color.

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