

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



NEWS RELEASE

**Officiating, Risk Minimization Remain Key in High School Boys
Lacrosse Rules Changes**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: James Weaver

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (August 23, 2017) — The 2018 high school boys lacrosse rules changes include clarifications to stick alignment and the use of visibly contrasting gloves and shafts, which are expected to ease the game’s officiating.

Overall, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Boys Lacrosse Rules Committee adopted and refined numerous officiating-related rules during its July 17-19 meeting in Indianapolis. Collectively, the committee adopted or clarified 15 boys lacrosse rules and officials signals. All rules changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

“The committee believes the sport of boys lacrosse is currently in very good shape,” said James Weaver, director of performing arts and sports and staff liaison for boys lacrosse. “The committee is excited to continue looking into the health and safety of the sport, while minimizing risk during its growth.”

Rules 4-3-3d and 4-3-3n were among the most notable changes to officiating calls. Stick alignment clarification as part of Rule 4-3-3d now states that during faceoffs the reverse surfaces of crosses must match evenly so that the top of one head lines up with the throat of the other and they are perpendicular to the ground. A note was added to Rule 4-3-3n to add flexibility in achieving color contrast between the shaft, glove and head. However, the rule now specifically states the circumference of the shaft shall not exceed 3.5 inches, and a contrasting color between the head and the top glove must be visible on the shaft during faceoffs.

“The committee wanted to have a thickness guarantee as opposed to a color guarantee,” Weaver said. “As long as the shaft contrasts the head of the stick and gloves, the player is fine. The rule is in place because it makes it easier for officials to see if a player is attempting to grip the head of the stick above the throat.”

For the second year in a row, the committee made a point to clarify proper mouthpiece usage. Rule 6-5-2x addresses this with a clarification that a penalty will occur if a mouthpiece is not properly worn inside a player’s mouth. Weaver noted that it must not “fish-hook” outside of the mouth.

Additional changes include better defining home and away jerseys with Rule 1-9-1g(8), as well as the approval of Rule 1-7-5 to allow crosse pockets of manufactured nontraditional synthetic material.

The adoption of Rules 1-2 and 4-9-2o were among the most significant committee changes not closely aligned with officiating, according to Weaver.

From a playing rules standpoint, Rule 4-9-2o states that a goal will be allowed if a shot is released prior to the end of a period. Previously, a goal was awarded only if the ball crossed the plane of the goal prior to the end of a period.

The adoption of Rule 1-2 offers schools a third potential field layout. To provide economic relief, the committee introduced a unified boys and girls field that allows schools to line one set of shared boys and girls lacrosse field markings.

“If schools choose to use the unified field option, fields will all be 120 yards like the girls field is currently,” Weaver said. “It would also use the girls arch, but the notable changes include additional space behind the goal for boys. In the past, this was a 10-yard space behind the goal but is now a 15-yard space. On the girls side, the goal is becoming two inches smaller while the boys goal remains the same.”

A complete listing of the boys lacrosse rules changes will be available on the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org. Click on “Activities & Sports” at the top of the home page, and select “Lacrosse-Boys.”

According to the 2016-17 NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey, there are 111,842 boys participating in lacrosse at 2,900 high schools across the country.

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About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing

rules for 16 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.9 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org.

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