

2017 Minnesota Off-Season Boys Lacrosse Guidelines

There are conflicting views about off-season leagues. Some people want the games to be like “pick-up lacrosse,” while others want games to be called “officially” to prepare players and teams for success regular-season success. The following guidelines apply to all off-season games:

Safety

- Safety rules will **never** be relaxed.
- All protective equipment required by rule must be worn by all players.
- In particular, mouth guards are required; players should not come out to the lineup or otherwise enter the game without them.
- Players without required equipment should expect a penalty, not a warning.

Uniforms

- The strict rules regarding uniforms in the NFHS rule book will *not* be enforced (e.g., matching shorts and helmets).
- All players on a team—including the goalkeeper—must have jerseys or pinnies of the same general color (not necessarily the same shade)
- Jerseys should have visible numbers on the front and back. If they don't, the player selected by the officials will serve the penalty even though it might be the wrong player.

Field safety issues

- Football sidelines should be used in domes (and any other facilities that are low on sideline space) to allow adequate space for players and spectators.
- Spectators should be opposite the bench/table side of the field, as far from the sideline as space allows.
- It is recommended that the site manager keep spectators between the 20 yard lines.
- Players on the bench should be as far back from the sideline as space allows (6 yards back if possible).
- Coaches should stay off the field and in their respective coaches boxes except during halftime, to warm up a goalie, or to tend to an injured player.
- Players waiting for the next game should not position themselves on the end line.
- Instruct players not to cross behind the end line while the ball is in play.

Equipment

- Equipment inspections are partially for safety (to make sure players are wearing protective gear) and partially to make sure illegal sticks are not being used. One goal is to try to weed out illegal equipment before the regular-season games, when an illegal stick penalty becomes much more significant.
- Contrasting tape is required for face-off players. The tape must be a single wrap, 6” down from the head but not covering any part of the head. Coaches should consider keeping a roll of tape likely to contrast head, shaft, and all colors on all players’ gloves (e.g., hot pink or another fluorescent color).

Officiating

- Officials are instructed to call penalties for off-season leagues/tournaments exactly as they would in the regular season (e.g., if it would be a 2-minute slash in a regular-season game, it should be the same in other games).
- Officials are instructed that “coaching” of players is more appropriate in off-season leagues, as these leagues are often developmental.

Other issues

- Because games are generally on a tight schedule, the game clock should start at the scheduled start time for the game even if teams are not ready to play.
- Quarters may be shortened if needed to keep the game on schedule (e.g., because of an injury timeout).
- Leagues must make clear whether ties stand or whether there is overtime. Overtime rules should be available at the scorer's table.
- It is expected that someone be at the table to record and time penalties and to run the game clock. A written record *must* be kept of penalties so the timekeeper can inform the officials if someone fouls out of the game.