



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

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Twelve rules changes approved for boys high school lacrosse **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** **Contact: Kent Summers**

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (August 3, 2005) — At its annual meeting July 17-18 in Baltimore, Maryland, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Boys Lacrosse Rules Committee approved 12 rules changes, including one that allows 20 seconds to clear the ball across the midfield line on a change of possession.

Rule 4-14, which previously allowed 10 seconds to clear the ball from the defensive area, now allows 20 seconds for a team to advance the ball beyond the midfield line after gaining possession inside the defensive half of the field. The rule change will make it easier for officials to administer contests on a consistent basis. Failure to advance the ball in 20 seconds will result in a turnover, with the ball awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the violation, or 20 yards laterally from the goal.

“The committee hopes the new rule will improve the flow of the game and eliminate defensive stalling,” said Kent Summers, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the NFHS Boys Lacrosse Rules Committee. “This change will allow the defense to use the entire field to clear the ball, and keep the game moving.”

Rule 4-1-1 now gives the option to the team that wins the coin toss to choose either control of the first alternate possession, or the goal it will defend first. Previously, the controlling team was automatically given the first alternate possession with no option of which goal it would defend first.

Among other changes, Rule 5-11-1 stipulates that the official has the authority to eject a player for flagrant misconduct, without having to wait for a second misconduct penalty. The ejected player should be removed from the bench and field premises if there is an authorized school representative present to supervise the ejected player. If no authorized school representative is present, the student must be confined to the bench.

Also, any time the score differential reaches 12 goals or more after the first half, a running clock situation will be implemented. Should the scoring deficit be reduced to fewer than 12 goals, then normal play would resume. Rule 3-1-2 originally had the margin set at 10 goals.

“This rule was adopted for developing teams,” said NFHS Boys Lacrosse Rules Committee Chairman Ron Belinko, athletic director of Baltimore (Maryland) County Schools. “It allows developing teams, which must travel long distances to find other teams to compete against, the opportunity for longer playing time.”

Another change adopted by the committee requires play to be stopped if any required goalie’s equipment becomes broken during play. Although this change was put in place at midseason last year, it will be placed in the rules book as Rule 4-27-1 with official adoption by the committee. Previously, play continued with an open goal while the goalie replaced his equipment off the field.

“This change minimizes risk for the goalie and other defensive players who might step in the crease to block a shot during the absence of the goalie,” Summers said.

Following is a listing of the seven other rules changes approved by the committee:

Rule 1-9-1c: Revised the color of tooth and mouth protectors and stipulates that they must be of a readily visible color (not white or clear).

Rule 2-1: Revises the procedure for listing players in the official scorebook and states that the lineup listed must be complete and accurate at the start of the game.

Rule 4-27-3: Stipulates that an injured player must leave the game until the next allowable point of substitution.

Rule 4-5-7: Revises the rule that stipulates possession when the ball is in flight at the end of a period.

Rule 4-7: States in the rules that if the ball becomes stuck in a player’s crosse, the ball must be awarded to the opposing team.

Rule 4-9-7: A goal will not be counted if the head comes off the stick on a successful shot.

Rule 7-5-2: Players serving multiple simultaneous penalties must serve the full time of all non-releasable penalties first. After the non-releasable time has been served, if a goal is scored during the releasable penalty time, the player could return to the game, but not if a goal is scored during the non-releasable penalty time.

Boys lacrosse had 53,436 participants at the high school level during the 2003-04 season, according to the High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS, and was sponsored by 1,156 schools.

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