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VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

MEMORANDUM

September 29, 2010

TO: Men's Lacrosse Head Coaches and Officials.

FROM: Don Zimmerman, secretary-rules editor  
NCAA Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee.

SUBJECT: 2011 and 2012 Approved Rules Changes.

Enclosed with this memorandum are the final changes that were recently approved through the NCAA's playing rules procedures. These changes will be in effect for the 2011 and 2012 seasons and will appear in the next printing of the rules book, which is expected to be available in December.

Additionally, the rules committee and officiating program are producing a comprehensive video to distribute to coaches and use in training at officiating clinics this fall and winter. These rules changes will be highlighted as well as several other key focus points.

Thank you in advance for your attention to these items. Best of luck as you prepare for the season.

DZ:nb

Enclosure

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## **2010 NCAA Men's Lacrosse Annual Meeting**

### **Summary of Changes – Approved, September 2010**

#### **Targeting Head/Neck**

- New rule and significant emphasis.

#### **Faceoff changes**

- Limit the clamp
- Adding “set” to procedure
- Officials shall vary cadence of whistle
- Pinning with the elbow/body illegal

#### **Simplifying Counts**

- 30 seconds on all defensive possessions to reach attack area
- Removal of 10-second attack area count
- “Get it in/Keep it in” only other count

#### **Advancing ball**

- 30 seconds to clear ball to the attack area
- Offensive half of the field maintained
- If ball returns to the defensive half, offensive team has 10 seconds to “get it in/keep it in” (two exceptions)

#### **Stalling Concerns**

- “Get it in/Keep it in” added

#### **Future Considerations**

- No movement to the right on faceoff
- Moving sticks farther apart on faceoff
- No motorcycle grip on faceoff
- Over and back line at midfield

## **Major Rules Changes**

### **Rule 4-3, Facing Off**

Play shall be started at the beginning of each period and after each goal by facing the ball at the center of the field.

**(Exceptions:** (1) In the event of an extra-man or flag-down that creates an extra man at the conclusion of any period, the next period shall be commenced by awarding the possession of the ball to the team that had possession of the ball at the conclusion of the prior period in the same relative position on the field. However, if the period ends with neither team in possession, except in the previously mentioned flag-down situation, the ball shall be faced off with all the normal restrictions. (2) If a player or team commits a foul before or during any faceoff, the ball shall be awarded to the offended team. (3) If a player at any faceoff delays resumption of play by any action or maneuver, such as backing out or standing up after the crosses are placed on the ground, the ball shall be awarded to the offended team (see Rule 6-6-n). (4) If a player moves his crosse or any part of his body after assuming the **“down” “set”** position, the ball shall be awarded to the offended team with all previous restrictions behind the defensive-area lines remaining in force.)

Before a faceoff, if a player commits a technical violation, that team’s faceoff man must leave the field through the special-substitution area as the official begins play with a quick restart at midfield.

*Note 1: This applies to all periods, including sudden-victory periods.*

*Note 2: The faceoff is considered to have ended when the ball crosses the defensive-area line. If the ball crosses that line and goes out of bounds, and officials cannot determine who was the last player to touch the ball, the ball shall be awarded by alternate possession.*

*Note 3: The ball shall be re-faced if the ball goes out of bounds in the midfield area and the officials cannot determine who was the last player to touch the ball, a player loses required equipment in the midfield area, an inadvertent whistle is blown while the ball is in the midfield area, an injury occurs in the midfield area, simultaneous fouls occur while the ball is loose, or the official calls timeout before possession is awarded.*

*Note 4: If there are simultaneous technical fouls before a faceoff, or if there are simultaneous personal fouls with equal penalty time, the ball shall be re-faced. (Exception: Rule 4, A.R. 22)*

*Note 5: In the event of a flag-down that creates an all-even situation at the conclusion of any period, the next period will begin with a faceoff.*

The official shall place the ball on the ground in the center of the 4-inchwide line. The players shall stand on the same side of the field as the goal each is defending. The official shall indicate to both players to **simultaneously** assume their respective positions ~~at the same time~~ by saying “down.” The crosses and gloves shall rest on the ground along the center line, parallel to each other up to, but not touching, the center line.

The official shall make certain that the reverse surfaces of the crosses match evenly and are perpendicular to the ground. Each player must have both hands wrapped around the handle of his own crosse, touching the ground. The right hand may not touch any part of the head of the crosse. The player's feet may not touch his crosse. Both hands and feet of each player must be to the left of the throat of his crosse. Each player must be positioned so his entire body is to the left of the throat of his crosse. It is legal to lean over the center line.

Once the players facing off have assumed their positions, the official shall say “set.” At this point, both players must remain motionless until the official sounds the whistle for play. The official shall vary the cadence of sounding the whistle for each faceoff. ~~sound the whistle promptly.~~

At the sound of the whistle, each player may attempt to direct the course of the ball by the movement of his crosse in any manner. A player may not lie on the ball or trap it with his crosse longer than necessary for him to control the ball and pick it up with one continuous motion, or withhold the ball from play in any other manner.

It is illegal for a faceoff player to kick, ~~or~~ step on or intentionally place any other body part on his crosse or the crosse of the opponent. It is illegal for a faceoff player to use his crosse to hold or pin down the crosse of the opponent.

It is illegal for a player to deliberately use his hand or fingers to play the ball. This shall be enforced immediately as an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty. Inadvertent touching of the ball when the hand is grasping the stick should not be called as an unsportsmanlike conduct foul.

It is illegal for a player to grab an opponent’s crosse with the open hand or fingers. This shall be enforced immediately as an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

When a faceoff violation occurs before the whistle, the offending team’s faceoff player must leave the field and be substituted for through the special-substitution area.

### **Play Examples**

**AR:** During a faceoff, A1 covers the ball to draw it back. B1 clamps on top of A1’s stick and does not allow A1 to play the ball. **RULING:** Withholding by B1. A1’s ball on a quick restart, B1 does not have to leave the field.

**AR:** During a faceoff, A1 clamps on the ball and looks for a teammate to direct the ball. He quickly directs the ball to A2. **RULING:** Legal play. The intent of this rule is to have the faceoff be a play that is in continuous motion.

**AR:** During a faceoff, A1 clamps on the ball and withholds the ball from play. He does not have a teammate to direct it to and continues to clamp the ball, keeping it from B1. **RULING:** Withholding by A1, ball awarded to Team B.

*RATIONALE: The committee continues to receive input and feedback regarding the faceoff play and the need to remove illegal actions from this play. The committee is trying to achieve the intent of the faceoff – to get the ball quickly into play and determine possession – while still allowing the skills some faceoff players have developed to continue.*

### **Rule 4-13, Advancing the Ball Into the Attack Area**

Upon gaining possession of the ball, a team must advance the ball **into their attack area** within **30** seconds. Failure to do so will result in a turnover, and the ball will be awarded to the opposing team at the spot of the violation or **laterally outside the attack area**. The requirement for advancing the ball into the attack area is met when the ball touches anything within that area.

The officials will enforce this rule using their **30**-second timing devices.

Once started, the **30**-second count will continue until:

- a. The opposing team gains possession.
- b. A clearing team player in possession of the ball touches the attack-area line or is inside the **attack area**.
- c. A loose ball touches the attack-area **line** or the ground inside the attack area.

- d. A loose ball touches anything in contact with the ground inside the planes of the attack-area lines (such as a player, the crosse of a player who is touching the ground, an official, the goal or the net).
- e. The ball is loose and there is a play-on for a foul by the opposing team, after which the attacking team regains possession (thus starting a new **30-second** count).
- f. The officials sound the whistle to stop play for any reason.

*RATIONALE: The committee believes using 30 seconds total to reach the attack area will eliminate some unneeded counts by officials and maintain the flow of play.*

#### **Rule 4-14, Ball Returning to the Defensive Half.**

Once the ball has been successfully advanced into the attack area, a team is provided the opportunity to run its offense on its offensive half of the field. When the ball touches anything on the defensive half of the field, and the offensive team was last in possession of the ball, the referee will signal “get it in/keep it in.” The offensive team has 10 seconds to return the ball to the attack area.

**Exception:** A new 30-second count will be awarded in these situations:

1. A shot that leaves the offensive half of the field.
2. A loose ball that leaves the offensive half of the field and was last touched (or deflected) by the defensive team.

#### **New Approved Rulings:**

**A.R. 1:** With possession of the ball on the offensive half of the field, A1 steps into the attack area. A1 attempts a pass to A2 that is not caught and the ball goes across the midline, where it touches the ground or a player. A2 gains possession. **RULING:** The official will signal “get it in/keep it in” when the ball touches anything on the defensive half. Team A has 10 seconds from the time the ball touches anything in the defensive zone to get the ball in the attack area and keep it in.

**A.R. 2:** With possession of the ball on the offensive half of the field, A1 steps into the attack area. A1 attempts a pass to A2 that is not caught and the ball rolls toward the midline. A3, who is standing on the defensive half, keeps the ball on the offensive half of the field without gaining possession. A2 picks up the ball. The ball never crosses the midfield line. **RULING:** No “get it in/keep it in” call.

**A.R. 3:** A1 has possession of the ball on the offensive half of the field and has stepped the ball into the attack area. B1 deflects a pass by A1, which crosses the midfield line. A2 picks up the ball. **RULING:** Team A has 30 seconds from the time possession is gained in the defensive zone to get the ball in the attack area.

**A.R. 4:** Team A is leading the game. A1 has the ball in the offensive half of the field and has established possession in the attack area. A loose ball is created with 2:02 remaining in the game. A1 regains possession outside of the attack area on its offensive half with 1:58 remaining. **RULING:** The official shall signal “get it in/keep it in” at the 2:00 mark and start the 10-second count. Team A has the remaining time on the count (in this case, eight seconds) to get the ball into the attack area and must keep it in.

**A.R. 5:** Team A is leading the game and calls timeout on the offensive half of the field with 2:15 remaining in the game. When play is restarted, what requirements are Team A under to get the ball

in the attack area? **RULING:** At the 2:00 mark, if Team A is **outside** the attack area, the official shall signal “get it in/keep it in” and start the 10-second count. If Team A is **inside** the attack area, the “keep it in” signal is made and administered.

**A.R. 6:** Team A is leading the game and A1 gains possession in the defensive half with 2:10 remaining in the game. With 1:55 remaining in the game, Team A crosses the midfield line. **RULING:** The official shall signal “get it in/keep it in” when the ball crosses into the offensive half of the field and start the 10-second count.

**A.R. 7:** Team A is leading the game and A1 gains possession in the defensive half with 2:15 remaining in the game. A1 crosses the midfield line with 2:10 remaining in the game. The official signals “get it in/keep it in” at the 2:00 mark and starts the 10-second count. At the 1:50 mark, the official’s “get it in/keep it in” count expires. **RULING:** In this case, Team A did not get the ball into the attack area before the “get it in/keep it in” count expired. Ball awarded to Team B.

**A.R. 8:** Team A is leading the game and A1 gains possession in the defensive half with 2:15 remaining in the game. A1 crosses the midfield line with 1:50 remaining. At 1:45, the official’s buzzer sounds. **RULING:** The official signals “get it in/keep it in” and starts a 10 second count when A1 crosses the midfield line because it is inside of two minutes. The 30-second buzzer supersedes the “get it in/keep it in” count. Ball awarded to Team B.

*RATIONALE: The committee believes that, once the ball is in the attack area on the offensive half of the field, that team has the responsibility to attack the goal. This rule change will underscore that importance and penalize teams that return to the defensive half of the field.*

#### **New in Rule 4, “Get It In/Keep It In.”**

In certain situations, a “get it in/keep it in” command will be administered.

“*Get it In.*” This warning is used when the ball is outside the attack area. An official signals and verbally announces “get it in.” The team in possession must advance the ball into the attack area within 10 seconds and keep it in the attack area.

“*Keep it In.*” This warning is used when the ball is inside the attack area. An official signals and verbally announces “keep it in.” The team in possession must keep the ball in the attack area.

“*Get it in/Keep it in*” situations are:

1. Under two minutes remaining in the game when the game is not tied (See Rule 3-4);
2. When the ball leaves the offensive half of the field through actions of the offensive team (Rule 4-14);
3. Stalling (See Rule 6-11).

*RATIONALE: The use of “get it in” will allow officials to institute this rule without technically having a violation when a player steps into the attack area briefly.*

**Rule 5-11, Fouling Out.** Any player who accumulates five minutes **of** personal fouls, ~~regardless of penalty time accrued,~~ shall be disqualified from the game. A substitute for that player...”

*RATIONALE: This slight adjustment makes it clear that five minutes of penalties is grounds for a disqualification.*

**Rule 6-11: Stalling (Pg 78): (RE-ORGANIZE Section 11)**

**SECTION 11. It shall be the responsibility of the team in possession to attack the goal.**

A.) A team in possession of the ball in its offensive half of the field will be required to “get it in/keep it in” the attack area if:

1. At any time during the course of the game, if in the judgment of the officials, that team is keeping the ball from play by not attacking the goal.

**Exception:** If the offensive team has the ball in the attack area and the defensive team is not playing the ball. The defensive team must attempt to play the ball within the attack area in order for a stalling warning to be issued against the offensive team. This exception does not apply outside of the attack area, but the offensive team’s responsibility to attack the goal remains.

2. Automatically, in the last two minutes of the fourth quarter if the team in possession is leading.

When a team is warned for stalling in the attack area, a “keep it in” warning will be administered.

*Note:* If the score is tied, neither team is required to keep the ball in the attack area, unless warned to keep it in. (see item #1 above)

B.) Once a stalling warning has been issued it will remain in effect until:

1. The defensive team gains possession
2. A goal is scored by the offensive team
3. The period ends, resulting in a faceoff
4. The offensive team causes the ball to go outside the attack goal area and touches the ball before the defensive team gains possession. In this case a stalling violation is called and the defensive team is awarded the ball.

NOTE – A team in possession of the ball in the attack goal area, after it has been warned to “keep it in” cannot be penalized for stalling unless it causes the ball to go outside the attack goal area.

C.) Once a stall warning has been issued, a stalling violation will be called if the ball comes out of the attack goal area in any manner, except for the following:

1. A shot by the offensive team
2. A loose ball leaves the attack area after last being touched (or deflected) by the defensive team.

A 10-second count starts when the ball touches anything outside of the attack area. If the offensive team regains possession the stall warning remains in effect.

*RATIONALE: Editorial in nature -- reorganized for easier understanding.*

**New Rule: Targeting the Head.**

A player shall not deliberately initiate contact to an opponent’s head or neck with a cross check, or any part of his body (head, elbow, shoulder, etc.) or stick. Any follow-through that contacts the head or neck shall also be considered a violation of this rule.

**PENALTY—One, two or three minute non-releasable foul, at the referee’s discretion. Excessive violation of this rule may result in an ejection from the game.**

*RATIONALE: The committee strongly believes targeting the head and neck area has no place in lacrosse. These types of fouls must be penalized severely and this rule accomplishes that goal.*