



REPORT OF THE  
NCAA MEN'S LACROSSE RULES COMMITTEE  
JUNE 5-7, 2023, ANNUAL MEETING

ACTION ITEMS.

**1. Legislative items.**

- None.

**2. Nonlegislative items.** The NCAA Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee approved four rules change proposals for the 2024 season. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee requests approval from the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel for the following items:

**a. Helmet coming off (Rule 1-20).**

(1) Recommendation. To establish that anytime a player's helmet comes off their head during a live ball scenario, the officials will stop play immediately. That player is required to leave the field of play. Play is to be restarted once that player reaches the substitution area, and that player may not return until the next dead ball after the restart of play.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. There continues to be a trend of players not properly securing their helmets as designed. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee is concerned about the potential increased risk of injury for players that are playing without their helmet as designed.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

**b. Video review (Rule 4-33).**

(1) Recommendation. To permit but not require the following video review process:  
*(Note: The underlined language is new language that will be added to the current video review rule.)*

A coach may use a challenge up until the last four minutes of regulation. Referee discretion may be used at any time during the game to review the following:

- (a) To correct the game and/or shot clock when there is a malfunction or timing error;
- (b) To determine if the release of a shot at the end of a period in relation to the expiration of time for the game clock or the shot clock;

- (c) To determine if a shot at the end of a period was deflected off of a defensive or offensive player before it entered the goal;
  - (d) To determine if a shot hits the camera mounted inside the goal cage;
  - (e) To determine if a loose ball crosses the goal line;
  - (f) To determine if the ball was in the goal before the dislodgement of the goal cage;
  - (g) To determine if an offensive player was in or landed in the crease or prior to the ball entering the goal;
  - (h) To determine if an offensive player landed in the goal mouth prior to the ball entering the goal as a result of illegal contact by the defense; and
  - (i) To determine if a goal was scored as a result of the head of the shooters crosse coming off during the shot or follow through.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. Video review is currently only permitted during the NCAA championships for a limited set of situations. This rules change would permit video review during all NCAA competitions. Under this video review process, timing scenarios and goals would be the only reviewable situations. In the last four minutes of regulation and any overtime period, these goals would be reviewed by referee's discretion. To review prior to the last four minutes of regulation, would require a coach's challenge or referee's discretion. There must be conclusive video evidence for the call on the field to be overturned. Video review shall be provided by the home team or host institution and if available, it shall be used.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. Varies.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

**c. Video review (Rule 4-33).**

- (1) Recommendation. To permit, but not require, video review to review contact to the head and/or neck area through the following review process:

Contact to the head and/or neck area may only be reviewed if the on-field official makes a call on the field that a potential contact to the head and/or neck area has occurred.

- (a) Officials may only use this procedure if a contact to the head and/or neck area is called on the field.
- (b) Officials will notify coaches before starting the review.
- (c) Officials have three penalty options to consider under this review:
  - (i) Indirect contact to the head and/or neck area.
  - (ii) Direct contact to the head and/or neck area.
  - (iii) Excessive or flagrant contact to the head and/or neck area with possible expulsion.

Officials are permitted to review a possible infraction that was not observed during play, however, only contact to the head and/or neck area may be considered. Should the officials determine that another infraction occurred, they may not assess that penalty by video review. However, if the officials determine that contact to the head and/or neck area did occur, they may enforce those penalties under this rule.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. Contact to the head and/or neck area is one of the most challenging plays to officiate. These plays often occur quickly during live action that also come with substantial penalties including the possibility of expulsion for the remainder of the game. Providing officials, the opportunity to review these types of plays will assist in officials more accurately adjudicating these plays on the field. These plays would be reviewed at the referee's discretion.

(4) Estimated budget impact. Varies.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

**d. Coach's challenge (Rule 4-44).**

(1) Recommendation. To establish that a team will be permitted two team timeouts and one coach's challenge each half or one timeout during any overtime period(s). If a coach's challenge is unsuccessful, that team will be charged a timeout and lose their challenge for that half. If the challenge is successful, they will retain that timeout and coach's challenge. Should a team no longer have any timeouts remaining in a half a coach may not challenge a call on the field.

A coach's challenge may only be requested for the reviewable items in Rule 4-33. Challenges do not carry over from each half.

A coach would have 30 seconds to challenge a non-goal play. If there is not an imminent scoring opportunity, the officials will stop play as soon as possible to conduct a review.

If the challenging team or the opposing team scores a goal during that period of time, the goal would not be counted if it was determined that the reviewable non-goal play was a goal.

All reviews in the last four minutes of regulation or any overtime period would be reviewed at the referee's discretion.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. By establishing a coach's challenge outside of the last four minutes of regulation and overtime, the Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee believes this will reduce the number of reviews outside of end of the game situations. In addition, tying challenges to timeouts will also reduce the number of potential stoppages throughout the game and coaches will have to make a decision on utilizing a timeout versus a coach's challenge in some situations.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

#### INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.

1. **Welcome, introductions and announcements.** The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee chair and staff liaison welcomed the committee and thanked them for their time.
2. **Review schedule, agenda and committee operations manual.** The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee reviewed the schedule, agenda and the committee operations manual. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee operations manual includes important policies for committee services, such as document retention, confidentiality, conflict of interest, rules writing and voting procedures.
3. **Review 2022 annual meeting report, July 6, 2022, videoconference report and April 11, 2023, videoconference report.** The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee reviewed and approved the 2022 annual meeting, the July 6, 2022, videoconference and the April 11, 2023, videoconference reports as written.
4. **Review PROP directive.** The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee reviewed a directive from PROP regarding facility changes that include a financial element. The directive reminds playing rules

committees to provide plenty of lead time (at least a one-year delay) when making such changes.

5. **USA Lacrosse report.** A representative from USA Lacrosse joined the Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee and shared several initiatives and updates. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee appreciated USA Lacrosse's participation in the annual meeting and hearing about the continued effort to grow the sport at the youth level. USA Lacrosse noted that they are enhancing an eLearning platform to help with officiating outreach and growth. Lastly, USA Lacrosse is exploring establishing a certification process for equipment standards.
6. **National Federation of High School State Associations boy's lacrosse report.** Unfortunately, the NFHS representative was unable to attend this year's annual meeting.
7. **Active official's report.** The active official provided an update to the Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee. National Intercollegiate Lacrosse Officials Association will continue to work with USA Lacrosse in growing the officiating body at the youth level. Officials expressed the need for video review to assist in getting the calls right on the field. The rules change around contact to the head and/or neck area was beneficial to officials this year because it provides clear and concise language around those types of contact plays.
8. **Intercollegiate Men's Lacrosse Coaches Association representative's report.** The IMLCA representative provided an update to the Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee and provided insight to the Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee on behalf of the coaches. The IMLCA will continue to work to get a greater response rate from the coaching body on the rules surveys. There was strong interest from the coaches to implement a change around helmets coming off during live play. The coaches also continued to express some concerns over plays around the crease area, illegal screen plays and the faceoff.
9. **Secretary-rules editor's report/review of correspondence.** The secretary-rules editor provided a report to the Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee the most significant rules topic secretary-rules editor also reviewed this past year. This was a generally quiet year overall for rules related issues and questions, but there were a few clarifications provided throughout the season which were shared with the membership through the rules interpretation/clarification document.
10. **National coordinator of officials' report.** The national coordinator of officials reviewed a thorough report to the Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee noting several items during the season, including evaluations of officials. The in-season training videos are a great tool for officials and coaches. This year, we provided access to the general public as well by posting them to the NCAA YouTube page. The national coordinator expressed a strong desire for the Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee to implement some sort of video review to assist the officials in getting calls right on the field without opening it up too far which could impact the natural flow of the game.

- 11. NCAA championship updates.** NCAA men's lacrosse championship staff joined the Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee for portions of the meeting and provided updates on the NCAA championships. It was noted that the Division I championship television viewership continues to grow. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee was briefed on the upcoming bid cycle process when will open later in the year to begin soliciting bids for future championship hosts.
- 12. Review of statistical trends.** The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee reviewed the statistical trends for the 2023 season.
- 13. Review of 2023 NCAA rules survey, call for proposals, and rules book corrections and issues summary.** The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee reviewed the survey results, survey comments and the call for proposals which helped guide the discussion of the potential rules changes.

The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee reviewed the language around goal nets and provided that the mesh of the net does not exceed 1½ inches it may be of varying shapes (square, hexagon, octagon, etc.). In addition, advertising on goal nets has become a challenge for officials to see if the ball has crossed the goal line. Only institutional and memorial logos are permitted affixed to the back of the goal nets below three feet.

The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee provided a clarification to the rules related to gloves that requires all players to wear gloves that are team official colors or the same dominant color.

The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee supported the NCAA statistics policy that after three quarters a game is determined to be official for statistical purposes. If both coaches agree, after three quarters the game may be official after the three quarters.

There has been conversation recently about adding a fourth official or an official to oversee the substitution box. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee discussed the concept but would like to have further conversations with the conferences as well as NILOA to see what the best approach may be to potentially add another official. There are concerns with potentially adding additional costs as well as other challenges around a limited number of officials. Some weekends, especially over holiday weekends, there are challenges with getting three officials to every site. Further discussion is needed around this topic to determine what the best approach may be.

Video review has been a long-standing topic for the Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee to consider. In the past, there has not been unanimous support to bring forward a rules change. That said, there has been a seismic shift in that position and the Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee felt it was vital to address it this year albeit in a non-change year. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee wanted to keep reviews limited in the first year by only allowing timing issues, goals and contact to the head and/or neck area to be reviewed.

In addition, the Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee added a coach's challenge to help eliminate every play from being reviewed. In the last four minutes or throughout overtime, it will be up to the officials to conduct the video review at their discretion.

The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee discussed a proposal to require a player to come off the field should their helmet come off during play. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee moved forward a rules change proposal that if a helmet does come off during a live ball, the officials will stop play, that player is required to leave the field and may not return until the next restart.

The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee discussed the current trend they are seeing in the shape of the crosse head. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee felt it important to protect the integrity of the traditional triangular shape of the crosse head. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee reviewed another head that deviates from the traditional shape and had concerns about potential protrusions that may hook and hold.

Lastly, there was a lengthy discussion about the faceoff and some of the challenges. It was enlightening to many on the call as the national coordinator discussed why officials are positioned where they are. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee issued a directive to the national coordinator to instruct officials to use a varying cadence after the word "set" and before the whistle blows. They are seeing faceoff players slightly jumping the timing of the officials whistle if the official does not vary their cadence.

**14. Identify 2023 points of emphasis.** The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee is recommending the following the points of emphasis from the 2023 season:

- a. Equipment is required to be worn properly which includes but is not limited to helmets, arm pads and mouth pieces.
- b. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee would like to further remind institutions that a light colored uniform must have a dark colored number and a dark colored uniform must have a light colored number. Uniforms and specifically uniform numbers serve a purpose and when numbers do not clearly contrast, it makes it challenging for officials, fans, broadcast partners and coaches to clearly identify a player. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee may look at future rules changes if this is not addressed.
- c. Bench decorum continues to be a concern throughout the sport of men's lacrosse. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee will again remind coaches and players to promote sportsmanship through their words and actions as the image of the sport is at risk. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee will work alongside IMLCA to help continue to promote the positive image of the game.

**15. Future meeting dates.** The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee will meet for next year's annual meeting June 3-5, 2024.

**16. Other business.** The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee thanked Alex Smith for his service on the committee.

*Committee Chair:* John Tillman, University of Maryland, College Park  
*Staff Liaison(s):* Andy Supergan, NCAA Championships and Alliances

NCAA Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee June 5-7, 2023, Annual Meeting	
<b>Attendees:</b>	
Andrew Fink, University of St. Joseph (Connecticut).	
James Greene, Big East Conference.	
Alec Jernstedt, Grove City College.	
Dana Lindstrom, Gwynedd Mercy University.	
Jerry Price, Princeton University.	
James Purpura, Virginia Military Institute.	
Willie Scroggs, secretary-rules editor.	
Alex Smith, Saint Michael's College.	
John Tillman, University of Maryland, College Park.	
<b>Guests in Attendance:</b>	
Brian Abbott, active official; Tom Abbott, national coordinator of officials; Caitlin Kelley, USA Lacrosse; Scott Musa, PROP Men's Lacrosse Liaison; and Dave Pietramala, IMLCA.	
<b>NCAA Staff Liaison in Attendance:</b>	
Andy Supergan.	
<b>Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:</b>	
Mitchell Bailey, Will Hopkins and Ryan Tressel.	