



**REPORT OF THE
NCAA MEN'S LACROSSE RULES COMMITTEE
JUNE 3-5, 2024, ANNUAL MEETING**

ACTION ITEMS.

1. Legislative items.

- None.

2. Nonlegislative items. The NCAA Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee approved eight rules change proposals for the 2025 season. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee requests approval from the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel for the following items:

a. Mouthpiece (Rule 1-20).

- (1) Recommendation. To permit a clear mouthpiece to be worn.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. To provide additional flexibility on the color of the mouthpiece given the availability of mouthpieces in the marketplace.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

b. Faceoff violation (Rule 4-3-b-9).

- (1) Recommendation. To eliminate the 30-second time serving penalty after the third faceoff violation of the half and then establish that if there is a faceoff violation by a faceoff player that faceoff player cannot take the next faceoff.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. The rules committee as well as the men's lacrosse coaches did not feel the penalties around the faceoff adequately prevented players from violating.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

c. Over and back (Rule 4-16.b).

- (1) Recommendation. To clarify that players established in the defensive half of the field would only be able to bat or deflect the ball with their crosse to keep it in the offensive half of the field.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. To clarify what a defensive player can do with the ball as it approaches midfield to keep the ball in the offensive half of the field following a successful clear. Body contact with the ball will result in an over and back violation.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

d. Deflected shot (New Rule 4-33-11).

(1) Recommendation. To permit video review to determine whether a valid shot deflected off the goalkeeper or goal pipe to determine if the shot clock should be reset. This could be reviewed either by coach's challenge at any point in the game or by official's discretion in the last four minutes of regulation or any overtime period.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. The change would provide clarity on if a valid shot hit the goalkeeper or goal pipe and if a shot clock reset is necessary.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

e. Fighting, flagrant misconduct and unsportsmanlike conduct (Rule 4-35).

(1) Recommendation. To provide officials the opportunity to review fighting, flagrant misconduct and unsportsmanlike conduct observed or unobserved at any time during the game.

(2) Effective date. Immediately.

(3) Rationale. The rules committee felt that the video review criteria did not adequately provide officials the opportunity to review some of these situations that often occur out of sight or involving multiple individuals.

(4) Estimated budget impact. None.

(5) Student-athlete impact. None.

f. Coach's challenge (New Rule 4-36).

- (1) Recommendation. To permit coaches the ability to challenge anything within the video review criteria as outlined in Rule 4-33 at any time during the game.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. This would allow coaches to challenge plays in the last four minutes of regulation or any overtime period.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

g. Official's discretion (New Rule 4-36).

- (1) Recommendation. To adjust the video review criteria to only permit official's discretion to review items in Rule 4-33 in the last four minutes of regulation or any overtime period.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. This change improves the overall flow of the game by only permitting official's reviews under Rule 4-33 in the last four minutes of regulation or any overtime period. This would not impact reviews of contact to the head and/or neck area or the new change (if approved) around fighting, flagrant misconduct or unsportsmanlike conduct reviews.
- (4) Estimated budget impact. None.
- (5) Student-athlete impact. None.

h. Suspended coach / bench personnel (Rules 5-13 and 5-14).

- (1) Recommendation. A suspended coach or team personnel cannot be in the confines of the venue from once the team arrives until the completion of the contest when the officials leave the field.
- (2) Effective date. Immediately.
- (3) Rationale. The rules committee felt after a review of the suspension rules in men's lacrosse that a suspended coach or team personnel should not be at the contest venue while serving a suspension.
- (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, committee operations manual, federated rules process, the PROP sportsmanship directive and NCAA Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee roster.** 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. In addition, the committee reviewed the federated rules process and discussed PROP's directive to review our rules around sportsmanship.
3. **Review 2023 annual meeting report.** The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee reviewed and approved the 2023 annual meeting report as written.
4. **Review of the NCAA injury surveillance data report.** The men's lacrosse rules committee heard a report from the managing director of the NCAA Injury Surveillance Program. It was noted that the participation numbers for intuitions in the program continues to increase to near pre-pandemic levels.
5. **USA Lacrosse report.** A representative from USA Lacrosse joined the men's lacrosse rules committee and shared several initiatives and updates. USA Lacrosse noted continued increased membership numbers. They are also shifting focus to produce more educational information and initiatives through a revamped platform for coaches and officials.
6. **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 all levels. NIOLA has been committed It was noted that for video review purposes, that black netting of goals makes it easier to see a white ball.
7. **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 on behalf of the coaches. The IMLCA will continue to work to improve the response rate from the coaching body on the rules surveys. In addition, the IMLCA shared their survey results and the feedback from an IMLCA rules subcommittee centered around the faceoff. Both sources supported a change to the faceoff rules eliminating the penalty after three violations in favor of removing that faceoff player from the next faceoff should that faceoff player commit a faceoff violation. The rules committee also discussed ways to be better partners during the annual IMLCA Coaches Convention and appreciated the continued partnership between both groups.

8. **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. The rules committee supported the interpretations issued throughout the year and approved them as written.
9. **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 continue to be a great tool for officials and coaches. It was noted that there were some learning pains with video review as early in the year, officials were reviewing too many goals that didn't need to be reviewed. As the season went on, officials began to use video review more appropriately.
10. **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 for this year's final trended downwards due to the change of schedule because of weather delays. However, ticket sales for championship weekend were up year over year. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee was briefed on the upcoming bid cycle process and the Division I committee's review of the bids that have been submitted.
11. **Review of statistical trends.** The men's lacrosse rules committee reviewed the statistical trends for the 2024 season.
12. **Review of 2024 NCAA rules survey, call for proposals, rules interpretations document and rules discussion document.** 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 rules committee discussed and approved moving to the pre-covid faceoff officiating mechanic. The change to the mechanic would establish the following procedure:

- After the command of down, the official will stand over the faceoff players and may adjust the players position if needed.
- From there, the official will say "set" and will back out and whistle to start the faceoff.

This change to the mechanic will provide a natural cadence variance by requiring the official to get out of the way before the faceoff starts. The concerns raised by the previous mechanic centered around officials blowing the whistle too quickly and faceoff players going early ahead of the whistle. This change coupled with the rules change requiring a faceoff player to sit out the next faceoff for committing a faceoff violation will hopefully create fairer faceoffs and reduce the number of times players attempt to jump the faceoff early.

The rules committee supported a change to the over and back rule to establish that players in the defensive half of the field may only bat the ball with their crosse and body contact with the ball is a violation. This aligns with the NFHS rule.

The rules committee discussed considerations on making a yellow ball the recommended color. Currently, there are multiple options permitted by rule for the color of the ball but the standard choice is a smooth white ball. The committee will continue to discuss and review with manufacturers to see if making a yellow ball the standard for men's lacrosse is achievable given what is in the marketplace.

The rules committee conducted a comprehensive review of the rules around sportsmanship as directed by the Playing Rules Oversight Panel. The rules committee felt that a coach or bench personnel should not be in venue if they are serving a suspension. However, the current rules were satisfactory for a student-athlete which requires them to just be out of sight and sound of the venue.

Video review was a central focus of the discussion during the annual meeting. The rules committee felt that it was beneficial for the game but at times officials were using it too much. The rules committee tweaked the rule to only permit officials reviews during the last four minutes and all of overtime. The coach's challenge also can be used at any point during the game. In addition, the committee felt it was important for officials to be able to review altercations or situations of flagrant or unsportsmanlike conduct as these behaviors often occur outside the sightlines of an official or involve multiple student-athletes.

The committee felt that the rules around the dive/goal mouth were adequate and did not need further changes. From an officiating standpoint, the officials felt that the consistency of the rules has helped them get better year over year on officiating these types of plays.

The rules committee discussed a play that has been called a "crowbar" where the defensive player lifts the stick arm and then pushes the offensive player down to dislodge the ball from the crosse. The committee felt that if this play is done with equal pressure it is legal provided that there is a quick release. If more than equal process it will potentially be a hold or could lead to a cross check on release. There will be rules education provided around this type of play.

There has been conversation recently about adding a fourth official or an official to oversee the substitution box. The 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.

- 13. Selection of the men's lacrosse rules committee chair.** The men's lacrosse rules committee selected Jerry Price (administrator from Princeton University) as the new men's lacrosse rules committee chair.

14. Identify 2025 points of emphasis. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee is recommending the following the points of emphasis from the 2025 season:

- a. It is illegal for the defender to force out a legal screener once the legal screener has established position. Once established, a legal screener is entitled to their position.
- b. Equipment is required to be worn properly which includes but is not limited to helmets, arm pads and mouth pieces.
- 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. There is added emphasis on bench celebrations should remain off the field of play and within the bench area. In addition, there is a trend on choreographed on-field celebrations which have not represented the image of the sport in a positive light. This is a concern for the rules committee as this behavior is often trending towards unsporting behavior. 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 3-4, 2025.

16. Other business. The Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee thanked John Tillman and Andrew Fink for their service on the committee. A special thank you was shared for Scott Musa who has served the past four years as the PROP liaison for men's lacrosse.

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 3-5, 2024, Annual Meeting	
Attendees:	
James Greene, Big East Conference.	
Alec Jernstedt, Grove City College.	
Jason Lange, University of Montevallo.	
Dana Lindstrom, Gwynedd Mercy University.	
Jerry Price, Princeton University.	
James Purpura, Virginia Military Institute.	
Willie Scroggs, secretary-rules editor.	
John Tillman, University of Maryland, College Park.	
Absentees:	
Andrew Fink, University of St. Joseph (Connecticut).	

Guests in Attendance:
Brian Abbott, active official; J.B. Clarke, IMLCA; Tom Abbott, national coordinator of officials; Caitlin Kelley, USA Lacrosse and Scott Musa, PROP Men's Lacrosse Liaison.
NCAA Staff Liaison in Attendance:
Andy Supergan.
Other NCAA Staff Members in Attendance:
Will Hopkins, Connor Lancashire and Ryan Tressel.