



MEMORANDUM

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TO: Head Men's Lacrosse Coaches and Officials.

FROM: Willie Scroggs, chair
NCAA Men's Lacrosse Rules Committee.

SUBJECT: Preseason Rules and Officiating Updates.

This correspondence is intended to help clarify a few rules and officiating mechanics as the 2008 season begins. Please pay close attention to these directives and clarifications.

1. **Points of emphasis.** As a reminder, the committee selected several points of emphasis for officials and coaches this season. They are listed below:
 - Back Checks. Back checks on the hip and lower back must be called more frequently and more consistently.
 - Head and Neck Contact. Checks to the area of the head and neck must be called without fail.
 - Moving Picks and Impeding. Moving picks and players using the head of the stick to impede the movement of the defender is a concern of the committee. Officials are instructed to call moving picks more consistently and pay attention to players using the head of their sticks to impede the movement of the defender. The intent is to eliminate contact or interference with an extended stick in relation to moving picks.

2. **Officiating Mechanics.** Several questions raised at the NCAA preseason clinics are answered below for guidance in some situations not covered in the rules book.
 - a. The mechanic for calling a face-off violation is as follows:
 - 1) Blow the whistle;
 - 2) Give the illegal procedure signal while at the same time pointing in the direction; and
 - 3) Call out the color of the team the ball will be awarded to on the restart. The whistle should be blown as quickly as possible on the restart (no more than five seconds).

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- 4) On a faceoff when the ball moves into the defensive side of the midfield line, Player A1 will be instructed to pick up the ball. As A1 crosses the midfield line, the whistle should be blown to start play.
 - 5) On a faceoff when the ball moves into the offensive side of the midfield line A1 will be instructed to pick up the ball. The whistle will be blown immediately to start play.
 - 6) The legality of shoulder pads should first be the responsibility of the head coach, athletic trainer, equipment manager and the team physician. If an official believes a player is not wearing shoulder pads, request that the player show his padding. If there is no padding, assess a penalty.
3. **Face-off violations.** The following are several areas of guidance dealing with a violation of the faceoff:
- a. If a faceoff player commits a violation and then directs the ball away from the faceoff box and the officiating crew determines the directing of the ball was intentional, a technical foul for delay of the game must be assessed. If another player other than the faceoff player intentionally delays, a technical foul shall be assessed.
 - b. If a wing player commits a violation, the center faceoff player must leave the field and a substitute must replace him.
 - c. **Situation:** In the final minutes of a close game, faceoff player A1 moves before the whistle. The coach of Team A immediately calls a timeout to avoid a quick restart and a possible break by B1. **Ruling:** Legal play. During the timeout, A1 is allowed to be substituted for and he does not have to leave the field on the whistle to start play.
 - d. If there are simultaneous technical fouls before a face-off, the ball shall be re-faced as provided in Note 4 on page 33 of the 2008 rules.
4. **Stick checks.** The following scenarios should assist officials when dealing with stick checks:
- a. **Situation:** A player is using double ball stops. **Ruling:** The official shall make the player remove one of the ball stops. A warning may be issued or, if during a check the stick is illegal, a penalty shall be assessed.
 - b. **Situation:** An official requests the stick of A1. Before handing his stick to the official, A1 pulls his strings or jams the head into the ground. **Ruling:** A one minute unsportsmanlike penalty shall be assessed on A1. The crew shall not conduct any other stick checks on either team during the dead ball time.

- c. **Situation:** A1 scores a goal and immediately pulls the strings of his stick. **Ruling:** A one minute unsportsmanlike penalty shall be assessed and the goal shall not count. The key point is that A1 pulls his strings IMMEDIATELY after scoring a goal. If A1 plays with his strings or pushes in his pocket just before the next face-off, those actions should not be penalized.
5. **Ten- and 20-second count situations.** The new rules relating to the 10- and 20-second count led to some questions in particular situations. The following scenarios should assist in the understanding of these rules:
- a. **Situation:** B1 throws a clearing pass to B2 that goes over his head and touches the ground across the midfield line. Does a 10-second count start when the ball touches the ground across midfield? **Ruling:** Yes.
 - b. **Situation:** May a player throw the ball beyond the midfield line, creating a loose ball, in order to stop the 20-second count? **Ruling:** Yes.
 - c. Any loose ball that crosses the midfield line and ends a 20-second count will start a 10-second count for the attacking team once it touches the ground.
 - d. **Ruling change in A.R. 60 on page 47 of the 2008 rules. Situation:** Team A is in its defensive end clearing the ball when A1 drops the ball. The ball is kicked over the midfield line, ending the 20-second count, then it is kicked back in Team A's defensive end and A2 picks up the ball. **Ruling:** A 10-second counts starts, not a 20-second count, when the ball is kicked over the midfield line into A's offensive end.
 - e. **Situation:** While A1 is in his attack area, he throws a pass to A2, which goes outside the attack area toward midfield. In the loose ball scramble, B1 pushes A3. **Ruling:** The official should signal a play-on until B2 picks up the loose ball. When B2 picks up the ball, the official must immediately blow the whistle, and award the ball to Team A, which now has 10 seconds to get the ball back inside their attack area.
 - f. If there is a whistle that stops play (e.g., out of bounds, foul, etc.), the team that gains possession is afforded the entire time allowed by rule. **Situation:** Team A shoots and hits the goal cage. The ball deflects and bounces across the midfield line, starting a count. In the battle for the loose ball, B1 is flagged for a loose ball push. **Ruling:** Team A is awarded the ball and has 20 seconds to cross the midfield line.

- g. These situations are an extension of A.R. 51 on Page 45. **Situation 1:** B1 throws a clearing pass to B2 that goes over his head and touches the ground across midfield. Does a 10-second count start when the ball touches the ground across midfield? **Ruling:** Yes. **Situation 2:** May a player throw the ball beyond the center line, creating a loose ball, in order to stop the 20-second count? **Ruling:** Yes.

6. **Player out of bounds.** This situation deals with a player out of bounds and how this play is officiated:

Situation: A1 attempts to scoop a loose ball near the sideline, but does not gain possession. In the process, his momentum carries him out of bounds. B3 then attempts to scoop the ball but also is not successful, causing it to go out of bounds, striking A1 who is out of bounds. **Ruling:** The ball becomes out of bounds when it hits the ground or an object out of bounds, in this case A1. B3 is the last player to touch the ball before it goes out of bounds. The ball is awarded to Team A.

7. **Timeouts in overtime.** By rule, Team A receives an additional timeout at the start of overtime. Team A had used all of available timeouts in regulation. The coach of Team A calls for a timeout after his faceoff player violates just before the whistle to start the overtime. Can the coach's timeout request be granted? **Ruling:** No. In A.R. 109 on Page 57, when a team takes a timeout between quarters or at halftime, the timeout is charged to the preceding period. However, if Coach A had a timeout at the end of regulation, this timeout could be granted. *Note: If a team has exhausted its timeouts and an official grants a timeout request, that team will be charged with a delay of game technical foul.*

Thank you for your time and attention to these directives and good luck this season.

WS:nkb