



Student Notes

OFFICIALS EDUCATION



USA LACROSSE


PROFESSIONALISM & GAME MANAGEMENT

MENS OFFICIALS DEVELOPMENT | 2025 SEASON

PROFESSIONALISM

OUR APPROACH TO THE GAME

- What is a Professional?
 - "a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation"
- Lacrosse is "controlled chaos"
- We are the calming factor
- We are unbiased
- We are entrusted to be keepers of the game
- We must respect our role
- WE MUST HONOR THE GAME



Proper
Preparation
Prevents
Poor
Performance

APPEARANCE

IT STARTS BEFORE YOU GET TO THE FIELD

- First impressions speaks volumes
- Conveys a level of respect for the game, coaches and players
- Is your ref bag ready to go?
- Have you taken inventory?
- Are you in shape?
- Can you "ref with a smile"?






Student Notes

UNIFORM

DRESS THE PART

Complete uniform

- Match your partner(s)
- Shirt
- Shorts or pants w/ Black Belt
- Socks that cover the ankle bone
- All Black Shoes
- Striped Hat
- Whistle (Fox40 preferred)
- 2 Flags
- 20-Second Timer
- Tape Measure



UNIFORM

OPTIONAL ITEMS

All Must Match

- All Black Coats
 - OK for extreme weather
- Black Gloves
 - Football receiver gloves are great
 - Wear lates/ rubber gloves under to keep hands warm
- Neck Covering
 - A headband worn around the neck can be a great way to block to the cold
- All Black Winter Hats
 - Only in extreme and all must wear



DOES IT MATTER?

ABSOLUTELY

A properly coordinated crew sends several unspoken messages

- We take our job seriously
- We are prepared
- We respect the work the coaches and players have done to prepare
- We respect our partners
- We respect ourselves
- WE HONOR THE GAME





Student Notes

RESPECT THE UNIFORM

WE ARE JUDGED WHILE IN THE STRIPES

We all became officials to make friends and have some fun, but there are limitations.

- Always leave the immediate playing area to have a post-game beverage.
- Do not socially engage with anyone from the teams that you just officiated.
- Have a change of clothes to wear if you do decide to spend some time with your crew



CONDITIONING

THE GAME IS FAST



BEING IN "GAME SHAPE"

THE PLAYERS ARE FASTER THAN WE ARE!

What does "Game Shape" mean?

- Endurance
 - Youth Games (2-3 miles)
 - High School Games (3-4 miles)
 - College Games (5-7 miles)
- Speed
 - Can you keep up with the players?
 - How do you "cheat" if you can't?
- Agility
 - Can you move side-to-side to get out of the way?
 - Can you "yo-yo" as lead or single at GLE?

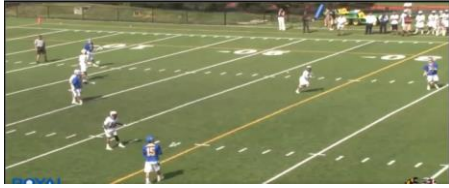




Student Notes

GAME SHAPE

THIS IS WHY IT MATTERS



HUSTLE

EVERYONE CAN DO IT

- You do not have to be fast
- You need to anticipate your next movement
- You need to jog, run and sprint
- Work to be in position even if you are tired
- A whistle should not stop your feet



HUSTLE INTEGRITY

WHAT YOU DO WHEN NO ONE IS WATCHING

- Do you give 100% all the time?
- Do you hustle even when not being observed?
- Do you work hard in JV games?





Student Notes

THE LITTLE THINGS MATTER
ESTABLISH GOOD HABITS

Be on time Including the pregame

Understand your importance

Take your role seriously

Be focused

RULES KNOWLEDGE AND APPLICATION
RULES & MECHANICS

RULES
STUDY THE BOOK

- Have multiple copies
- Consider getting the app for NFHS
- **Highlight** areas of interest or concern
- Review your most common mistakes every game
- Be a student of the game



Student Notes

MECHANICS

HOW WE DO OUR JOB

- Correct mechanics allow you to be in the best position to see the play
- Make adjustments as the play changes
- Being out of position opens the door for problems on the field and from the sideline
- Keep moving – Don't Kill Grass
- Be on the lines (goal, endline, sideline) when the ball is there



Mechanics

KEY POINTS



PREGAME

TIME TO GO TO WORK

- Socialize before the pregame or after the game
- Ask relevant questions
- Have your rule book available
- Discuss the teams playing
- What does this game mean?
- Is this a rivalry game?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of each team





Student Notes

TABLE AND GAME PERSONNEL

PART OF YOUR CREW

- Who is your table crew?
- Part of YOUR Team
- Scorekeeper & Timekeeper a must
- Responsibilities
- Expectations
- Be helpful to them
- Explain penalties thoroughly
- Limit Distractions (Phones)
- Test Horn



THE SOFT SKILLS

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

- It takes practice
- The comments and questions are generally the same
- Develop your responses and practice
- Answer questions, not statements
- Don't be afraid to say "It's time to move on"



THE SOFT SKILLS

HEAD COACH COMMUNICATION ACTIVITY

Situation

- You have a head coach that has a reputation as a "hot-head" and likes to yell at everything. He has no social filter and typically gets one conduct penalty per game and sometimes a USC. As you are running by the bench as trail and call a loose ball push the coach screams, "What are you doing? Have you ever seen lacrosse? This must be your first game!"
- How do you handle this?





Student Notes

ASSISTANT COACHES

CAN BE GREAT ASSETS

- You guide the conversation
- Have them be a buffer to the coach
- Remember their first responsibility is to coach the kids and not talk to you
- The Sub Box coach can help with the bench and player issues
- Questions are OK
- Comments are NOT
- If they become a problem, you can take away their right to speak



THE SOFT SKILLS

ASSISTANT COACH COMMUNICATION ACTIVITY

Situation

- You are in a conference game with teams that are similarly skilled. One of them is having a bad game but fighting to hang in there. An assistant coach for the losing team who has been quiet for the entire game is standing at the end of the coaching box when you throw a flag. He says "Come on ref, you have to call it both ways."
- What do you do?



PLAYERS

YOUR BIGGEST ASSET

- Connect with the players and they will work with you
- Establish a working relationship with the captains
- Faceoff men should be your best friends
- Players are generally embarrassed by poor behavior by parents and coaches
- Use them as first line of intervention when needed



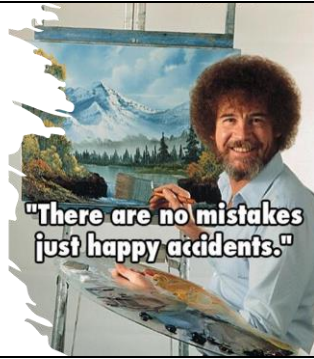


Student Notes

MISTAKES

WE ALL MAKE THEM

- How you handle a mistake will determine your credibility with all stakeholders
- Own them, don't try to cover up or ignore
- Admit to a coach when you made a mistake
- Apologize to the coach and players
- Reset the field so no advantage is gained from your mistake
- No make up calls
- Learn from it



YOUR CREW

LOYALTY IS PARAMOUNT

- Your crew is YOUR team
- Live as a team or die as an individual
- Your partners will make mistakes
- Don't throw them "under the bus"
- Senior officials need to be good mentors
- Let your Crew Chief do their job
- The goal is a ways to make the SAFE & FAIR call



GROWTH AS AN OFFICIAL

HOW TO GET TO THE NEXT LEVEL

- What level are you now?
- What level do you want to get to?
- Who can help you get there?
- Be willing to travel!
- Be willing to accept all assignments
- Communicate your goals
- Ask for HONEST feedback
- Be willing to ACCEPT it and grow
- Attend a USAL LAREDO Clinic





Student Notes

PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

YOUR GROWTH IS YOUR JOB

- Officiating growth is a personal responsibility
- You are competing with your fellow officials for the "Big Game"
- Find a mentor
- Watch high level officials
- Watch other sports officials
- Learn and get better every game
- Accept challenges and setbacks
- Don't blame others



THANK YOU TO THE MEMBERS
OF THE
MENS OFFICIAL'S EDUCATION
DEVELOPMENT TEAM