



## **REDBIRDS LACROSSE CLUB**

### **BASIC LACROSSE RULES**

Lacrosse is Canada's national summer sport, yet many people are unfamiliar with its rules. Hopefully this will help get you started;

- Lacrosse may seem a bit like Hockey, however, it has much more in common with Basketball. Like Basketball, Lacrosse involves full team offence and full team defense.
- Like Basketball there are no off sides or icing; this makes for a fast paced, end-to-end game. There are usually about 2 to 3 times the number of shots on goal as there is in a hockey game; about 20% result in goals.
- The 5 offensive players are referred to as left crease (like left wing in Hockey), left corner (like left defense), right crease (right wing), right corner (right defense) and point (centre).
- Minor offenses do not always result in a penalty rather the ball is often awarded to the non-offending team.
- When ball possession is awarded to player, the opposing players must give him 9' of space.
- A team that causes the ball to leave the playing surface will lose possession to the other team; play is simply whistled in.
- If a shot strikes the goalkeeper in the mask, play will stopped and possession will be given to the goalkeeper. If however the ball goes directly off the mask and into the net it counts as a goal.
- Cross-checking is legal and it is an important aspect of the game. A legal cross-check is applied with the shaft of the stick when it is held between both hands. It must be against the side, front or arms of the opponent and below the shoulders and above the waist. An illegal cross-check is one made above the shoulder or below the waist or if the opponent is not on his feet or if he is a non ball carrier out side of the 24' dotted line. If a player ducks into a check and takes it on the neck or head it will not result in a penalty to the defensive player. Cross or body checking from behind and violent checking into the boards is not tolerated.
- High sticking does not always result in a penalty. "Incidental" high sticking may be let go at the Referee's discretion; if not called, play continues.
- Goalkeepers can leave their crease and join the play. A goalkeeper out of his crease is treated like any other player. Goalkeeper initiated offence is a key offensive tactic.



- Face-offs are taken at centre floor only. They start with the open side of the stick facing the player's respective goal. The ball must come out of the 4' face-off circle before the other players can enter the 22' centre zone. Any offence in this regard will result in possession to the non-offending team.
- If an offensive player with the ball pushes off with his free hand or arm it will result in ball possession being awarded to the defensive team. This is often hard for spectators to detect.
- Any defensive player can check any offensive player if he is inside the 24' dotted line. Outside of the dotted line however only the player with the ball can be checked. If an offensive player checks a defensive player it will result in ball possession being awarded to the defensive team.
- The ball can be kicked provided it does not result in a goal. Only the goalkeeper is allowed to touch the ball with his hand and only then if he is in his crease. If a player touches the ball it is awarded to the other team.
- A team that is shorthanded must move the ball over centre within 10 seconds of gaining possession and once over cannot go back; if it does it loses possession.
- Players going after a loose ball must play the ball and not check each other.
- If an offensive player enters the defensive goal crease ball possession is awarded to the goalkeeper. If a player enters the opposing crease to check a player or even touches the goalkeeper it will result in a penalty. If an offensive player is pushed into the defensive crease it will not result in a penalty or loss of ball possession provided he leaves quickly.
- Defensive players are allowed to enter their own crease and often run through it to check an opposing player or to chase a loose ball.
- A goalkeeper or player can bring the ball back into their own crease provided one of their feet is already in the crease.
- After a shot is stopped or if the ball possession is gained in the crease, it must be moved out of the crease within 5 seconds.

The above is a brief over view of some of the main rules. If you would like to learn more about Lacrosse you can visit the Canadian Lacrosse Association (CLA) website which is [www.lacrosse.ca](http://www.lacrosse.ca) and the Ontario Lacrosse Association (OLA) website which is [www.ontariolacrosse.com](http://www.ontariolacrosse.com) .