

Policies of the Hereford Girls Lacrosse Program

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Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide an encouraging and healthy environment for girls of all skill levels and ability to learn, compete, and grow as athletes and individuals. We are focused on developing individual and team skills, good sportsmanship, character and a healthy work ethic that fosters and instills life-long appreciation and love for the game. Core to our mission is the continuing education of our coaches, parents and players. We fully support and encourage participation in the Positive Coaching Alliance program and provide ongoing coaching and player clinics across age groups instructing on technique, field awareness and team play. To further support our goals, we strive to create an environment that provides unconditional positive reinforcement to our players and proactively encourage coaches, parents and spectators to demonstrate respect for all teams and good sportsmanship at the Hereford Girl's Lacrosse activities.

I. Rules of Play

Rules of play for the Girls Program shall be governed by US Lacrosse's' *Official Rules for Girls & Women's Lacrosse*. The league (for example MYLA) may establish additional or modified rules for youth players. When this is the case, they supersede US Lacrosse rules. An example is modified checking rules.

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II. Minimum Play Rule

All Coaches will, at a minimum, follow the MYLA guidelines that each player will play not less than twenty-five percent (25%) of each game; however, the goal for every team at every level will be to allow equivalent playing time per position. It is incumbent upon everyone involved in the Hereford Girls Lacrosse Program during the team alignment process and during the course of the season to ensure that the size and makeup of each roster is created, and the teams are managed, in the spirit of the policy to ensure fair playing time for every player. The only exceptions shall be in the event of disciplinary action or a player injury.

III. Playing Up

Every Player must play in her age appropriate level as determined by the league rules. "Playing up" will not be permitted. Six-year-olds wishing to play at the Tyker level must have played at the Clinic level (or in a comparable program) as five-years-olds.

IV. Evaluations and Team Alignment

The general purposes of evaluations are:

- o Give all players the opportunity to demonstrate their skills.
- o Eliminate favoritism and bias when placing players on teams.
- o Create teams consistent with league rules (example, MYLA) for the various levels (A/B/C). For example, multiple teams at the same level are required to be equally balanced.
- o Create teams that are in the best interests for the majority of players within a playing level.

Pre-Evaluations (Completion of Registration)

Upon completion of the registration period, the Registration Coordinator will provide a list of all players registered for a specific age group to the Age Group Coordinators. A complete list of players registered for all age groups will be provided to the Assistant Commissioner. To ensure that adequate time is given to the player evaluations, a target of three, two-hour evaluations will be conducted for the

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Lightning, Midget and Junior age groups. A target of one or two, one-hour evaluations will be conducted for the tyker "A" group. Player evaluations are optional for spirit or high school age groups. At least one of these evaluation sessions will be used for the expressed purpose of conducting tryouts for any player wanting to be considered for an "A" team. The program will strive to conduct evaluations for the spring outdoor season using a combination of indoor and outdoor facilities. Evaluations for the fall indoor season will be abbreviated compared with spring evaluation, and will be conducted outdoors.

Selecting Evaluators

The Age Group Coordinators will select evaluators for each age group. A list of evaluators for each age group will be submitted to the Assistant Commissioner for his/her review. The Assistant Commissioner shall verify that all efforts have been made to satisfy the guidelines for selecting evaluators. The Girl's Board shall resolve any issues regarding evaluator selection not set forth above. Evaluators should be instructed to remain impartial in the scoring of players and refrain from taking any social or personal opinion into their scoring other than the lacrosse skill being evaluated. Every effort will be made to have as many qualified evaluators for a given age group come from a pool of coaching candidates who do not have daughters playing in that age group. Evaluators will not provide input or rating information for their own daughters.

The Evaluation Process

The evaluations should consist of an assessment of the player's lacrosse skills (stick skills, scooping, passing, catching, shooting, dodging, defense, goal tending), physical abilities (speed, endurance, strength), game sense, field awareness, aggressiveness, ability to follow directions, and attitude. Each Age Group Coordinator is responsible for developing the age appropriate drills necessary to assess the above. Adequate scrimmage time should be allocated to assess game sense, field awareness, and aggressiveness.

The Age Group Coordinators will receive a complete list of registered players for his/her level from the Registration Coordinator. From this list, a "player key" will be created which associates a pinnie number to a player's name. In addition to the "player key", the Age Group Coordinators will create a "ratings sheet" which will contain only the pinnie number and areas on the sheet to rate player's skills based on the various different skills that will be evaluated. By removing the player's name from the rating sheet, this will help with impartiality by assigning each girl with a non-bias identifier (number only) during the evaluation process.

At evaluations, the "player key" can be used to check off who has attended the evaluation. The ratings sheet will be used to log each girl's performance in each of

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the different skills areas during the evaluation. We will use a numbering system from 1 (worst) to 5 (best) to record performance.

When appropriate, the players will be divided into smaller groups by sequential number. Each group will go to separate skill stations to be evaluated. This makes each station more manageable which should result in more accurate scores and more evaluator contact with each player. The objective is to keep the process moving from station to station to reduce idle time and overall confusion. This will help the evaluation process by keeping the players more focused.

Where feasible, players should be able to run through the drill once before recording performance. This step will assure that each player understand the skill being evaluated.

Once evaluations are completed, the Age Group Coordinator should compute the rankings for all attending players. All individual scores will be summed and the sum will be divided by the number of individual scores to determine each player's overall ranking. Once overall rankings are computed for all participants, the Age Group Coordinators should sort the list in descending order by overall rank. The result will be a list of players from skilled to beginner for each Age Group level. From this list, the selected coaches and Age Group Coordinators can very easily choose "A", "B" and "C" teams without factoring in personal opinion and bias. This process should occur as soon as possible after completion of the evaluations.

All documentation, including individual evaluator ranking sheets, overall ranking sheets and sorted rankings, will be copied and sent to the Assistant Commissioner for his/her review and reference. The Age Group Coordinator will make every effort to copy individual evaluator ranking sheets at the facility where evaluations are held, after completion of the evaluation session. The copies will be given to the Assistant Commissioner for his safeguarding. The Age Group Coordinator will keep the originals.

Player Rankings

Player rankings will be kept confidential and be disseminated to only the Assistant Commissioner, the Age Group coordinator, and those coaches directly involved in a specified draft. All information in making decisions regarding player placement on a particular team will be maintained on record by the Age Group coordinator.

Players Missing Evaluations

General Rule for all Players.

Players who do not participate in evaluations shall be placed at a playing level (A/B/C) based upon all reasonably available objective criteria. For example, such

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criteria would include, but not be limited to, ratings by a player's prior lacrosse coaches. The responsibility shall be primarily upon the player who missed evaluations to provide sources for such information to her Age Group Coordinator in a timely manner. If there is any doubt about the appropriate level for such a player between two levels, the player shall be placed at the lower skill level. If there is insufficient information to make an informed decision on the appropriate playing level, then the player shall be placed at the level for players with less experience, skill, and/or dedication (usually C).

Additional Requirement for Placement on A Team.

A player who does not participate in evaluations may only be placed on an "A" team (or a B team if it is the highest level team being fielded at that age level) if that player was "unable" to participate in any evaluation session prior to team selection. (Age Group Coordinators may conduct make-up evaluations for players who missed evaluations.) For example, the inability to participate in evaluations would include, but not be limited to, an injury existing at all evaluation dates that precluded the player's participation at all evaluation dates. A determination that a player was unable to participate in evaluations must be jointly agreed upon by the both the Age Group Coordinator and girls commissioner and emailed to the Girls Board for review.

Team Alignment

- o Team alignment will not be determined until after evaluations.
- o Team alignment should consider the best interests of the most players.
- o MYLA rules state a minimum team alignment, which must be established in order to allow all teams at a playing level to participate in playoffs.
- o Once team alignment is determined, coaches can be selected appropriately.

V. Selection of Coaches

- a) The selection of coaches shall occur only after the player evaluation process has been completed and team alignment has been determined.
- b) No incumbent coach or candidate to coach a girl's lacrosse team shall represent himself or herself as a coach until the coach selection process is final.
- c) Each Age Group Coordinator will be responsible for selecting the coaches at his/her level prior to the commencement of each outdoor and indoor season.

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- d) **Returning Coaches.** Returning coaches are individuals who have coached girls lacrosse (note: reference to coaches herein includes assistant coaches unless otherwise specified) in the Girls Hereford Lacrosse Program who express a desire to coach on their child's registration form or who express such a desire to the Age Group Coordinator before the evaluation process begins. Returning coaches shall be selected by factoring in the criteria for filling coaching vacancies below, but by heavily weighting the following criteria:
- 1) Commitment to coaching both the indoor and outdoor season.
 - 2) Experience at the age level and then at the immediately preceding age level.
 - 3) Overall experience coaching girls lacrosse.
- e) **Coaching Vacancies:** Any vacancies shall be filled based primarily upon each candidate's knowledge of girls lacrosse and experience coaching girls lacrosse. In addition, the criteria for returning coaches above shall be heavily weighted, if applicable, and then the following qualifications shall be factored in (not in order of importance):
- 1) Experience in and knowledge of other sports (playing and coaching).
 - 2) Experience as a lacrosse player (some of our most successful coaches have never played lacrosse, but have invested the time and energy needed to learn the game, while applying leadership skills).
 - 3) Positive leadership and good judgment.
 - 4) Communications (both to parents and the ability to relate to and instruct girls).
 - 5) Organization.
 - 6) Willingness to work with others.
 - 7) Ability to attend practices and games.
 - 8) Being a positive role model.
 - 9) Ability to focus on players equally.
- f) **Recruitment for coaching vacancies** shall be conducted by the Age Group Coordinator for each age group from:

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- 1) Parents who express a desire to coach on their child's registration form or otherwise; and
 - 2) Other volunteers recruited by the Age Group Coordinator, who volunteer through the web site or who are located by other means.
- g) All returning coaches, and candidates to fill vacancies and board members shall be invited to all applicable meetings, such as any preseason board meetings and meetings held by the Age Group Coordinator for the applicable age group. All such coaches shall be requested to provide the Age Group Coordinator with a statement to document both their interest in coaching as well as their knowledge of girls lacrosse and experience coaching girls lacrosse.
- h) Coaches shall be selected as follows:
- 1) Each Age Group Coordinator shall make the initial selection of coaches for the teams at each such Age Group Coordinator's age level based upon the criteria set forth above.
 - 2) The coaching selection shall be transmitted by each Age Group Coordinator to the Girls Commissioner, Girls Board and incumbent coaches for final approval.
 - 3) Any issues regarding coach selection not set forth above shall be resolved in accordance with the Procedures of the Girls Board.
- i) During the outdoor season, no one individual should be selected as the head coach of more than one team in the MYLA league without the approval of the Girls Commissioner and the Girls Board, including incumbent coaches. No coach shall be selected for a second coaching position during any season if it would deny another qualified candidate the opportunity to coach during the season.
- j) Head coaches shall be available for all (or substantially all) of a team's practices and games during the season.
- k) An individual may be disqualified from coaching temporarily or permanently by the Girls Lacrosse Board for "good cause." In the event that the Girls Lacrosse Board cannot address a coaching issue in a timely manner, the Girls Commissioner's and Age Group Coordinator shall address the issue. Appeal procedures are set forth below in "Grievances." "Good cause" is intended to include a material failure to follow the Girls Policies or a matter of equal or greater importance. "Good cause" is not intended to be based upon a mere difference of coaching philosophy where the adopted philosophy is consistent with the Girls Policies and not inconsistent with the principles of the Positive Coaching Alliance.

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VI. Selection of Teams

All teams will be selected by a method consistent with a round robin draft. In cases where such a method is not used, teams will be tentatively selected and recommended by the coaches to the Age Group Coordinator for approval. The Age Group Coordinator must attend all team selections to ensure consistency and impartiality. Player rankings determined from evaluations will be used as the main criteria to determine a player's skill level and placement on a particular team; i.e., "A" or "B" or "C" team. Given that the numbering system can result in approximately similar rankings, other criteria can be taken into consideration to assign closely ranked players to a final team; for example, a player's years of experience, a player's positive attitude and enthusiasm, the overall necessity to balance field positions within each team and past performance reviews completed by members of the Hereford coaching staff. The objective here is to ensure that each player is placed on the appropriate team with peers of equal skill, athletic ability, and aggressiveness that will allow that player to fully and equally participate, to have an enjoyable lacrosse experience and to prosper in the game of lacrosse. Note: "A" team(s) will be selected first when appropriate, "B" team(s) will be selected second when appropriate and "C" team(s) will be selected last when appropriate. Any player attending the evaluations who chooses to be excluded from the selection process of the "A" team before or after the evaluations are completed, should notify the Age Group coordinator immediately, and prior to the first team meeting.

VII. Registration

Process

- a) A mail in registration will be conducted well before the beginning of the season.
- b) During the mail in period, forms will be made available on the Hereford Lacrosse web site and at the HZRPC (Hereford Zone Recreation and Parks Council) office.
- c) When the mail in registration period begins, it will be advertised via email, flyers distributed to the area schools and public library, and road signage.
- d) All players that mail in a registration and payment during the defined mail in period will be guaranteed placement on a team. The deadline for this period will be clearly displayed on all advertisements.
- e) After the mail in deadline, the program will conduct a late/walk in registration.

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- f) Late/walk in registrations will be used to fill out the teams. Registrations will be taken on a first come, first served basis.
- g) In the event that teams are filled to capacity, a waiting list will be established in the order described above.
- h) Any parent interested in serving as a head coach or assistant coach should indicate such interest on their daughter's registration form.

Team Sizes

- a) Team size directly affects playing time. Adequate playing time is necessary for the enjoyment of all participants. Coaches must be committed to providing fair playing time for all players.
- b) The Age Group Coordinator will determine minimum and maximum team size, considering playing level and season (indoor/outdoor).
- c) With the coach's approval, minor variations in team size are acceptable in some circumstances.

Wait List

- a) The registrar is responsible for processing all registrations in the order received.
- b) Coaches, coordinators, and others should not accept registration forms, and understand that such actions may adversely affect the registrant's placement. The register must be contacted directly by the players and/or parents in order to properly register.
- c) During, or shortly following walk in registration, the registrar is responsible for notifying players/parents that they are on a waiting list.
- d) As openings occur, players will be selected from the waiting list in the order they registered.
- e) Preference will not be given based upon skill level, special skills, or anything else. For example, a coach may not select #5 on the wait list if that player happens to be a goalie and his/her team needs a goalie. This is unfair to players #1 through #4 that are waiting.
- f) If a player is on the waiting list, they are not officially registered with Hereford Lacrosse, and would NOT be violating MYLA rules by registering with another program.

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- g) The program will not deposit monies until placement on a team is certain. Parents/players on the wait list may at any time receive their money back.
- h) In the event of a wait list, Hereford Lacrosse will strive to recruit players so that everyone gets placed on a team. It is the program's desire to place everyone on a team.

VIII. Grievances

All grievances should be attempted to be resolved at the level closest to the issue prompting the grievance.

For a parent that has a concern about their child's experience, the coach should be the first contact. If the resolution is unsatisfactory to the parent, then the parent should contact the Age Group Coordinator. A listing of coordinators and their contact information is available on the web site. If the grievance still cannot be resolved, then a written request for consideration should be made to the Girls Commissioner and Girls Lacrosse Board, which includes a description of the issue, and the desired resolution.

It will be the responsibility of the Girls Lacrosse Board to address all written grievances, and determine what, if any action will be taken. In the event that the Girls Lacrosse Board cannot address an issue in a timely manner, the Girls Commissioner's shall address the issue. The burden of proof in any grievance will be on the grievant. Any appeal of the decision of the Girls Commissioner shall be to the Girls Lacrosse Board. Any appeal of the decision of the Girls Lacrosse Board shall be to the Commissioner of the combined Girls and Boys Lacrosse Program. Any appeal of the decision of the Commissioner of the combined Girls and Boys Lacrosse Program shall be to the Hereford Zone Recreation & Parks Council.

Revision History

December 2005 – Approved. Current board members: Marilyn Darcangelo, Brian Tenberg, Rick Stanley, John Beazley, Amanda Gianotti, Sam Reider, Andy Clancy. Coach selection and grievance sections incomplete.

February 2008 – Section added for players missing evaluations. Current board members: Bill Litsinger, Brian Tenberg, Rick Stanley, Clarke Tankersley, Chris May, Jen Reider, Frank Collachi, Amy Nozemack, Lauren May, Lindsay Reihl, Erin McCleary, Dan Stachura, Tom Carroll, Duane Abbott, Jen Reider

January 2009 – Major revision to include Mission Statement, rewrite of evaluation process, addition of coach selection, and revisions of most other sections. Current board members: Bill Litsinger, Brian Tenberg, Rick Stanley, Clarke Tankersley, Chris May, Frank Collachi, Amy Nozemack, Lauren May, Lindsay Reihl, Erin McCleary, Dan Stachura, Tom Carroll, Duane Abbott, Jen Reider