

## **COACH, PLAYER, SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Mission of the OCLA is to promote the game of lacrosse among the youth of the United States in a safe and sportsmanlike environment. Further the OCLA is committed to preserve the "Honor of the Game" for the players, coaches, officials, parents, and all others who enjoy the sport of lacrosse. To fulfill our Mission and preserve the Honor of The Game, the OCLA expects that players, coaches, officials, parents, and spectators abide by a "Code of Conduct" that embodies basic common sense principles, demonstrates consideration of others, and projects a positive image to our young men and women. By doing this, the OCLA can further its efforts to maintain the highest possible standards of Sportsmanship and to work together for the betterment of the game of lacrosse at all levels, but especially at the youth level, where first impressions count the most. To gain a better understanding of the origins of the Code of Conduct, it is strongly recommended that Members read "The Parents Guide to the sport of Lacrosse" (published & distributed by US Lacrosse), especially the sections entitled the Bill of Rights for Young Lacrosse Players, The Role of Parents, and The Role of the Coach.

The purpose of the "Code of Conduct" and the enforcement provisions which follow are to promote, project, and protect the image of lacrosse, and the interests and safety of all those that participate and give their time and effort to the betterment of the Game. The ultimate success of the principles and standards, emphasized in this "Code of Conduct" rest primarily in the hands of those for whom they have been prepared -- the Players, Coaches, Officials, Parents and Spectators.

### **A. The Code of Conduct**

Players, coaches, spectators, and parents are to conduct themselves in a manner that "Honors the Game" and demonstrates respect to other players, coaches, officials, and spectators. In becoming a member of the lacrosse community an individual assumes certain obligations and responsibilities to the game of lacrosse and its participants. The essential elements in this "Code of Conduct" are HONESTY and INTEGRITY. Those who conduct themselves in a manner that reflects these elements will bring credit to the sport of lacrosse, themselves, their teams, and their organization. It is only through such conduct that our sport can earn and maintain a positive image and make its full contribution to youth sports in the United States and around the world. The OCLA supports the following behaviors for those participating or involved in any way with US Lacrosse and youth lacrosse in general:

- The essential elements of the "Code of Conduct" must be adhered to.
- Sportsmanship and teaching the concepts of fair play are essential to the game, and must be taught and developed both at home and on the field during practices and games. Permitting, encouraging, or condoning performance that is dangerous or demeaning to a player, coach, official, spectator, or anyone connected with the function of the game is unacceptable.
- The emphasis on winning should never be placed above the value of good sportsmanship, the concepts of fair play, or the skills of the game.
- Derogatory comments are unacceptable. Use positive reinforcement with players and adults alike. It should be remembered that criticism, once made, can never be retracted.
- The safety and welfare of the players are of primary importance.
- Coaches must always be aware of the tremendous influence they have on their players. They are to strive to be positive role models in dealing with young people, as well as with adults.
- Officials are expected to conduct themselves as professionals and in accordance with

those guidelines and rules set forth in the applicable rule books and manuals; and in a manner that demonstrates courtesy and fairness to all parties while exercising their authority on the field.

- Adults involved with the game must never permit anyone to openly or maliciously criticize, badger, harass, or threaten an official. To do so is a violation of the rules of the game and must be considered unacceptable conduct. The coach must quietly and privately address all concerns to the officials at the appropriate time as defined by the rules; and if deemed appropriate, place in writing to the official's assigning authority any significant problems with the officiating.
- Knowledge of the Rules of Lacrosse must be respected and adhered to by all who participate in the game of lacrosse, both in the letter and the spirit of the game. The Rules are designed to protect the players, provide common standards and control the game. Attempts to beat these rules, to take unfair advantage of an opponent, or to teach deliberate unsportsmanlike conduct is considered unacceptable conduct.
- Guidelines and eligibility requirements, such as age and previous level of participation, have been established to encourage and maximize participation, as well as promote safety. All who participate in the game of lacrosse must be thoroughly acquainted with these rules and regulations, and should assume the responsibility for their observance and enforcement. Attempts to circumvent eligibility rules, or to use ineligible players, shall be considered unacceptable conduct.

## **B. Enforcement of Violations of the Code of Conduct**

- A player or coach ejected from an OCLA sanctioned game for any Unsportsmanlike Conduct (See Definitions) will be barred from the remainder of the game in question, and the following two games pending a review by the OCLA. The offending individual(s) must immediately leave the game area. Depending upon the seriousness of the infraction, coaches may be barred from attending any future regular season or tournament games as a spectator.
- A team that plays an Illegal Player (See Definitions), knowingly or unknowingly, in an OCLA sanctioned game will forfeit the game during which the infraction occurred.
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct (See Definitions) by spectators, who are identified by either a recognized game or event official(s), will first result in the stoppage of play and a request by the game officials to the coach(s) to address the offending spectator(s), asking that the disruptive activity cease immediately. If such behavior continues, a one-minute penalty on the in-home will be assessed by the game officials against the offending team (boys) or a yellow card given to the team coach (girls), and the offending spectator(s) must then immediately leave the game area for the remainder of that game. Failure of the spectator to leave the area will result in the immediate stoppage of play and the forfeiture of the game.
- Any player(s) or coach(s) who at any time while attending an OCLA sanctioned event, conducts themselves in an abusive, offensive, or illegal manner outside of game situations will be barred from participating in the next two OCLA sanctioned events pending a review by the OCLA. Depending upon the seriousness of the infraction, the offending individual(s) or team(s) may be barred from attending any future regular season or tournament games as a spectator(s). Further, a spectator(s) who conducts him or herself in an abusive, offensive, or illegal manner while attending an OCLA sanctioned event outside of game situations will be subject to being barred from future games. NOTE: It should be understood that if the offending individual(s) will not leave the area of his/her own free will, and to enforce any of the above violations, a request will be made to have the offending individual(s) escorted from the area by a designated authority.

### **C. Definitions**

- **Illegal Player(s):** An Illegal Player is defined as a player who does not meet the criteria set forth in the player eligibility section of the OCLA player, conduct and game rules (section 1).
- **Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** Unsportsmanlike Conduct is defined as a player, coach, or spectator who at any time while on field or on the grounds of a sanctioned OCLA event conducts themselves in an abusive, offensive, or illegal manner during game situations or outside of game situations. This includes but is not exclusive to:

a.) Fighting;

b.) Causing property damage at an event site, (i.e.: Property damage to the game site, eating areas, any part of the host site's physical plant, etc.);

c.) Entering into an argument with an official or umpire as to a decision that has been made;

d.) Attempting in any way to influence the decision of an official or umpire;

e.) Using threatening, profane, or obscene language or gestures at any time during a game;

f.) Baiting, taunting, or any other act which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule, or demean others under any circumstances, including on the basis of race, religion, gender, or national origin.

### **D. Review and Appeal Procedure and Process**

- The Official's Coordinator will report any violations to the board immediately. Upon notification, the designated league officials will review the incident within 72 hours and decide whether any further punitive action is required.
- If the individual in question wishes to challenge the matter of participation in future OCLA sanctioned events, he/she may make a formal request in writing to the OCLA board of directors for a special hearing. Once this request has been received, a hearing will be convened in a timely manner at a site mutually agreed upon by all parties. The hearing panel will be made up of the OCLA board of directors. All decisions of the panel as to future participation will be final.

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Changes are denoted in red