

U.S. Lacrosse - Southern Ohio Chapter
Program Guidelines - Girls Middle School Lacrosse
Adopted: January 15, 2009
Second Revision: January 2017 (approved via vote 1/30/17)

1. Structure:

The *Ohio South Middle School Girls Lacrosse League* (the “League”) is an association of Southern Ohio public school teams, private school teams, recreation association teams, and private club teams (“Programs”) that sponsor lacrosse teams for 7th and 8th grade girls.

As of January 2017, the Programs who plan to participate in the League consist of the following: Anderson, Beavercreek, CCD, Centerville, CHCA, Indian Hill, Kings, Lakota, Lebanon, Loveland, Madeira, Mariemont, Mason, Miami Valley, Miamisburg, Milford, Oakwood, Pandas, Royals, Seven Hills, Springboro, Summit, Sycamore, Vikings, Walnut Hills, and Wyoming. Program participation may vary annually based on each program’s ability to field a lacrosse team.

2. Mission:

The purpose of this League is to promote the growth of competitive middle school girl’s lacrosse in the Southern Ohio Chapter, while recognizing the importance of physical fitness, stick skills, game skills, understanding of the rules, and sportsmanship to individual player development. Objectives include:

- a. **Skills** - Increasing the skill level of experienced and inexperienced players.
- b. **Advancement** - Preparing middle school girls to advance to high school play.
- c. **Opportunity** – Support and enable middle school girls’ ability to play on a team, and to provide opportunities for new teams to join the League.
- d. **Management** - Facilitate and manage games among teams in the League.
- e. **Rules** - Enforce the rules and regulations of U.S. Lacrosse and the Southern Ohio Chapter. Facilitate communication with the Ohio Women’s Lacrosse Umpires Association as appropriate.
- f. **U.S.L. Programs** - Promote U.S. lacrosse training, coaching, sportsmanship, and education programs. Each player and coach must register with U.S. Lacrosse.

3. Divisions:

Teams in the League will be scheduled according to the competition level set by the individual program’s director. The A-division is a competitive grouping, while the B-division is a developmental grouping. The goal is to have equivalently sized and skilled girls play in each division. Modified checking is allowed at both A and B levels. If a Program holds they do not have enough players that are “A” level but do have enough overall players to field 2 teams, the Program should attempt to field two equally skilled B teams. The League will rely on Programs to make this

determination; the League Board will review annually if Programs are assessing this fairly. During the season, if it is clear that a Program significantly underestimated the strength of their 2 B teams, an attempt to convert one team to an A team will be considered if possible. In-season adjustments and end-of-season assessments for a specific Program will be considered for the following year's plans.

- a. **A-level** teams encourage competitive play and are structured by their coaches to win within the philosophy and spirit of the game. We will keep win/loss records and league standings at the A-level only. The coach may play 7th graders or 8th graders on an A-level team based on skill. It is recommended that 6th graders only play in A games if needed to field a team. For 6th grade players who routinely play on an A level team, it is recommended that the player should not play on their program's 5/6 youth team. Consistent with US Lacrosse, rules, 5th grade players should not play at the 7th and 8th grade levels. Also consistent with US Lacrosse rules is consideration for player size when moving 6th grade players to 7th/8th grade teams.

- b. **B-level** teams encourage developmental play and are structured by their coaches to encourage participation and improve skills in game settings. We will not keep win/loss records and league standings in the B-division. B-teams are predominantly 7th graders, who are learning the fundamentals of the game, to prepare for A-team play in their 8th grade year, and 8th graders who are new to lacrosse (typically with < 2 years of experience). As noted above, at a coach's discretion, 6th graders may play on B-teams so that the team has an adequate number of players. Consistent with US Lacrosse, rules, 5th grade players should not play at the 7th and 8th grade levels. Also consistent with US Lacrosse rules is consideration for player size when moving 6th grade players to 7th/8th grade teams. Unless there is routinely an insufficient number of players to adequately field the Program's Middle School teams, it is recommended that 6th graders playing frequently on the B team should not also be playing in the Program's 5th-6th grade team.

- c. **A and B level:** Unless either team's roster for a given game will fall below 16 players, it is recommended that no player should play more than 3 halves combined between the A and B games. When a primary A player plays in the B game, Programs are encouraged to play said A player in a position different from her primary A level position. Goalies are exempted from this recommendation, however programs are encouraged to identify A and B team goalies.

4. **Management:**

A board of directors consisting of 5 members will manage the League (the "Board"). Each Board member's term will last for two fiscal years beginning on October 1 and ending on September 30. Vacancies will be filled by volunteers

selected by a majority vote of the Programs in attendance at the first or second Fall chapter meetings.

5. **Fees:** Fees are determined by the Southern Ohio US Lacrosse Chapter. Compliance with fee payment is the responsibility of individual programs. Noncompliance of fee payment will be addressed by the leadership of the Southern Ohio US Lacrosse Chapter.
 - a. **Single Team** - An organization with a single team will pay U.S. lacrosse an annual fee of \$125.00 (\$75.00 membership, and \$50 assignor fee).
 - b. **Multiple Team** – An organization with 2 teams (A & B) will pay U.S. Lacrosse \$200.00 (\$150 membership, and \$50 assignor fee).
 - c. **Payment** - The fees must be paid prior to the January scheduling meeting for teams to be entered for that season.

6. **Activity Schedule:**
 - a. **September-November** – New Board members selected and become active. The Board compiles a list of the teams that will participate in the next year’s League play, along with a list of all Ohio program contacts within the League. The scheduling process and method will be identified by the Board with key dates identified. Dates for the scheduling process and final meeting should be set by the end of November.
 - b. **December** – All Board members will attend the Southern Ohio Chapter of U.S. Lacrosse meetings to prepare for the January scheduling process and final meeting. Divisions and League structure will be discussed at this time. By the end of the month, Programs participating in the League will be confirmed and committed.
 - c. **January** – The process of scheduling will be concluded by the end of January. This will typically involve a period of data collection regarding turf field availability, the number and level of teams each Program will sponsor, and periods where games will not be played (e.g. Spring Break). This data will then be organized and an initial draft schedule will be provided to member programs for feedback. A final schedule meeting to solidify and finalize the upcoming season’s schedule will be held. The final schedule will be released in early February.
 - d. **February** – Programs may schedule meetings for players and parents to discuss the upcoming season. Players may participate in off-season clinics and leagues at any time before practice and league play commences.
 - e. **Late February-May** –Coaches may start practice on the day identified by the Board (February 20, 2017) as the first day for lacrosse for Middle School programs. This typically coincides with the start date for High School girls programs but may be adjusted at the Board’s discretion. The start date for games will be determined by the Board ensuring sufficient time for programs to play 14-16 in-season games (March 13, 2017).
 - f. **June** – Programs are free to enter their teams in summer tournaments. It is recommended that programs consider OHSAA rules governing rising high school freshman.

g. **July-August** – No significant activities.

7. **Schedule and Reporting of Games:**

- a. **Schedule** - All games are finalized at the annual scheduling meeting in January. A draft is prepared by the scheduling director prior to the meeting, so coaches can work out major conflicts beforehand.
- b. **Assignor** - The schedule is compiled in an Excel spreadsheet, which lists the following information for each game: game number, home team, home team contact, home team contact phone number, away team, away team contact, away team contact phone number, game location, game time. The scheduling director will submit the schedule to the Arbiter assignor (currently John Hunt – JVBHuntv@gmail.com).
- c. **Limit** - League teams must play their League schedule. If they do schedule a game outside their division, it cannot interfere with the ongoing referee schedule, and it does not count in League standings. To avoid impacting referee scheduling for the League and high school games, Programs should attempt to reschedule games on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday.
- d. **Reporting** - All scores for A-games are reported by the home team to a volunteer selected after scheduling meeting by e-mail. We will not keep personal statistics in the League.

8. **Games:**

- a. **Days** – Middle school girls’ games are normally played on Monday and Wednesday evenings, commencing early or mid-March, allowing for various spring breaks, and ending by mid-May, typically by beginning of the OHSAA HS playoffs. **Typically**, there is a 7-week window for games plus a week for make-up games.
- b. **Length** – The games should take one hour to complete: 25 minute running clock first half, 5 minute half time, 25 minute running clock second half. One-90 second time out will be permitted for each team in each half. Clock will be stopped by referee for any player injuries, other significant disruptions in play or called time out. The play clock will be stopped during the final two minutes of the second half.
- c. **Rules** – U.S. Lacrosse rules will be in effect for everything except the game time stipulation (local rule). There will only be modified checking (e.g. full stick must be below the shoulder), and a defended player who holds a stick in a “checkable position” above the shoulder (as defined by US Lacrosse full checking rules) for more than 3 seconds will lose possession. When one team scores to gain a 4 goal lead, the team which is behind can elect to take possession of the ball instead of having a draw. This free possession is played as an indirect minor foul per US Lacrosse rules.
- d. **Referees** – Referees will be assigned by the chapter assignor. Ideally, **at least one adult over 25** years of age should be assigned to referee each game. If

there is only one referee for a game, he/she should be an adult over 25, and he or she will be paid \$60 per game. If there are 2 referees for a game, one should be an adult over 25, and each referee will be paid \$40 per game. Each team splits the cost of the referees, irrespective of whether a team is visiting or home. The referees must be U.S.L. approved. If no referee appears by game time, it is the coaches' prerogative to determine if the game should be played and who will officiate. In such instances, the Head Coaches for both teams are encouraged to officiate the game in an objective manner so that the game can be played within the spirit of the rules and good sportsmanship.

- e. **Playing Time Requirements** – Unless required by the rules of a particular Program, a coach may play any player for as much time as he/she wants. Unless either team's roster for a given game will fall below 16 players, it is recommended that no player should play more than 3 halves combined between the A and B games. When a primary A player plays in the B game, Programs are encouraged to play said A player in a position different from her primary A level position. Goalies are exempted from this recommendation, however programs are encouraged to identify A and B team goalies.
- f. **Coaches** – The coaches must meet any specific program requirements and requirements of the Southern Ohio Chapter of US Lacrosse. Paid coaches are permitted. The Head coach is the only coach allowed to communicate to the referee during the game. Player captains are also allowed to communicate to the referee during game play (as consistent with US Lacrosse rules).
- h. **Tables** – The home team is responsible for providing timers and a scorer's table. The home team is responsible for identifying a score keeper and score book or scoreboard. Home teams are responsible for all field set up including cones for substitution areas and field boundaries.
- i. **Fields** – Home team will be responsible for providing and inspecting the field to ensure playability, lined per U.S. Lacrosse rules, and as close as reasonably possible to U.S. Lacrosse regulation size.
- j. **Mercy Rule** – The mercy rule may be applied in situations where one team has a score differential of four or more goals. The trailing team has the option of a free position at the draw circle.

9. **Player Jurisdiction:**

This is a community-based league. The League's goal is to ensure that girls play for the team within their school district based on their primary residence. Since, there are 4 types of teams in this League (public school, private school, recreation, and club), the jurisdiction rules must allow for unique circumstances associated with each type of team organization.

- a. **Public School** – If a player attends a public school that has a school team, that player should play for that public school team. If there is a player, who lives

in a public school team district, but attends another school that does not have a team, that player must play for the closest (to their home) recreation or club team. If a player is cut by her public school team, she may play for the nearest recreation or club team. If a player lives in a community that has both a public school team and a recreation or club team, she may choose which team she wants to join, but she should not play outside the community and she cannot play on 2 teams.

- b. **Private School** – If a player attends a private school that has a school team, that player is encouraged to play for the private school team, but has the option to play for a recreation team or club team located in the community in which she resides. That player must choose one or the other, and cannot play on both, and should not play on a club or recreation team outside of her district if there is a team available for her to play in her district.
- c. **Recreation Team** – If a player lives in a school district that has a recreation team and no school team, she must play for that team, unless she attends a private school and chooses to play for the private school team.
- d. **Club Teams** – While club teams do not have defined areas, they are not allowed to recruit players from areas that already have community based recreation teams, club teams, or public school teams.
- e. **Players** – No player can play for two different League Programs.

10. Code of Conduct; Misconduct:

The League's goal is to provide a safe and competitive environment for players to have fun, develop friendships, learn, and grow. The Board encourages the principles of the Positive Coaching Alliance. The Board encourages Program managers and coaches to be responsible for the behavior of their coaches, players, and fans and to take corrective measures when necessary. The Board views its disciplinary role as one of oversight, and will not tolerate player, coach, or fan misconduct. The responsible Program for each team is primarily responsible for the discipline of the coaches and players of said team, provided the League reserves the right to impose discipline when determined necessary by the Board.

- a. **Code of Conduct** – The U.S. Lacrosse Code of Conduct will be used as the League's conduct code. The U.S. Lacrosse Code of Conduct is located at the U.S. Lacrosse website (uslacrosse.org) within the rule book for each age grouping as well as within the Health and Safety guidelines.
- a. **Player Misconduct** – Players who misbehave will receive yellow and red cards per the referee's discretion in accordance with U.S.L. rules. Any player, who receives a red card, will be suspended for the next full game.
- b. **Coach Misconduct** – Coaches are not permitted to leave the coaching box (coach's half of field to endline), while a game is being played, without permission of the referee (i.e., injury). Coaches are not permitted to yell at players or coaches from the opposing team. Coaches are not allowed to encourage their players to hurt, harm, or injure players from other teams. Profanity by coaches, players and fans is not permitted. Coaches and players are not permitted to touch a referee, other coach, or player in an aggressive manner. If a coach violates these rules, he will receive a warning from the

referee on the first offense in the form of a yellow card, and a red card on the second offense. If a second offense (red card) occurs, an assistant coach will be asked by the referee to take over field duties for that team and the coach who received the red card shall leave the field. Following such an incident, the referees will write a report to the Board Chair, and the coach will not be permitted on the field until he has had a personal meeting with the Board Chair and 2 other members of the League Board to form a committee. This Board committee may discipline the coach by giving him/her/them anything from a warning to a 2 game suspension. If determined appropriate by the Board committee who meets with the coach, any coach who receives a second red card in the same season will not be permitted to participate in a game sponsored by the League.

- c. **Fan Misconduct** – Fans are not permitted to run on the field during the game. Fans are not permitted to touch coaches, players, or referees. Fans are not permitted to verbally harass players, coaches, or referees. If a fan is abusive, the referee may stop the game, issue a warning to the team, and request the coach to immediately talk to the fan. If this happens a second time, the referee may change possession of the ball, if he/she can determine what team the fan represents. Coaches shall take reasonable steps to monitor the conduct by the fans of his/her team.

11. Substance Abuse:

Substance abuse by coaches or players will not be tolerated. The first violation for substance abuse is a 2 game suspension; the Program is also permitted to assess any additional sanctions required by that Program. The second abuse at a League sponsored game is a remaining season suspension. Any substance abuse incident should be reported by the referee/s and coach/es to the Board Chair. If a coach or a referee decides a player cannot make a competent decision on the field (for whatever reason), the coach or the referee has the right to remove that player from the game.

12. Adoption of Guidelines and Future Modification to Guidelines.

These Guidelines will be submitted for approval by a majority vote of the Programs participating in the League Scheduling Meeting occurring at the end of January in the modification year. Each Program will be entitled to one vote, regardless of the number of teams sponsored by the Program. Once approved by a majority vote of the Programs participating in the League Scheduling Meeting, any future amendment or modification of these Guidelines will require a majority vote of the Programs.

13. Ohio HB 143. Programs are encouraged to review Ohio HB 143 requiring concussion training for all coaches. [<http://www.lsc.ohio.gov/analyses129/12-hb143-129.pdf>]