Lacrosse Study guide

Lacrosse, considered to be America's first sport, was born of the North American Indian, christened by the French, and adapted and raised by the Canadians. Modern lacrosse has been embraced by athletes and enthusiasts of the United States and the British Commonwealth for over a century.

The sport of lacrosse is a combination of basketball, soccer and hockey. Anyone can play lacrosse--the big or the small. The game requires and rewards coordination and agility, not brawn. Quickness and speed are two highly prized qualities in lacrosse.

An exhilarating sport, lacrosse is fast-paced and full of action. Long sprints up and down the field with abrupt starts and stops, precision passes and dodges are routine in men's and women's lacrosse. Lacrosse is played with a stick, the crosse, which must be mastered by the player to throw, catch and scoop the ball.

Lacrosse is one of the fastest growing team sports in the United States. Youth participation in the sport has grown over 500% since 1999 to nearly 250,000. No sport has grown faster at the high school level over the last 10 years and there are now an estimated 200,000 high school players. Lacrosse is also the fastest-growing sport over the last six years at the NCAA level, and that's just the tip of the iceberg. There are more than 500 college club programs, including nearly 200 women's teams that compete at the US Lacrosse Intercollegiate Associates level.

• Each team must keep at least four players, including the goalie, in its defensive half of the field and three in its offensive half. Three players (midfielders) may roam the entire field.

• There are ten players consisting of one goaltender, three defense players, three midfielders, and three attackers.

• Generally, high school games are 48 minutes long, with 12-minute quarters. Each team is given a two-minute break between the first and second quarters, and the third and fourth quarters. Half time is ten minutes long.

• A lacrosse game begins with a face off at the midfield line at the X spot in the center of the field.

• In a lacrosse match, it begins with a face-off. The ball is placed between the sticks of two squatting players at the center of the field. The official blows the whistle to begin play. Each face-off player tries to control the ball. The players in the wing areas can release; the other players must wait until one player has gained possession of the ball or the ball has crossed the goal line.

• Teams change sides between periods. Each team is permitted two time-outs each half. The team winning the coin toss chooses the end of the field it wants to defend first.

• Players may run with the ball in the crosse, pass and catch the ball. Only the goalkeeper may touch the ball with his hands.

• An attacking player cannot enter the crease around the goal, but may reach in with his stick to scoop a loose ball.

• A goaltender is considered in the crease as long as he has one foot on or within the 18-foot diameter circle. If he lifts his foot up and puts it back down while in the possession of the ball, it is called "out and in" and he loses possession of the ball.

• A goaltender has four seconds to step out of the crease or throw the ball to a teammate. If he does not do this, he loses possession of the ball.

• A face off consists of the two center players at the mid-field line crouching down and placing their sticks on the ground so that the heads of the sticks have their backs to each other. The official then
places the ball on the ground between the heads of the sticks, steps back and blows a whistle which signals to the players they can fight for possession of the ball.

- Center face-offs are also used after a goal and at the start of each quarter.
- If the ball or a player in possession of the ball goes out of bounds, the other team is awarded possession of the ball. If the ball goes out of bounds after an unsuccessful shot on goal, the player nearest to the ball when and where it goes out of bounds is awarded possession.
- An attacking player cannot enter the crease around the goal, but may reach in with his stick to scoop a loose ball.
- If a player commits a foul, the umpire blows the whistle and play stops. The player fouled wins or retains the ball, while the player who fouled the player is moved several yards behind or to the side of the player they fouled.
- Checking -- the method by which a player knocks the ball from another's stick -- is prohibited when it is: directed toward the face; uncontrolled; holding down the other's stick, or when the checker's stick is too close to the head or face. There can be no body contact.
- No players, other than the goalie, may enter the circle around the goal cage if the goalie is present.
- Cradling is the back and forth motion of bringing the stick from your waist up to your head and back down or bringing the stick from your right side across your body to your left side and back again.

**Positions:**

- **ATTACK:** The attacker's responsibility is to score goals. He generally restricts his play to the offensive end.
- **MIDFIELD:** The midfielder's responsibility is to cover the entire field playing both offense and defense.
- **DEFENSE:** The defense's responsibility is to defend the goal. He generally restricts his play to the defensive end of the field.

**GOAL:** The goalie's responsibility is to protect the goal and stop the opposing team from scoring.