

# LACROSSE

## BRIEF HISTORY:

With a history that spans centuries, lacrosse is the oldest sport in North America. Rooted in Native American religion, lacrosse was often played to resolve conflicts, heal the sick, and develop strong, virile men. To Native Americans, lacrosse is still referred to as "The Creator's Game."

Ironically, lacrosse also served as a preparation for war. Legend tells of as many as 1,000 players per side, from the same or different tribes, who took turns engaging in a violent contest. Contestants played on a field from one to 15 miles in length, and games sometimes lasted for days. Some tribes used a single pole, tree or rock for a goal, while other tribes had two goalposts through which the ball had to pass. Balls were made out of wood, deerskin, baked clay or stone.

The evolution of the Native American game into modern lacrosse began in 1636 when Jean de Brebeuf, a Jesuit missionary, documented a Huron contest in what is now southeast Ontario, Canada. At that time, some type of lacrosse was played by at least 48 Native American tribes scattered throughout what is now southern Canada and all parts of the United States. French pioneers began playing the game avidly in the 1800s. Canadian dentist W. George Beers standardized the game in 1867 with the adoption of set field dimensions, limits to the number of players per team and other basic rules.

New York University fielded the nation's first college team in 1877, and the game has grown tremendously since then. There are currently 400 college and 1,200 high school men's lacrosse teams from coast to coast.

The first women's lacrosse game was played in 1890 at the St. Leonard's School in Scotland. But, it was not until 1926 that Miss Rosabelle Sinclair established the first women's lacrosse team in the United States at the Bryn Mawr School in Baltimore, Maryland.

## POSITIONS:

### **Attack:**

The attackman's responsibility is to score goals. The attackman generally restricts his play to the offensive end of the field. A good attackman demonstrates excellent stick work with both hands and has quick feet to maneuver around the goal.

### **Midfield:**

The midfielder's responsibility is to cover the entire field, playing both offense and defense. The midfielder is a key to the transition game, and is often called upon to clear the ball from defense to offense.

### **Defense:**

The defenseman's responsibility is to defend the goal area. The defenseman generally restricts his play to the defensive end of the field.

## MEN'S LACROSSE EQUIPMENT:

### **The Crosse:**

The crosse (lacrosse stick) is made of wood, laminated wood or synthetic material, with a shaped net pocket at the end.

### **The Ball:**

The ball must be made of solid rubber and can be white, yellow or orange. The ball is 7.75 - 8 inches in circumference and 5 - 5.25 ounces.

**Protective Equipment:**

It is recommended that players wear such protective gear as helmets, gloves, and shoulder pads when participating in contact lacrosse.

**GENERAL LACROSSE RULES:**

- Lacrosse is a non-contact game played by 7-12 players. Lacrosse combines the skills of soccer, football, and basketball. The object of the game is to pass the ball to a teammate in the opponents goal area. The team scoring the most goals wins.
- Field players may pass, catch or run (up to three steps) with the ball in their crosse. After that, the ball must be thrown to a teammate. Players are allowed to pivot in any direction as in basketball.
- Lacrosse begins with a throw off. One team hurls the ball toward the opposite team, when the opposite team scoops the ball up play begins.
- If two players are going after the ball, the defensive team will be awarded possession.
- The boundaries are clearly marked on the playing surface.
- When a whistle blows, all players must stop in place. When a ball is ruled out of play, the player closest to the ball gets possession when play is resumed (provided they did not throw the ball out of bounds).
- Rough checks, and contact to the body with the crosse or body, are not allowed.
- A player may gain possession of the ball by intercepting an opponent's pass, or retrieving a loose ball.

**SCORING:**

- In order to score, the ball must be passed over the goal line and successfully caught by a teammate in the end zone.
- One can not run over the goal line and score, or pick up a loose ball in the end zone to score.

**PERSONAL FOULS**

**Slashing:** Occurs when a player's stick viciously contacts an opponent in any area.

**Tripping:** Occurs when a player obstructs his opponent at or below the waist with the crosse, hands, arms, feet or legs.

**Cross Checking:** Occurs when a player uses the handle of his crosse between his hands to make contact with an opponent

**Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** Occurs when any player or coach commits an act which is considered unsportsmanlike by an official, including taunting, arguing, or obscene language or gestures.

**Unnecessary Roughness:** Occurs when a player strikes an opponent with his stick or body using excessive or violent force.

**TECHNICAL FOULS**

**Holding:** Occurs when a player impedes the movement of an opponent or an opponent's crosse.

**Interference:** Occurs when a player interferes in any manner with the free movement of an opponent, except when that opponent has possession of the ball, the ball is in flight and within five yards of the player, or both players are within five yards of a loose ball.

**Pushing:** Occurs when a player thrusts or shoves a player from behind.

**Screening:** Occurs when an offensive player moves into and makes contact with a defensive player with the purpose of blocking him from the man he is defending.

**Stalling:** Occurs when a team intentionally holds the ball, without conducting normal offensive play, with the intent of running time off the clock.

- Fouls result in the temporary removal from the game or permanent removal from the game depending on their severity.

### **LACROSSE SKILLS:**

**Catching:** The act of receiving a passed ball with the crosse.

The coordinated motion of the arms and wrists that keeps the ball secure in the pocket and ready to be passed or shot when running.

**Cutting:** A movement by an offensive player without the ball, toward the opponent's goal, in anticipation of a feed and shot.

**Feeding:** Passing the ball to a teammate who is in position to score.

**Passing:** The act of throwing the ball to a teammate with the crosse.

**Scooping:** The act of picking up a loose ball with the crosse.

**Shooting:** The act of throwing the ball with the crosse toward the goal in an attempt to score.

### **GLOSSARY OF LACROSSE TERMS:**

**Clearing:** Running or passing the ball from the defensive half of the field to the attack goal area.

**Crosse (Stick):** The equipment used to throw, catch and carry the ball.

**Face-Off:** A technique used to put the ball in play at the start of each quarter, or after a goal is scored. The player's squat down and the ball is placed between their crosses.

**Fast Break:** A transition scoring opportunity in which the offense has at least a one-man advantage.

**Ground Ball:** A loose ball on the playing field.

**Handle (Shaft):** An aluminum, wooden or composite pole connected to the head of the crosse.

**Head:** The plastic or wood part of the stick connected to the handle.

**Pocket:** The strung part of the head of the stick that holds the ball.