



oregon youth lacrosse association

[www.oylax.org](http://www.oylax.org)

**OYLA Memorandum – Attn: Referees, Coaches and Program Coordinators**

**Date: April 21, 2009**

**To: OYLA Certified Youth Referees  
Youth Lacrosse Coaches  
Program Coordinators**  
**From: OYLA Board of Directors**  
**Re: Referee Update / Season Update**

On behalf of the OYLA Board, we hope that your season is off to a go start. Based on the number of calls and emails received by OYLA Board Members, it seems we have made great progress this season in improving the quality of our youth games through better instruction and more consistent refereeing in addition to helping to train more knowledgeable lacrosse coaches. Thank you referees, coaches and program coordinators for your ongoing commitment to OYLA's effort to provide a safe, positive and educational youth lacrosse experience.

To keep this progress moving forward, we ask for your support when addressing game incidents by responding in a positive and solution oriented manner. We trust that game incidents can be resolved at the program level but certainly OYLA can review and help resolve as needed or required.

To better minimize game incidents, please read and consider the following recommendation:

- 1. Referees:** you are empowered through your OYLA referee training and certification to manage and control the lacrosse game. Player safety is enhanced and game incidents are reduced by being an active and engaged referee.
  - Please referee to OYLA grade level rule sets; no exceptions
  - Please use your whistle and flag confidently as tools to manage the game you are officiating. Coaches and players have an expectation that you know the grade level rule sets. Coaches may disagree with your call. That is ok. Your primary job is to ensure a safe game is being played within the age level rules

- Please provide clear communication to players and coaches before the game, during the play of the game as well as timeouts and halftime as needed.
- Please report to your program or referee coordinator if you encounter conflicts from a game with a team's coach(s) or player(s), whether from your own program or opposing team

**2. Coaches** - you are the direct link between the players, referees and even the parents. Coaching to grade level rule sets will help develop the players' needed lacrosse fundamentals. Your commitment to the grade level rule sets will also help protect your kids by reducing the risk of unnecessary injuries as well as give parents a greater understanding of lacrosse. Please also remember while many of our youth referees will have some lacrosse playing experience, playing the game is entirely different than refereeing it. You can help ensure a positive training experience for our referees and youth lacrosse players by:

- Supporting and coaching to the grade level rule set only
- Not condoning improper conduct from your players in practice and in games
- Talking to the referees and/or opposing coaches in a positive manner even if feel the referees are not making calls or making repeated improper calls. Adopt a Safety First attitude.
- Working with the opposing coach to support the referee by talking to you players about playing good, hard lacrosse within the rules
- Alerting your Program Coordinator if there is an incident with the opposing team, its coach(es) or with the referee(s). Please get the name(s) of the coaches and/or referees to your Program Coordinator.

**3. Program Coordinators** – you are the direct link between your coaches, referees and OYLA. Your involvement and support of the OYLA mission is vital to the success of youth lacrosse in Oregon. You can help ensure a positive lacrosse experience for our players, referees, and coaches by:

- Requiring your coaches to instruct players based on the grade level rule sets
- Require your coaches to report any game incident to the Program Coordinator immediately after the game and include the names of the referees and opposing coaches
- Working internally or with other Program Coordinators to positively resolve game incidents, even if brought against your own players, referees or coaches
- Take corrective action as needed with any player, coach or referees in your program who are putting the player's safety at risk by not adhering to the grade level rule sets

- Communicating to OYLA if the conflict cannot be resolved at the program level. You can email your information to the OYLA Board by logging on to our website at [www.oylax.org](http://www.oylax.org) and click on the Contact Us button.

We are optimistic that as the season progresses, we will continue to see and hear that there are many more great youth lacrosse games being played than those that require post game incident review and/or corrective measures. We trust you will agree that any game that puts the safety of the players at risk because of improper conduct, by a player, coach or referee is not acceptable.

Thank you in advance for your continued support to the OYLA mission. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns. You can reach the OYLA Board by logging onto our website at [www.oylax.org](http://www.oylax.org) and click on the Contact Us button. Board member contact information is provided as well.

**Honor the Game.**

**OYLA Board of Directors**