



***CHAMPIONSHIPS***<sup>®</sup>

Rules Presentation  
February 4, 2026



## Primary Goals of the 2026–2027 Rule Changes

### Enhanced Safety & Deterrence

- Stronger penalties for physical fouls and dangerous play

### Simplified Penalty Structure

- New foul categories
- Reduced number of different penalty administrations
- Avoid double penalties

### Improved Game Flow & Timing Efficiency

- Rules changes to reduce overall game duration
- Rules changes to improve game flow and pace of play

### Clearer Definitions of Fouls/Greater Consistency in Calls

- Consistent interpretation and enforcement of fouls
- Fewer game-to-game and official-to-official discrepancies



## Goals and Game Personnel

### Goals and Logos

- Face outward
- Centered on the back of the goal net
- No higher than three feet from the ground.

### Suitability of Nets

- No holes or gaps in the net may exceed the diameter of a game ball or allow a ball to pass through
- Officials have final authority in determining whether goals meet rule specifications
- Responsibility of home team to correct

### Coach Presence on Sideline

- Coach must be present on the sideline to commence or continue play; see NCAA Bylaws re who may serve as a coach

### Headsets

- Required all Division I and Division II in 2027; strongly encourage for 2026; Division III permissive use



## Timing and Draw

### Game Clock

- Will stop on cards, stick checks, offside fouls, and defensive fouls committed in the CSA or administered at the dot during the final minute of each quarter and overtime period
- Will run on 8-meter free positions

### Overtime

- Remains sudden victory
- Two-minute rest period followed by a overtime period.
- This sequence shall continue until a winner is determined

### 30-Second Second Draw Clock

- Starts after completion of the stick check; expires on the sound of the horn
- If teams are ready before expiration, clock shall be turned off and no horn
- If not ready (**including late running off the field**), then possession to opposing team; subbing onto the field after horn is illegal substitution and green card

### Draw

- Team in possession at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters will retain possession at the start of the subsequent quarter regardless of numerical advantage
- Draws shall occur at the start of the game, at halftime, at the beginning of each overtime period, and after goals



## Fouls and Penalty Administration

### Shooting Space and Three Seconds

- Stick-and-arm's length shall be used to determine both shooting space and three-second violations
- **Both** can be flagged

### No Switching of Sticks

- During the course of play; permitted during
- Green Card
- Switching sticks is permitted after a goal is scored and during timeouts, including coaches

### Broken Stick

- Immediately leave the field
- Green Card
- **Exception:** Goalkeeper when opponent is in possession of the ball

### 8-Meter Free Positions (Major Fouls and Flagrant Fouls by Defense in CSA)

- Limited 8-meter free positions to the hash marks directly adjacent to the center hash
- Determined by the half of the critical scoring area in which the foul occurred

### Red Card

- Required a one-game suspension for any player who fails to serve a required next-game suspension
  - One-game suspension for the head coach of a player fails to serve a required next-game suspension
  - If issued in the final game of the season, serve during the first game of the following spring season
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- A series of vertical blue bars of varying heights and widths, arranged in a row at the bottom right of the page.

## Fouls and Penalty Administration

### Categories

- Minor and Procedural
- Major
- Delay-of-Game
- Technical
- Flagrant

**Note:** Eliminated warnings except for non-engagement and repeated false starts on 8-meter free positions

### Areas of Administration

- Outside of the CSA
- Critical Scoring Area (Attacking 12-meter fan and goal circle)
- Dot Restart Area
- 12-Meter Fan



Foul Category	CSA	12-Meter Fan (Def. End Coming Out)	Dot Restart Area	All Other Areas
<b>Minor &amp; Procedural</b>	<i>Defensive:</i> 12-meter fan  <i>Offensive:</i> Change of possession at spot of foul, self-start	Spot of foul, self-start	Dot, whistle start; defensive end may be spot of foul, self-start	Spot of foul, self-start
<b>Major</b>	<i>Defensive:</i> 8-meter free position (offender 4m behind) <i>Offensive:</i> Change of possession at spot of foul, self-start	Green Card, 12-meter	Green Card, dot	Green Card, spot of foul
<b>Delay-of-Game</b>	Green Card, 12-meter	Green Card, 12-meter	Green Card, dot	Green Card, spot of foul
<b>Flagrant</b>	<i>Defensive:</i> Yellow/Red Card + 8-meter free position  <i>Offensive:</i> Yellow/Red Card + 12-meter	Yellow/Red Card, 12-meter	Yellow/Red Card, dot	Yellow/Red Card, spot of foul

Technical Foul	CSA	12-Meter Fan	Dot Restart Area	All Other Areas
<b>Shooting Space</b>	8-meter free position (offender 4m behind)	—	—	—
<b>Three Seconds</b>	8-meter free position (offender 4m behind)	—	—	—
<b>Goal Circle – Defense (No Possession)</b>	8-meter free position (offender 4m behind)	—	—	—
<b>Goal Circle – Defense (With Possession)</b>	Dot (offender 4m behind)	—	—	—
<b>Goal Circle – Attack</b>	Goal circle, self-start  *May also be spot of ball if goal circle would disadvantage non-offending team	—	—	—
<b>Offside</b>	Green Card, 12-meter	Green Card, 12-meter	Green Card, dot	Green Card, spot of ball



## Universal Penalty Administration Principles

- All fouls shall be administered at the spot of the foul unless administering the foul at that location would disadvantage the non-offending team, in which case the foul shall be administered at the spot of the ball.
- All players shall be positioned a minimum of 2 meters away, except on 8-meter free positions and goal circle fouls administered at the dot, where offenders shall be positioned 4 meters behind and all other players 4 meters away.
- A whistle start is required unless the restart is designated as a self-start.
- For Minor and Procedural fouls, when the non-offending team is in possession at the time of the foul, the possession clock shall reset.
- All cardable fouls (green, yellow, and red cards) require the possession clock to reset to 90 seconds.
- Any player may take a free position, except for 8-meter free positions, which shall be taken by the player who was fouled or otherwise determined under the rules. (Exception: goal circle foul by defense without possession)



## Slow Whistle (Flag)

- All fouls when the ball is inside the critical scoring area
- All fouls that occur outside the critical scoring area when the ball is inside the critical scoring area
- Administer most recent foul, always administer fragrant fouls
- If **only** minor, foul administered at 12-meter

## Advantage

- Major, Delay-of-Game, and Offside Fouls
- Signal, **NO whistle**
- A fast break, a numerical advantage in transition, or a scoring opportunity created by the attacking team's momentum and positioning
- Advantage **shall not** be applied solely because an attacking player maintains possession of the ball or **continues minimal forward movement**
- Most recent and **equivalent** principle



# Advantage

## Equivalent-or-Greater Penalty Philosophy

- The administration of advantage follows an **equivalent-or-greater penalty philosophy**, consistent with international lacrosse principles.
- When multiple fouls occur in sequence:
- **If the most recent foul is equivalent to or greater than the earlier foul**, the **most recent foul governs** the penalty administration.
- **If the most recent foul is not equivalent to the earlier foul**, the **greater penalty is administered**, regardless of sequence.
- Officials do **not reduce the penalty** simply because a lesser foul occurs after a more serious one.
- In alignment with not disadvantaging the non-offending team.

First Foul	Second Foul	Penalty Administration
Green Card	Minor / Procedural	Green Card
Green Card	Major (CSA)	8-meter free position, no additional card
Green Card	Flagrant	Yellow or Red Card; 8-meter free position if applicable
Green Card	Shooting Space	Shooting space; 8-meter free position, no additional card
Green Card	Shooting Space (shot taken, no goal)	8-meter free position, no additional card
Green Card	Shooting Space (shot not taken)	8-meter free position, no additional card
Green Card	Green Card	Administer the most recent Green Card



## Notable Definitions

**Pushing:** Pushing an opponent with one's hand or body in a manner that causes displacement.

**Holding:** Restricting an opponent's movement by physically restraining the opponent's body, clothing, or stick using one's hand, arm, leg, or body.

**Cross Check:** Using the shaft of one's stick to initiate stick-to-body contact to hit and displace an opponent.

**Illegal Use of the Stick:** Using the stick in a manner that is unsafe, intimidating, or that pins, restricts, or controls an opponent's movement rather than momentarily redirecting the opponent's path. Examples include:

- Using the stick against an opponent's body in a manner that pins, restricts, or controls the opponent's movement (e.g., a V-hold)
- Hand checks, slap checks, V-Holds (all defined in Rule 7)

**Note:** Eliminated reaching across an opponent to check the stick when one is level with their opponent

**Slap Check:** A slap check is an illegal check in which a player uses a forceful, uncontrolled, or swinging (chopping or hacking) motion of the stick to strike an opponent's stick or body, rather than executing a short, controlled check directed at the exposed head or exposed shaft of the opponent's stick. A check directed at the shaft of the stick between an opponent's hands is illegal.



# Video Review

\*Green card fouls are not reviewable.

Officials	
a	Game clock or possession clock errors
b	Shot timing at the end of a period
c	Whether a shot contacted the goal pipe or was deflected by the goalkeeper
d	Identification or confirmation of the correct offender for a cardable foul resulting in ejection

Teams	
a	Game clock or possession clock errors
b	Shot timing at the end of a period
c	Whether a shot contacted the goal pipe or was deflected by the goalkeeper
d	Identification or confirmation of the offender for a yellow or red card
e	Whether the ball completely crossed the goal line
f	Whether the ball contacted an attacker's body
g	Whether the shooter committed a goal circle violation
h	Whether an attacking player entered the goal circle prior to the goal
i	Possession at the end of a period
j	Act-of-shooting fouls eligible for review under the rules

Video review shall be utilized whenever there is uncertainty in making a determination related to items a–c and shall always be utilized for item d, regardless of uncertainty.

During any required officials' review, officials shall correct any timing errors and shall identify, confirm, overturn, and administer any yellow or red cardable fouls observed in the video evidence.

Teams are limited to two video review requests per game.

An available timeout is required to request a video review.

If the ruling stands or is confirmed, the team is charged one review request and one timeout.

If the ruling is overturned, the team retains the review request.





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Thank you!  
Have a great 2026 season!