SPARKS, Md. —The US Lacrosse Board of Directors recently approved boys’ youth lacrosse rules that align with the Lacrosse Athlete Development Model (LADM). The new rules are based on the core values of the LADM, which are to encourage skill development and grow participation by promoting a safe and fun playing environment through developmentally appropriate rule sets tailored to specific age groupings.

In early 2016, the US Lacrosse Board of Directors tasked the Men’s Game Rules Subcommittee to develop rules of play that support the LADM. The new rules follow the LADM recommendation that small-sided games be played at younger ages, with size of field and numbers of player progressively increasing as players develop both physically and cognitively. The rules also align with the new recommended player segmentation groupings that will take effect in September 2017.

“The Men’s Game Rules Committee is proud to take these initial steps in a bold new direction, embracing the principles of the ADM that other sports have incorporated so successfully,” said David Seidman, chair of the committee. “While we expect lots of questions, we are confident that the kids are going to love playing under these conditions, and coaches and parents will appreciate the simplified rules that are presented in a modern, enjoyable and easy-to-read method.”

A youth-specific rulebook will available digitally later this fall and hardcopies will be available in early 2017. The following summaries of play at each level are provided to assist clubs and leagues as they plan for their spring seasons.

6U

Players: 3v3 with no goalie
Field Size: 60 yards x 35 yards (cross field)
Equipment: Sticks only, soft-type ball
Goal Size: 3 feet by 3 feet
Penalties: Player leaves the field. No time-serving penalties. Penalties used as a teachable moment to explain the foul that has been committed.
Body Checking: No body to body contact is permitted.
Stick Checking: Stick to stick contact is not permitted

8U

Players: 4v4 with no goalie or 3v3 plus a goalie
Field Size: 60 yards x 35 yards (cross field)
Equipment: Full equipment, soft-type ball
Goal Size: 3 feet by 3 feet
Penalties: Player leaves the field. No time-serving penalties. Penalties used as a teachable moment to explain the foul that has been committed.
Body Checking: No body checking permitted. Any overt (obvious) collision should be enforced as an illegal body check. The following types of body contact are allowed:

legal holds
legal pushes
positioning yourself against an opponent to gain possession of a loose ball (i.e. boxing out)
defensive positioning to redirect an opponent
incidental contact

Stick Checking: Only checks with the crosse listed below are legal. In all cases stick checks must be made on the crosse of an opponent or gloved hand of a crosse when an opponent is in possession of the ball or within 3 yards of a loose ball.

(a) Lift the bottom hand, when it is on the stick and below the chest; or the head of the stick when it is below the chest area.
(b) Poke the bottom hand when it is on the stick and below the chest area; or the head of the stick when it is below the chest area.
(c) Downward check initiated below the shoulders of both players.

10U

Players: 6v6 with no goalie or 5v5 plus a goalie
Field Size: 60 yards x 35 yards (cross field)
Equipment: Full equipment, NOCSAE lacrosse ball
Goal Size: 6 feet by 6 feet (5x5 or 4x4 allowable)
Penalties: Time-serving penalties.
Body Checking: No body checking permitted. Any overt (obvious) collision should be enforced as an illegal body check. The following types of body contact are allowed:

legal holds
legal pushes
positioning yourself against an opponent to gain possession of a loose ball (i.e. boxing out)
defensive positioning to redirect an opponent
incidental contact

Stick Checking: Only checks with the crosse listed below are legal. In all cases stick checks must be made on the crosse of an opponent or gloved hand of a crosse when an opponent is in possession of the ball or within 3 yards of a loose ball.

(a) Lift the bottom hand, when it is on the stick and below the chest; or the head of the stick when it is below the chest area.
(b) Poke the bottom hand when it is on the stick and below the chest area; or the head of the stick when it is below the chest area.
(c) Downward check initiated below the shoulders of both players.

12U

Players: 7v7 or 10v10, depending on size of field used
Field Size: 60 yards x 35 yards (cross field) or 110 yards by 60 yards
Equipment: Full equipment, NOCSAE lacrosse ball
Goal Size: 6 feet by 6 feet
Penalties: Time-serving penalties.
Body Checking: No body checking permitted. Any overt (obvious) collision should be enforced as an illegal body check. The following types of body contact are allowed:

legal holds
legal pushes
positioning yourself against an opponent to gain possession of a loose ball (i.e. boxing out)
defensive positioning to redirect an opponent
incidental contact

Stick Checking: Only checks with the crosse listed below are legal. In all cases stick checks must be made on the crosse of an opponent or gloved hand of a crosse when an opponent is in possession of the ball or within 3 yards of a loose ball.

(a) Lift the bottom hand, when it is on the stick and below the chest; or the head of the stick when it is below the chest area.
(b) Poke the bottom hand when it is on the stick and below the chest area; or the head of the stick when it is below the chest area.
(c) Downward check initiated below the shoulders of both players.

14U

Players: 10v10
Field Size: 110 yards by 60 yards
Equipment: Full equipment, NOCSAE lacrosse ball
Goal Size: 6 feet by 6 feet
Penalties: Time-serving penalties.
Body Checking: Limited body checking is permitted. However body checks that might be acceptable in high school play may be excessive in youth lacrosse, and should be penalized accordingly.
Stick Checking: Last season’s US Lacrosse stick checking rules will still apply which includes a rule prohibiting one-handed stick checks.

Questions concerning the new US Lacrosse boys’ youth lacrosse rules can be addressed to Rick Lake, men’s game senior manager, at rlake@uslacrosse.org