

**HUNTSVILLE LACROSSE ASSOCIATION**  
**2011/2012 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
(As of November 2011)

## **HLA FALL BALL 2011 PLAYER PLAY-UP REQUESTS TO PLAY IN DIFFERENT YOUTH/HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION**

In unusual circumstances, players, coaches or parents may seek to move a player up (or down) with regard to age group or grade group, and in considering such requests, the HLA wants to encourage safety, competition, player development, team parity and the growth of youth lacrosse.

- The first and preeminent consideration will be safety. This is especially important at the JV/HS/Men's Division, where the size, physicality, and maturity of the participants is much greater than at the youth age groups, and where the occurrences and consequences of injury are the greatest.
- All requests for movement will be handled on a case-by-case basis so as to not negatively impact team sizes by reducing numbers in one group for another. Any movement will be the exception, not the rule.
- Factors concerning the player in question: birth date, grade, years played, skill level, physical maturity and size, prior or current injuries, emotional maturity and confidence and safety of all players. The impact of a transfer upon the respective teams, upon the impacted grade groups, and upon HLA as a whole must also be considered.
- Players will not be assigned to multiple teams. If they are "moved up or down", they will play on that team only.
- There is no correlation between "playing up" in Fall Ball and what will occur during the Spring season.

### **Procedures**

If a player wishes to request a transfer, the player/parent should contact their respective coach, who will in turn contact the applicable Director (Boys/Girls, Youth/High School) who will evaluate the request and make a determination as to whether to approve the request for transfer.

(Adopted by the HLA Board, 20 SEP 2011)

## HLA SPRING 2012 SEASON DIVISIONS AND GUIDELINES

**1. Boys Divisions.** The boy's teams shall be organized by age/grade into the following playing divisions:

- U9 division
- U11 division
- U13 division
- U15 division
- High school division (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade)

High school boys shall be organized into Junior Varsity and Varsity level teams, and Varsity teams may be divided into A and B divisions as appropriate.

For the 2012 Spring Season, the anticipated high school divisions are as follows:

Varsity A: Grissom

Varsity B: Huntsville, Bob Jones

JV: Grissom, Bob Jones, Huntsville

**2. Girls Divisions.** The girl's teams shall also be organized by age/grade into the following playing divisions:

- U13 division
- U15 division
- High School division (9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade)

High school girls may be divided into junior varsity and varsity teams where appropriate.

### **3. High School Guidelines (Boys and Girls)**

- High School teams (Varsity/JV) will be comprised of players in grades 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>.
- If a player attends a school which has a team competing at the player's level (Varsity/JV), that player must play for his school, unless he is a supplemental player (see below).
- When a High School does not have enough players to field a team, or alternatively, has excess players who are insufficient to form an additional team (collectively "supplemental players"), the primary consideration for the assignment of such supplemental players will be the proximity of the player's residence and school to team practice and game sites, provided that a team can accommodate the player. However, assignments may also be made to avoid teams having too many players to allow for adequate playing time.
- 9<sup>th</sup> graders that are not selected to play on an existing Varsity or JV team will have the option (if they meet the age requirements) to play on a U15 team.
- 8<sup>th</sup> graders will not be allowed to play on a High Varsity or JV team. There are only two exceptions to this policy: (1) If the Varsity or JV team does not have an adequate number of players available to form a team, and supplemental players are not available to support the team, an 8<sup>th</sup> grader would be considered based on the criteria established in the HLA Play Up/Play

down Policy. (2) If an 8<sup>th</sup> grader is too old to meet the age requirements for a U15 team, he/she is eligible to play at the High School Varsity/JV level.

#### 4. High School Zoning Guidelines

- Public school players that do not attend Huntsville, Grissom, or Bob Jones High School will be assigned based on geographical region. Home schooled (and private school players not attending the private schools noted below) players will be assigned based on the zoning of their home address. Private school players from Randolph, Catholic HS, Madison Academy and Westminster will be assigned as noted below.
- Players who live in other areas of North Alabama and specific Private School players will be assigned as follows:
  - Bob Jones HS Region
    - Sparkman HS
    - East Limestone HS
    - Madison Academy
    - Madison, Athens, Decatur and areas West
    - Westminster
  - Huntsville HS Region
    - Buckhorn HS
    - Lee HS
    - C.I.T.Y HS
    - Johnson HS
    - Columbia/New Century HS
    - Areas North/East of Hazel Green and Buckhorn HS'
    - Madison County HS
    - Catholic HS
  - Grissom HS Region
    - Redstone Arsenal resident players (regardless of schools)
    - Butler HS
    - Randolph School
    - Areas south of Hampton Cove

#### 5. Age and Eligibility Guidelines

**The following age groupings are determined as of the August 31st preceding competition:**

- **U15:** All players must be 14 years old or younger on the August 31st preceding competition. It is recommended that when multiple teams exist within a program, the program should consider physical size, skill, and maturity when organizing teams.
- **U13:** All players must be 12 years old or younger on the August 31st preceding competition. It is recommended that when multiple teams exist within a program, the program should consider

physical size, skill, and maturity when organizing teams.

- **U11:** All players must be 10 years old or younger on the August 31st preceding competition. It is recommended that when multiple teams exist within a program, the program should consider physical size, skill, and maturity when organizing teams.
- **U9:** All players must be 8 years old or younger on the August 31st preceding competition. It is recommended that when multiple teams exist within a program, teams should consider physical size, skill, and maturity.

### **Spring 2012 Age Grouping Quick Reference Table**

<b>Birthdate</b>	<b>Age Bracket</b>
• Born on or after 9/1/1996	U15
• Born on or after 9/1/1998	U13
• Born on or after 9/1/2000	U11
• Born on or after 9/1/2002	U9

(Adopted by the HLA Board, 4 NOV 2011)

## **HLA SPRING 2012 YOUTH (U9 – U15) PLAYER PLAY-UP / PLAY-DOWN REQUESTS TO PLAY IN DIFFERENT DIVISIONS**

### **Guiding Principles**

In unusual circumstances, players, coaches or parents may seek to move a player up (or down) with regard to age group, and in considering such requests, the HLA wants to encourage safety, competition, player development, team parity and the growth of youth lacrosse. Transfers are not a matter of player or parental preference. Transfers are only to be made when the factors considered compel the conclusion that a transfer is appropriate. The first and preeminent consideration will be safety.

- All requests for movement will be handled on a case-by-case basis so as to not negatively impact team sizes by reducing numbers in one group for another. Any movement will be the exception, not the rule.
- Factors concerning the player in question: birth date, grade, years played, skill level, physical maturity and size, prior or current injuries, emotional maturity and confidence and safety of all players. The impact of a transfer upon the respective teams, upon the impacted age groups, and upon HLA as a whole must also be considered.

### **Procedures**

1. If a player wishes to request a transfer, the player/parent should contact their respective coach, who will in turn contact the applicable director (Boys/Girls Youth Directors) to make the request. The applicable Director will evaluate the request and make a recommendation to the HLA Executive Committee.
2. In their conference, the HLA Executive Committee will consider all of the following factors concerning the player in question: birth date, grade, years played, skill level, physical maturity and size, prior or current injuries, emotional maturity and confidence, safety of all players, and player commitment to the sport. They will also consider the impact of a transfer upon the respective teams, upon the impacted grade groups and upon the HLA as a whole.
3. The HLA Executive Committee will review the situation and make a determination as to whether to approve the request for the transfer. The HLA Executive Committee's decision is final.

(Adopted by the HLA Board, 18 OCT 2011)

## **HLA COACH SELECTION AND RETENTION POLICY**

The HLA strives to select and retain coaches who are good role models for youth players and who not only demonstrate the ability and willingness to coach the sport of lacrosse, but as importantly, individuals who demonstrate the highest principles of sportsmanship and integrity toward the game of lacrosse. Coaches will undergo a background check and sign the Coach Code of Conduct as a condition to coaching for the HLA.

The HLA Executive Committee, with input from the Director of Coaching Development and the Directors of Boy's and Girl's Youth and High Schools, will select coaches for all HLA teams (U9 – HS). Factors that the Committee will take into consideration for the selection of coaches will include the following: Coaching experience, lacrosse experience, training and certification, locality, maturity, coaches' request, leveling of talent/parity among teams, and what is best for the HLA organization as a whole.

Each coach will be assigned to a team for a single season and is only entitled to coach at the pleasure of the HLA during the course of the season.

Coaches are expected to attend any HLA-mandated pre-season coaching clinics and/or meetings, unless illness or employment interferes with the scheduled event. In addition, coaches are expected to handle their coaching responsibilities in a conscientious manner, and to cooperate with the HLA throughout the season. The Executive Committee of the HLA shall be authorized to suspend or dismiss any coach at any time for failure to follow HLA policies or for conduct otherwise deemed detrimental to the HLA.

At the end of each season, the HLA will conduct parent and coach surveys to determine the level of satisfaction with coaches. Based upon such survey results, as well as the input of the Executive Committee and other HLA officials in dealing with the coach during the season, the HLA Executive Committee shall have the authority to bar a coach from returning to coach in future HLA programs. Appeals of any such decision shall be made to the HLA Executive Committee.

(Adopted by the HLA Board 4 NOV 2011)

## **HLA COACH CODE OF CONDUCT AND PLEDGE**

The HLA is committed to promoting the "Honor the Game" philosophy for all who enjoy the sport of lacrosse. To help fulfill this commitment, the HLA expects coaches (as well as officials, players, parents and spectators) to abide by a Code of Conduct that "Honors the Game" and embodies basic principles of fair play and good sportsmanship; demonstrates consideration of others; and projects a positive image to the youth we serve.

Accordingly, each HLA Coach is expected to follow a "Code of Conduct" exemplified by the following pledge:

**I HEREBY PLEDGE THAT AS A HLA COACH I WILL:**

- Honor the Game of Lacrosse
- Consider it a privilege to coach youth and recognize that the game I am coaching is for youth and not for my benefit as an adult.
- Recognize that as a coach I am the single person who is the most responsible for setting the tone of behavior for my players and my team's parents and fans.
- Lead by example in demonstrating a sense of fair play and superior sportsmanship to all my players.
- Strive to master the rules of lacrosse and teach those rules to my players and their parents.
- Teach lacrosse skills, and use coaching techniques, appropriate for the age I coach.
- Emphasize positive coaching methods designed to foster a love and appreciation for the sport of lacrosse in my players.
- Place the emotional and physical well being of my players ahead of my personal desire to win.
- Remember to treat each player as an individual and recognize that there is a large spread in emotional and physical development of players within the same age group. Avoid excessive displays or outbursts of anger in the presence of my players.
- Not threaten, harass or abuse a player physically, verbally, mentally or sexually.
- Not use alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs in the presence of players.
- Not maliciously criticize badger, harass, or threaten any official.
- Not use the media (including electronic media such as websites, blogs, Twitter, etc.) to criticize an official, opposing coach or player, or those associated with administering the sport of lacrosse thru the HLA.

(Adopted by the HLA Board 4 NOV 2011)

## **HLA SPRING 2012 SEASON YOUTH (U9 - U15) TEAM SELECTION PROCESS GENERAL AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Teams should be limited to no more than 20 - 25 players and formed to the extent possible with players from the same community. However, due to a number of variables and requirements, including without limitation,

- 1) the amount of or difference in player population in a community
- 2) the proximity of a player's residence to practice and game facilities
- 4) the prior team that the player has played on
- 5) the desire to have parity among teams to the extent possible
- 6) the limitation on the number of players a team can have

the assignment of players to teams outside of their community may be necessary from time to time to meet the requirements of the league and further its goals. When a community does not have enough players to field a team, or alternatively, has excess players who are insufficient to form an additional team(s) (collectively "supplemental players"), the primary consideration for the assignment of such supplemental players will be the proximity of the player's residence to team practice and game sites, provided that a team can accommodate the player. However, assignments may also be made to avoid teams having too many players to allow for adequate playing time, to attempt to achieve parity among the teams in a grade division, to develop teams, or to facilitate other league goals. Further, players may only play on one team and may not play on multiple teams. The HLA Executive Committee shall be charged with making team assignments and their decision shall be final.

(Adopted by the HLA Board 4 NOV 2011)

## **HLA HIGH SCHOOL OFF-SEASON PRACTICE AND CONDITIONING POLICY**

1. All high school teams are allowed five (5) practices during the off-season. "Team" is defined as more than two players working with a coach or coach designee. "Off-season" is defined as the day after the GBYLA state championship (ex. May 2, 2011) until the first day of practices for the following season (ex. January 18, 2012). "Practices" are defined as any organized field participation with lacrosse equipment by a high school which has the presence of, or has in attendance, a HS coach, assistant coach, representative of the team/school or a person requested by the coach/program/school to manage the activities of its respective players.
2. Each team is required to submit to the HLA Executive Committee their respective plans to utilize their five practices. The submission of the schedule must be made prior to the start of practices. Upon request, HLA will provide for all coaches the tentative schedule of each team.
3. HLA will utilize the submitted schedule as the basis for assessing whether a practice is within the five practice rule. This will be the first data point to resolve any concerns should any arise regarding organized team activities.
4. The sanctions for violation of the five-practice policy are as follows:
  - 1st offense – Offending team will forfeit their first league game
  - 2nd offense – Offending team will forfeit their 2nd league game and the Head Coach will be suspended from the 3rd league game
  - 3rd offense – Offending team will not be eligible for any Post Season play
5. In addition to practices, high school teams are allowed to hold conditioning sessions at the discretion of the coach. To constitute a conditioning session, there can be no usage of lacrosse-related equipment, such as sticks, gloves, balls, goals, etc.
6. Prior to commencing practices or conditioning sessions, the HLA coach shall be required to obtain Medical Authorizations / Consent / Waivers from the parent / guardian of each player. Failure to comply with such requirement shall result in a suspension of the right of such team to conduct practices / conditioning sessions for a period determined by the HLA Executive Committee.
7. New Player Clinics. In addition to practices and conditioning sessions, high school teams are allowed to have one new player clinic between the opening of registration and the beginning of practice. There is no restriction on youth teams within a community having new player clinics that are designed to recruit new players, and such clinics are encouraged.

(Adopted by the HLA Board 4 NOV 2011)