



Mile High Lacrosse Field Rules of Emphasis

Slashing:

The Rule

Rule 5.7.1: “Swinging a crosse at an opponent’s crosse or body with deliberate viciousness or reckless abandon, regardless of whether the opponent’s crosse or body is struck.”

The Penalty

Personal foul for 1, 2 or 3 minutes.

How it Works

At all levels of play, officials must judge whether a swing is vicious, reckless or both. The threshold for vicious and reckless swings is higher at the high school level compared to the youth level. A game between two high school rivals will have a higher limit for what constitutes slashing than a U11 game.

A **vicious swing** is most clearly defined as one that would do serious damage if a player were not wearing equipment. A huge two-handed swing that crashes down on the top of a shoulder pad is a vicious swing because without equipment, a player would likely suffer an injury.

A **reckless swing** is one that demonstrates a lack of control. The two most common examples are when a defender is beat and quickly swings his crosse behind him, and a riding attackman whips a one-handed check to a clearing midfielder who just broke past the midfield line. Those checks have a low chance of only hitting stick or glove hand, and if a player swings in desperation and hits the body, it’s likely that a flag will be thrown.

One key part of this rule that many people miss is that **contact is not required** for a slash to be called. While it is very rare for slashing to be called at the high school level without contact, it is more likely at the youth levels, where such an uncontrolled swing needs to be flagged so the coach has an opportunity to teach his player about better defensive fundamentals.

5.7.3 Situation B

Can a defensive player, who does not have reasonable access to an opponent’s crosse and makes no apparent attempt to dislodge the ball or prevent a feeder’s pass, choose to strike repeatedly the lower gloved hand on the crosse with undue force?



Ruling: Penalty. Personal foul for slashing.

Explanation: There are a few things to pay attention to here, in particular “reasonable access” and “no apparent attempt.” There is a difference between a defender timing a check to the glove to disrupt an offensive player’s rhythm and just wailing on the hands holding the stick. That is an attempt to injure and not an attempt to pop the ball out.

5.7.3 Situation C

A1, advancing the ball toward B1, holds his crosse back with one hand and protects his crosse with the other arm. B1 then swings his crosse and strikes A1’s protecting arm.

Ruling: Penalty. Personal foul, slashing against B1.

Explanation: This situation really forces the official to judge all of the different parts of slashing. Is the swing reckless and/or vicious, and is the contact a definite blow or strike? If yes, slash; if no, brush. The higher threshold for checking at the high school level means that some checks to the arm will go uncalled because more often than not, a single swing does not reach that threshold.

5.7.3 Situation D

A3 has beaten B2, who swings his stick in a check and strikes A3 on the shoulder or across the back in an attempt to get to A3’s stick.

Ruling: Penalty. Personal foul, slashing against B2. This is an illegal back check.

Explanation: One of the most common displays of a reckless swing that catches the body is the desperation check from a beaten defender. These checks make the job of an official pretty easy because if the swing hits anything but the stick or gloved hand a slash is pretty evident to everyone at the game.



Take-Out Check/Excessive Body-Check

"Take-Out Checks or Excessive Body-Checks are prohibited at every age level. A Take-Out Check/Excessive Body-Check is defined as:

A. Any body-check in which the player lowers his head or shoulder with the force and intent to put the other player on the ground.

B. Any body-check considered more aggressive or more physical than necessary to stop the advancement of the player carrying the ball or to keep or move a player away from a loose ball. This includes but is not limited to: (i) any check in which a player makes contact with sufficient force and intent to knock down the opposing player; (ii) any check in which a player makes contact with sufficient force and intent to injure the opposing player; and (iii) any check made in a reckless or intimidating manner."

Penalty

Two- or three-minute non-releasable foul (Mile High Lacrosse rules this would be a 3-4 minute penalty), at the official's discretion. An excessively violent violation of this rule may result in an ejection.

Analysis

The definition of a take-out check is crystal clear. What trips people up is the proper application.

Any body check that is delivered with a lowered head or shoulder and knocks a player to the ground is a takeout check for 2-3 minutes non-releasable. Why the emphasis? Because the overarching principles of youth lacrosse are individual stick skills, team play, player safety, and sportsmanship. I believe all coaches, parents, and officials can agree on that, which is why the penalty time for severe body checks starts higher.

The second part of the definition is more subjective as one official may have a different interpretation of "more aggressive/physical than necessary" than another. Much of this definition depends on the game. A U15 game should permit more physical play than a U13 game. As players grow older, the threshold for illegal-versus-legal play rises up in a manner that is commensurate with the level of skill on display.

The final adjustment to the youth body-checking rule defines the age levels that permit body checking. Here is the rule for each age level and the translation:

U15/U13(Which Mile High Lacrosse Follows): Limited body checking is permitted

Translation: From the front or side, not blindside or excessive, on a player with possession or within three yards of a loose ball, both hands on the crosse, below the neck and above the waist.



FACE OFFS:

Discuss for solution - We will return to “regular” face offs. A face off player can not pinch the ball in the back of their crosse and move forward or backward with the ball still in the back of their crosse. The face off person may not direct the ball in a passing motion to a teammate from the back of their stick.

Man down face off – No player will be allowed to move from their restraining box to the wing, The man down team must face off with only 2 middies.

PENALTY TIMES:

TECHNICAL FOULS - 1 min (Release on goal)

PERSONAL FOULS – 2 min (Release on 2 goals)

All Unsportsmanlike/Unnecessary Roughness/Take Out Checks will be reported to league administration. After the game referees will ask captain for names of the individuals who received the penalty. Each incident will be evaluated on it’s own merit. Penalties could be verbal/written discussion, suspension from games, probation, or expulsion from the league. Any team to have multiple offenses by one or several members of their team could face similar sanctions. If the person is found to be non-rostered the team will immediately go on probation and could jeopardize playing in future leagues.