

IOU Officiating Certification

Mandatory Module: Safety

Section 1: Weather and Field Conditions

- Without safe playing conditions, the game can never start
- The referee has final say over whether the game can be played. If you feel uncomfortable with conditions, do not allow the game to be played.

Lightning

- Lightning strikes must be at least 8 miles (13km) away for at least 30 minutes in order to be safe for play
- If lightning strikes within the safe distance, go indoors or inside of a car. Direct people to avoid trees, light posts, and any tall metal objects

Heat

- Heat index is a measure which takes into account heat and humidity
 - A heat index over 128°F is completely unsafe for play, and games must be cancelled or postponed
 - A heat index over 100°F is very dangerous. Allow for extended breaks in play, and consider postponing the game at halftime
 - A heat index over 80°F is cause for concern. Be on the lookout for heat illness and allow extended breaks in play when you feel they are needed

Cold

- It is possible to get frostbite in any temperature which is below the freezing point of water
- Wind chill effects, wet ground conditions, and precipitation can exacerbate this
- It is possible to die from hypothermia in temperatures above freezing, up to 50°F/10°C, when clothing is wet, there are severe winds, or a person is exposed to the temperature for an extended period of time without proper attire
- Body temperature can be raised with proximity to heat (such as a fire or space heater), physical activity, or consuming hot food or beverages

Wind

- Wind which makes the ball difficult to control is a hazard to safety
 - Players swinging their stick at the ball are apt to miss and strike another player
 - Extra focus on ball can lead to dangerous collisions
- Even on surfaces shielded from the wind, exceptionally high winds, such as tropical storm and tornado winds, pose a safety risk and games should be cancelled or rescheduled

Hail

- Game must be delayed for hail

Field Condition

- Field must be free of debris
- Spectators must be clear of the field
- Outside hazards such as trees, buildings, and roads must not pose a threat to the field
- Large pot-holes must be filled in
- Stepping hazards such as spiked weeds and ant-hills must be cleared away as much as possible

Goal Condition

- Goals must have smooth posts without protrusions
- Netting must not be a tripping hazard
- Field around goals must be flat and solid- this is a high traffic area and requires particular attention
 - Field which is in poor condition must be leveled with cleats, sticks, or shovels if necessary

Section 2: In-Game Safety

- Players may attempt to play through injuries
- Where their self-preservation fails, it is the referee's duty to protect them and the other players on the field
- The referee always has the final say regarding who can and cannot play in a game

Blood Injury

- Blood in and of itself is not a disqualifying injury
- If bleeding can be contained or stopped and cleaned away, players can play
- Bleeding that can't be contained or stopped and cleaned away is a health risk, and players must be prevented from playing
 - Profuse bleeding is a health hazard for blood-borne diseases
 - Extreme bleeding can be a life-threatening injury. Pressure needs to be applied to constrict blood vessels.
- Clay can be used to mitigate bleeding. Only use disinfected medical-grade clay

Heat Illness

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

WHAT TO DO

HEAT EXHAUSTION

- Heavy sweating
- Cold, pale, and clammy skin
- Fast, weak pulse
- Nausea or vomiting
- Muscle cramps
- Tiredness or weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Fainting (passing out)

- Move to a cool place
 - Loosen your clothes
 - Put cool, wet cloths on your body or take a cool bath
 - Sip water
- Get medical help right away if:**
- You are throwing up
 - Your symptoms get worse
 - Your symptoms last longer than 1 hour

HEAT CRAMPS

- Heavy sweating during intense exercise
- Muscle pain or spasms

- Stop physical activity and move to a cool place
 - Drink water or a sports drink
 - Wait for cramps to go away before you do any more physical activity
- Get medical help right away if:**
- Cramps last longer than 1 hour
 - You're on a low-sodium diet
 - You have heart problems

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

WHAT TO DO

HEAT STROKE

- High body temperature (103°F or higher)
- Hot, red, dry, or damp skin
- Fast, strong pulse
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion
- Losing consciousness (passing out)

- Call 911 right away-heat stroke is a medical emergency
- Move the person to a cooler place
- Help lower the person's temperature with cool cloths or a cool bath
- Do not give the person anything to drink

SUNBURN

- Painful, red, and warm skin
- Blisters on the skin

- Stay out of the sun until your sunburn heals
- Put cool cloths on sunburned areas or take a cool bath
- Put moisturizing lotion on sunburned areas
- Do not break blisters

HEAT RASH

- Red clusters of small blisters that look like pimples on the skin (usually on the neck, chest, groin, or in elbow creases)

- Stay in a cool, dry place
- Keep the rash dry
- Use powder (like baby powder) to soothe the rash

It is possible to have heat illness even in cold weather, so be mindful of the signs and be wary of players' safety



Brain Injury

- If in doubt, sit the player out
- Any player exhibiting signs of brain injury must be removed from the game
 - Disorientation: dizziness, slurred speech, nonsensical statements, confusion, poor memory
 - Lost brain functions: lost consciousness, vision, hearing, or balance
 - Repeated or involuntary head shaking
 - Visible signs of pain in the head, such as rubbing temples or clutching the scalp
 - Abnormal, rigid body positions, even momentarily



“Fencing response”: person presents one or both arms extended even while on their back



“Mummy response”: person coils their arms and extends the rest of their body in a rigid shape



Deceribate response: Locked elbows, locked jaw, extended limbs. May present only on one side of the body

Spine Injury

- Treat any player who is laying on the ground as though they may have a spinal injury until proven otherwise
 - Look to make sure that a player is able to move their legs and feels all of their extremities

Cardiac Injury

- Sudden trauma to the chest or extreme exertion may aggravate pre-existing heart conditions and cause cardiac arrest
- Health screenings and physicals should prevent players with heart conditions from playing, but sudden medical episodes are still possible
- Freak health episodes, such as strokes, can cause cardiac arrest even in healthy people
- Cardiac injuries are immediately life threatening
- Immediately provide aid when a player exhibits a sign of cardiac concern
 - Sudden, unexpected collapse
 - Clutching the chest or left arm and extreme exhaustion
 - Loss of consciousness
- First, check for pulse. If none is present, call emergency services immediately
 - If an automatic defibrillator is available, use it as directed
 - If one is not available, perform CPR

Soft Tissue Injury

- Players who have severe limb injuries may wish to continue playing, but can be a risk to themselves
- Players who have an obvious and severe limp or who are unable to use one of their arms are at risk of injuring themselves or another player

Bone Injury

- Limbs which are bent in an incorrect place, with protruding bones, or which show signs of extreme swelling require immediate medical attention.
- Players in such condition cannot be allowed to play

Section 3: Altercations

- At higher levels of play, altercations are a natural result of intense emotion and physicality
- It will not be possible to completely avoid risk to players who want to injure themselves, so it is your job to mitigate that risk
 - Intentional attacks with the stick are THE most dangerous possible event, and must be avoided at all costs
 - Keep active and potential altercations away from bystanders, both players and spectators

Short-Term Health Risks of Altercations

- Broken hands, fingers, and wrists
- Lost and chipped teeth
- Bitten-off tongue
- Bleeding and infections
- Broken shins, toes, and feet
- Torn ligaments, tendons, and muscles

Long-Term Health Risks of Altercations

- Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE)
 - Long-term brain injury which results from repeated head trauma
 - Advanced stages can cause personality disorders, sleep disorders, depression, memory problems, and even early death
- Sensory Damage
 - Vision loss, hearing damage, tinnitus, loss of balance
- Chronic pain
 - Joint pain, recurring aches, toothache, neurological shooting pains

Preventing Fights

- Players who intend to fight may look for excuses to increase physicality
 - Pushing and shoving or shouting after whistles
 - Extreme roughness in front of goal
 - Frequent hip-checking, at the expense of possession
- If players are in these situations, you have three options to prevent a fight:
 - Diffusing
 - Physical separation
 - Game management foul

Diffusing Situations

- As referee, you have authority over the players. Use this to command them to stop. A simple “Knock it off!” is sometimes enough to dissuade violent behavior
- Talking to captains or coaches can help reduce tensions
- Issuing warnings about additional penalties can dissuade players from fighting

Physical Separation

- If players are shoving each other, in each other's faces, or otherwise posturing to fight, physically standing between them and pushing them apart can solve the problem
- In these situations, you may enlist help from other players to corral their teammates.

Game Management Fouls

- Use of minor foul calls (such as delay of game) can deter worse behavior from players
- Sometimes players want to fight because of perceived injustice on the field, strictly penalizing foul play can help mitigate that feeling for them

Minimizing Damage From Fights

- Even with preventative measures, players may still fight, either for emotional reasons or tactical ones
- When this occurs, you have the following priorities:
 - Keep other players from entering the altercation, even in an attempt to break it up
 - Clear players and obstacles away from the altercation
 - Wait for the altercation to become safe to break up

Types of Altercations

- Shoving Match
- Stick Fight
- Scrap
- Square-up
- Instigator

Shoving Match

- A shoving match frequently involves more than 2 players
- Injuries can come from the mass of humanity
 - Cleats on toes
 - Dog piles
 - Errant sticks
- It can be difficult to discern what is actually happening
- Can escalate quickly into other types of fight

Breaking up a Shoving Match

- Work outside in
- Threaten harsh penalties
 - “I will eject whoever does X next”
 - “I’m only giving one team fouls out of this”

Stick Fight

- Players attack or try to attack each other with their sticks
- Extremely dangerous, but be careful in any attempt to intervene
- Watch out for your own safety first

Breaking up a Stick Fight

- Take a stick from a nearby player
- Approach carefully from the side of the altercation
- Use the stick to ward off any stick swing that may strike you
- Rapidly approach one player
- Drop stick and wrap arms around chosen player
 - Wrap around OUTSIDE of arms- pin arms to sides
 - Grab your weak wrist with your dominant hand
 - Turn back to non-grabbed player
 - Drive forward with legs
- If possible, remove stick from hands of grabbed player
- Once immobilized, fight should de-escalate to the point of assessing penalties

Penalizing a Stick Fight

- Match fouls for dangerous stick for combatants
- Major interfering with referee fouls for any player who did not clear altercation
- Major interfering with referee fouls for a player who does not surrender their stick

Scrap

- Fight occurs as a natural extension of play
- Can be haphazard- players may be on the ground or not have dropped their sticks
- Fight begins with players close together and engage immediately
- Players may be in the middle of a crowd of players, who may also be pushing and shoving
- Very difficult to prevent

Breaking up a Scrap

- Wait for an opening
 - One or both players have fallen over
 - Players let go of one another and separate into a “squared up” position
 - Players are too tired or too close to one another to strike with their hands
- Separate BOTH players at once- NEVER take out just one player
- Protect yourself by approaching altercation by leading with your hands first, then step between players.

Penalizing a Scrap

- Default to major penalties for striking
- If players failed to actually strike each other, assess them minors for delay of game or unsportsmanlike conduct
- If a player has used a takedown move or submission move, add an additional minor for tripping or obstruction
- If a player attempts to join an ongoing altercation, assess them a minor for unsportsmanlike conduct
- If player(s) continue to fight after your attempt to break them up, add an additional minor for interfering with referee

Square-Up

- Both players drop their sticks and line up like boxers, some distance away from each other
- Technically lining up in this way is not a foul in and of itself, but this sort of altercation can be easily prevented
- If players refuse to resume play, can issue minor delay of game fouls

Breaking up a Square-Up

- Standing between players with arms outstretched can prevent players from engaging each other and fighting
- Sometimes even verbal discouragement can encourage players to pick their sticks back up and continue playing

Instigator

- One or more players attack an unwilling opponent
- Requires immediate intervention
- Immediate match penalty in all circumstances, no exceptions

Breaking up an Instigator

- Wrap the arms of the instigator(s) and clear them away
- Pin their arms to their sides and drive through with legs
- Bring player to ground if necessary
 - Wrap both of player's legs
 - Ensure you land on top of player, not underneath
- Repeat as necessary for multiple combatants
- Call for immediate medical assistance for victim, even if there are not visible signs of injury