

# **ALBERTA LACROSSE ASSOCIATION - BOX LACROSSE TOURNAMENT POLICY**

Version 1.0

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## **1. Purpose of this Policy**

- 1.1. As defined in Regulation 6.01 “A tournament is defined as a contest involving several teams who play against each other in a series of games and will require ALA sanctioning prior to taking place in the province.” This Policy outlines how the ALA will review and determine which tournaments to sanction for box lacrosse in Alberta.

## **2. Benefits, Purposes and Risks of Tournaments**

### **2.1. The purposes of tournaments are:**

- 2.1.1. Fun competition opportunity. While regular seasons offer an extended competition, there is usually only one season winner. While it is important that sports are fun even when teams are not the winners, tournaments offer additional opportunities for teams to engage in an alternate shorter competition and have the inherent joy that comes from a successful competition.
- 2.1.2. Variable opponents. As lacrosse is a relatively smaller sport, many teams have to play the same opponents or travel great distances to play other opponents. Tournaments give an opportunity for teams to face teams from new geographies in a relatively efficient manner as they all congregate at the tournament to play.
- 2.1.3. Camaraderie and bonding. Since many teams travel to tournaments, they frequently spend time together away from the playing surface at hotels, social gatherings and similar events that many younger players find a fun and rewarding experience.
- 2.1.4. Funding. The clubs hosting tournaments typically charge a fee to the participating teams that will exceed the costs of the tournament by a small margin. Also, because tournaments gather a large number of people, they are also good opportunities for vendors, raffles and other commercial opportunities that can be realized by the hosting club to help fund their operations.

2.2. While tournaments provide the benefits noted above, they also come with potential risks and downsides that need to be monitored and minimized:

- 2.2.1. Fatigue, injury and over competition. Teams that play in too many tournaments risk having players that do not have the requisite amount of rest needed to recover from play in order to avoid injury. They also may take away time needed for practice (especially when sufficient recovery is also accounted for) such that development is hampered. In addition, while the competition of tournaments can be fun, it can also be stressful and emotionally draining which can have negative impacts on young players.
- 2.2.2. Cost. The travel to tournaments is generally born by the families of the players. Attending many tournaments, or tournaments that are far away from families' residences, places costs on families that can make participation in lacrosse expensive. This can make tournaments a barrier to participation in sport.
- 2.2.3. Official burnout. Tournaments have many games taking place very close together. This usually requires officials to officiate many games close together over a weekend. Doing this too many times in a season can cause officials to have a negative officiating experience, especially if the heightened sense of competition leads to inappropriate conduct from fans, coaches and players.

### **3. Objectives and Guidelines**

3.1. In order to balance the purpose of tournaments with the possible risks, the ALA will be targeting the following objectives when sanctioning tournaments:

- 3.1.1. Overall, the ALA will try to ensure that there are approximately 2 in province tournaments available for all teams to participate in from U11 to U17, except for at U17A which is governed by Regulation 9C and the Wild Rose Lacrosse League. For U9, the ALA targets 1 tournament per team. This applies to all skill divisions where offered (C, B, A).
- 3.1.2. The ALA will award tournaments in a way that encourages the U9 tournaments to be participated in close to home where a hotel stay may not be necessary to participate. Other age groups will be targeted so that it will be easy for teams to have one travel tournament and one that is closer to their home area.
- 3.1.3. The ALA will aim to have geographic diversity of tournaments. There will be a distribution of tournaments that is across the province, but there may

be more tournaments, or larger tournaments, in LGBs that have more teams.

- 3.2. In order to meet the above objectives, the ALA will be applying these more specific guidelines when sanctioning tournaments:
  - 3.2.1. Each LGB will only be permitted to host one tournament that includes all age groups from U9 to U17 (a “large tournament”) per season.
  - 3.2.2. All other tournaments should have some combination of the following age groups:
    - Any one age group of U9, U11, U13, U15 or U17,
    - U9, U11 and U13,
    - U11 and U13, or
    - U15 and U17
  - 3.2.3. If a club is requesting U9, U11 and U13 together, the number of teams per division should be 4 or less.
  - 3.2.4. No club will be permitted to host more than one tournament per season.
  - 3.2.5. The ALA will target on each weekend between the third weekend in April and second weekend in June at most:
    - one large tournament,
    - Up to 4 other tournaments, but only so that there is only one additional tournament for each age group outside of the large tournament.For example, there could be a tournament that has only U9, one tournament with U11 and U13 and one tournament with U15 and U17 in any one weekend. Essentially, there will only be 2 tournaments for any age group
  - 3.2.6. An exception to this may be granted if there are 2 requests for a single age group with 6 or less teams. For example, instead of 1 tournament for U9 in any given weekend, the ALA may approve 2 U9 tournaments in a weekend that are for 4 teams each.

#### **4. Sanctioning Process**

- 4.1. Any club wishing to host a tournament should complete the application form designated by the ALA. These forms should be submitted to their LGB to the designated person responsible at that LGB.
- 4.2. Each LGB should review the tournaments applied for and determine if, as a whole and taking into account the characteristics of their LGB:

- 4.2.1. It complies with the Objectives and Guidelines in Section 3 above,
  - 4.2.2. It further the purposes for tournaments set out in 2.1 above,
  - 4.2.3. It minimizes the risks set out in 2.2 above,
  - 4.2.4. It fairly distributes the tournaments among the members requesting to hold tournaments in that LGB.
- 4.3. If a request, once reviewed by the LGB in the context of all the other requests received, does not meet the Objectives and Guidelines Objectives and Guidelines in Section 3 above, further the purposes for tournaments set out in 2.1 above, or minimize the risks set out in 2.2 above, the LGB can go back to the Club and request revisions to the tournament request. If the Club refuses to revise its request, it can not be approved by the LGB and not submitted by the LGB to the ALA in the procedure as set out below.
- 4.4. Once an LGB has done a review of all the tournaments requested to it, all the tournament requests should be submitted to the ALA along with a statement that the LGB has reviewed the tournament requests and in the opinion of the LGB, based on its own expectations of its number of players and officials in that LGB for the upcoming year, the tournaments requested are in compliance with this Policy.
- 4.5. These requests should be submitted from each LGB to the ALA by November 1 of each year. Each LGB may set its own deadline for submission to the LGB that is before November 1.
- 4.6. The ALA will then review the requests from each LGB to ensure that all of the tournament requests taken together meet the objectives of this Policy. In order to meet the objectives and guidelines in this Policy, the ALA may request an LGB and a club revise its request for either a new date, number of teams, number of games or age groups to be included in the tournament. If the LGB or club refuses to revise their tournament request, the ALA may refuse it.
- 4.7. Once the ALA is satisfied that all tournament requests, when taken together, will satisfy the objectives of this Policy, the ALA will confirm the approved tournaments with the clubs and LGBs. The ALA will aim to have that confirmation delivered by November 15 of each year.

## **5. Tournament Scheduling**

- 5.1. Tournament schedules should attempt to start no earlier than 4 pm on a Friday afternoon and end by 9 pm on Sunday evening. This is to facilitate participant and official travel, avoid extra conflicts with work and other commitments and generally create a tournament schedule that places reasonable burdens on families and officials.
- 5.2. Where a tournament needs to go outside these guidelines, it should only be done in the following circumstances:
  - 5.2.1. The Tournament falls on or around a holiday weekend such that extra days are available that many families would consider “long weekend” dates;
  - 5.2.2. The Tournament is able to confirm with local officials that they have availability before 4 pm on a Friday or after 9 pm on Sunday.
  - 5.2.3. The Tournament is scheduling games before 4 pm on a Friday among teams that are primarily local teams, so that there is no extra travel burden during a workday for families
- 5.3. U9 tournaments will follow the Long Term Athlete Development recommendations such that all tournaments must follow a festival format that permits only round robin scheduling and no playoff or playdown games.

## **6. Promotion**

- 6.1. All approved Tournaments will be posted along with their host club, date, location and age group(s) on the ALA website.
- 6.2. If a tournament wants specific other promotion of their tournament, such as through email solicitation or social media presence, they should make a specific request for such promotion in accordance with the ALA's Advertising and Promotion Policy.
- 6.3. Tournaments are encouraged to use social media to bring awareness of their event and lacrosse to the public and their communities. Social media usage must all comply with all other relevant policies such as the Social Media Policy and the Code of Conduct. Tournament organizers are encouraged to use social media collaboration tools to work with the formal ALA accounts that are used to promote lacrosse and the ALA will, within its resource capabilities, aim to assist with such social media promotion.

## **7. Review of Policy**

- 7.1. This policy should be reviewed and revised on an annual basis.

