

The 2024 lacrosse season has been an overall success, marked by strong participation, competitive spirit, and a continued commitment to player development. As the Discipline Director, my role is to ensure that we uphold the integrity of the game and maintain a safe, respectful environment for all players, coaches, and officials. This season, while largely positive, was not without its challenges. There were a few recurring issues that needed attention, particularly with respect to player conduct, coaching behavior, and the lack of internal policies to address certain issues that may not necessarily require CDLA's intervention. While these challenges exist, the season itself ran smoothly overall, and the positive growth of the league is evident.

Season Overview and Key Discipline Issues:

General Discipline and Suspension Overview:

This year, discipline-wise, the league saw improvements in several areas. The **number of suspensions** was down compared to previous years, indicating a general trend toward more controlled and respectful behavior on the field. Most of the incidents were not as severe as in years past, and the cases that did arise were addressed appropriately. There was a noticeable reduction in the number of **major penalties** (e.g., fighting, violent conduct), and overall, we saw more players adhering to the rules of the game. However, a few areas still require ongoing attention.

I truly believe that we need to implement an internal discipline policy as it was one of the key challenges this season. It would be great to address minor issues that don't necessarily require escalation to CDLA. While CDLA does a fantastic job managing serious violations, we encountered several smaller disciplinary matters that could have been more efficiently handled at the local level. For instance, issues like unsportsmanlike conduct, minor infractions, or coaching concerns could be addressed directly by the league. This would streamline the process and allow us to act more quickly.

I believe it's crucial that we develop a set of **internal guidelines** for minor infractions, giving our league the authority to deal with routine disciplinary issues locally. This could include a tiered system for dealing with issues like poor sportsmanship or inappropriate conduct that doesn't necessarily need to be referred to CDLA, but still needs to be addressed for the good of the league. Empowering our league to handle these issues at the local level would help us maintain control over player conduct while allowing CDLA to focus on more serious matters.

Enhanced Education on Sportsmanship and Safety:

We must continue to emphasize **sportsmanship** and **player safety** as top priorities. While the overall behavior was better this season, there were still instances of aggression that could have been avoided. I recommend that we implement **mandatory workshops** for players, coaches, and parents at the beginning of each season. These workshops could cover topics such as how to compete safely, the importance of respecting opponents, and the consequences of aggressive or unsportsmanlike behavior.

Additionally, providing **refresher courses** throughout the season on topics like head contact and body checks would keep these issues top of mind for everyone involved.

These are just a couple things I would like to work on in the following year, but once again was impressed with how much more improved this year was.

With Warmth
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