

**Vancouver Island Minor Lacrosse Commission**  
**Rule Changes in Tyke and Novice Divisions for 2019 Season**

The members of the Vancouver Island Minor Lacrosse Commission voted in some changes that affect the Tyke and Novice divisions on Vancouver Island. The first motion was “Vancouver Island will play 3 vs 3 in Tyke. The second motion was “There will be no tiering in Novice; all teams will be equally balanced.” The third motion was to “Remove contact from Novice and replace it with Place and Push”. These motions were made and discussed with full representation from all ten associations and executive members. All three motions were passed with an overwhelming majority vote.

Below is the rationale for the decision as written by Bryan Baxter.

### *Changing the Game*

*The Vancouver Island Minor Lacrosse Commission recently made some changes regarding the way your children will receive lacrosse instruction and the structure of play that associations will adopt.*

*These changes were felt necessary for several reasons.*

*First and foremost, the changes were made to align the instruction and structure of play with the Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model which has been around for a number of years. In a nutshell, LTAD is a framework for systematically training and developing the physical, mental and emotional capacities in athletes according to scientifically recognized principles and stages of human development. It is based on clearly defined developmental stages and provides recommendations for ratios of training-to-competition hours, points of emphasis in skills training, formats for competition and more. It allows athletes the flexibility to move between competitive and recreational arenas of their sport at almost any time of life. Following proper athlete development in the early stages of training, and depending on talent, athletes can choose to pursue elite competition or join a recreational stream for fun, health and wellness.*

*The concern for the VIMLC is the second and third stages of LTAD, the FUNdamental Stage (6-10 year olds) and the Learning to Train Stage (8 – 12 year olds). This includes both male and female athletes.*

*The emphasis in these stages is all about development. Children need to learn the basics of the ABC'S (Agility, Balance, Coordination and Speed) coupled with the development of the skills necessary to play the game of lacrosse. (Scoop, cradle, pass and catch) These skills are better learned when practised more often and children get way more opportunities to touch a ball playing on a smaller surface with less participants. The old adage that practise makes perfect is multiplied when children play in these environments. That is the main reason for having your Tyke aged children playing half*

*floor and 3 vs 3 rather than the traditional 5 vs 5 on a full floor. Most sports today have adopted the idea of smaller surfaces and fewer athletes for these reasons.*

*Lacrosse in general across the country has seen declining numbers as athletes (and parents) opt for less physical contact for their young athletes. Hockey no longer allows hitting until the athletes are in the category of Bantam Rep. The basic intent behind the no hitting in Novice is so we can retain the athletes that come into lacrosse and not lose them for the fear of getting hurt. In addition to the no hitting rule, by eliminating tiering at this age group, it allows all athletes to play to learn the sport skills that will allow them to compete at a higher level later on. It should also take the focus off the result, and place it on the process. It is still possible to choose a team that wishes to compete in tournaments that will allow for more structured competition.*

*Novice is the place in our sport where we are losing the greatest number of athletes and from all indications, hitting and getting hurt were the main reasons cited for leaving. When children are developing, there are massive differences in the physical, mental and emotional development among athletes. It is important that we take the truly competitive nature of the game out at this level and replace it with a system that stresses development. We are getting so competitive, so early that we have even had a Novice coach call for a goalie pad measurement. The child was devastated and almost inconsolable. Let's let our kids have fun as they learn Canada's National Summer Sport by placing less emphasis on winning and more on the skills (both athletic and sport specific) necessary to play.*

The final operational details for both divisions will be discussed and finalized at the VIMLC February Planning Meeting. The president of each association will be responsible to provide the coaches of these divisions with all the information and support they require to make this a successful change for all players.

Sincerely yours,

Brian Boas  
VILMC Chair