



### **Collegiate Women's Lacrosse Officials Association (COA)**

The COA, USL and the IWLCA are pleased to officially announce the formation of the COA as a professional organization dedicated to collegiate women's lacrosse officiating. Our three organizations are united by the common goal of improving all aspects of officiating in the collegiate game. The COA is specifically founded to provide a focused and dedicated structure for the recruitment and training for the college level. The transition from USL training/certification to the COA will be over a multi-year time period. The road map for this transition process is detailed below. As we work together, any changes or clarifications will be communicated on a regular basis, the communication lead will be the COA. Please feel free to share comments and feedback to [collegiateofficiating@gmail.com](mailto:collegiateofficiating@gmail.com) or go to [coalacrosse.org](http://coalacrosse.org).

#### ***Who are we?***

Foremost, the COA is a member organization representing women's collegiate lacrosse officials. The organization will be responsible for all aspects of officiating at the college level including the recruitment, training, retention and promotion of women's lacrosse officials. The organization is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of officials, assigners, administrators and coaches from D1, D2 and D3. Working groups include the Official Development Subcommittee, Assigners Subcommittee, Conflict Review Board, National Collegiate Subcommittee, and the Core Group of observers, trainers and raters.

#### ***Why we exist?***

Over the past three years there has been a 20% increase in the number of colleges sponsoring NCAA women's lacrosse. During this same time period there has been a 1.9% increase in the number of officials at the US Lacrosse district and national level. Compounding this shortage, there are conferences adding women's lacrosse in areas of the country that do not have a single women's lacrosse official within 200 miles. So while we celebrate the rapid growth of the game, the number of trained officials for the college game has not kept pace. This is both a logistical and quality problem that the COA is dedicated to redress through the delineation of its recruitment and training program solely for the college game.

In addition, the quality of play and athleticism at the collegiate level has improved and continues to improve exponentially. Rules, equipment changes, coaching strategies and pace of game provide ongoing challenges – to even the best officials. Here again, the COA's dedicated scope will be best positioned to further train and assist collegiate officials. The IWLCA and USL fully support the COA in this effort and will be providing assistance as needed in the transitioning stages and beyond.

### **What are the benefits for officials?**

#### ***Education and Training***

- Provide and promote educational materials for training and rating collegiate officials.
- Conduct educational game observations for all levels of collegiate officials to promote individual improvement as well as consistency nationally.
- Develop and maintain professional and ethical conduct guidelines for collegiate lacrosse officials.
- Create an annual written test specific to the NCAA rules.
- Provide a mechanism for all officials to receive an NCAA rule interpretation annually.

#### ***Rating/Certification***

- Identify, train and rate new college officials.
- Provide a rating structure for current USL district and national officials which incorporates educational sessions along with field ratings at the level of college game they are seeking to officiate.
- Simplify the process of ratings for collegiate officials allowing for timely advancement of qualified officials.
- Create a core group of trainers, raters and observers who are trained specific to the collegiate game and its officials.

#### ***Advocacy***

- Promote COA certified officials to the collegiate assigners.
- Disseminate information about officiating opportunities and liaison with assigners in both local and non-local opportunities for officials.
- Serve as a platform for collegiate assigners to discuss issues and concerns.

- Oversee a Conflict Review Board to address issues and concerns between coaches and officials.
- Negotiate a recommended fee structure to assist conferences and assigners in the college game.
- Provide official's feedback to the NCAA Coordinator of Officials.

### **What will the transition look like?**

In order to ensure a smooth and quality transition of collegiate officiating from USL to COA, our three organizations have developed a three year timeframe. Collectively we feel this will best support the officials and the game through the process.

### **Timeline**

#### **2015-2016**

- All college officials must be a member in good standing of COA and USL to officiate college contests and pay dues to each organization (\$50 USL, \$35 CWLOA)
- All collegiate officials must take the COA written NCAA rules test prior to the 2016 season.\*  
*\*Officials calling high school games will need to take the USL written test also.*
- All collegiate officials must complete an NCAA rules interpretation prior to officiating 2016 season.
- District and National ratings will continue under the present USL requirements.
- USL Local officials, hereby referred to as COA Transitioning Officials, wishing to officiate collegiate games (NCAA, NAIA, WCLA, and NJCAA) must attend a training clinic administered by the COA prior to the 2016 season.
- The COA will conduct an educational observation program available to USL district and national officials to promote individual improvement and national consistency.

#### **2016-2017**

- All collegiate officials must be a member of the COA and USL and take the COA NCAA written test prior to the 2017 season.
- All collegiate officials must complete an NCAA rules interpretation prior to officiating the 2017 season.

- COA Transitioning Officials wishing to officiate collegiate games must attend a COA training clinic annually.
- USL District officials will come under the auspices of the COA. They automatically will be placed in the following rating classifications:
 

USL District 1 and 2	COA Collegiate
USL District 3	COA Collegiate Select
- District officials whose rating expires will need to rerate using the COA procedures. Re-rates will be weekend clinics located at sites using the appropriate level of play.

Collegiate	Division II or III play
Collegiate Select	Division I play

- Required fitness tests will be included as part of all rating sessions. Officials must meet the published standards set forth for their rating classification.
- USL National ratings will continue under the present USL requirements.
- All ratings given through the COA will be three years in length.
- The COA will conduct an educational observation program available to USL district and national officials to promote individual improvement and national consistency.

## 2017-2018

- **All** college officials will be certified by the COA.
- All collegiate officials must be a member of the COA and USL, take the COA written NCAA rule test and complete a NCAA rules interpretation prior to officiating each season. USL National and International officials will be classified as National Elite officials under the COA.
- Collegiate Select officials desiring to improve their rating to National Elite will be required to attend an approved COA rating clinic at Division I play.
- National Elite officials whose rating expires will be required to attend an approved COA rating clinic at Division I play.
- COA Transitioning Officials wishing to officiate collegiate games must attend a COA training clinic annually.
- Required fitness tests will be included as part of all rating sessions. Officials must meet the standards set forth by the COA for their rating classification.

- National Elite ratings given through the COA will be three years in length.
- The COA will conduct an educational observation program available to USL district and national officials to promote individual improvement and national consistency.

