

REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW ARIZONA LACROSSE TEAMS

The list below is not intended to be all-encompassing as to what is required to start a new team in either our AYLL (boys) or AGLA (girls) league. It is however intended to be a good “cheat-sheet” to help you understand those areas that need to be addressed very, very carefully.

And none of this is intended to scare anyone off. Those who can follow generally the guidelines below are simply much better prepared to weather all the pitfalls that await a new team

So, here are some “to-do’s”.....

1. JHS is preferred as the starting format, not HS (varsity or JV). Why? Our experience says HS teams with no feeder program simply struggle/die in time due to the difficulty of playing against more experienced teams who draw new players from experienced JHS programs. A HS-only program is a recipe for trouble.
2. If you must start as a HS program, then you may be limited to a JV program until the team can show enough progress to be moved up to the HS varsity ranks
3. have 4 coaches lined up. Having one-only (or even 2) is another recipe for disaster. Work conflicts and other responsibilities make it impossible for coaches to be at every practice. And having only one coach (or none.....) at a practice means kids just stand around and get zero benefits
4. have a very, very strong parent organization to take control of the program so that the coach(es) can coach and parents can administer. If the coach has to organize area of...lining the field, call/e-mail players, collect money, organize registrations, etc, he/she simply gets burned out and then the coaching is less than it should be
5. find a field for practice and games. Don’t assume anything about this. One team in Phoenix had their field lined up and ready to go---until the school board (or city park administration) said 2 weeks before the season.....“you can’t line our field”. Other schools/parks have initially allowed use of the field and then pulled it weeks into the season as they noted the possibility for danger from flying lacrosse balls (windows, cars, walkers, adjacent fields, etc)
6. get some parents (or students) to agree to be your full-time score table personnel who are responsible for keeping the books at each game. It is not a hard job, but if you have to train a new person for every game, they simply never catch on to all the expectations
7. be ready to have the sport cost you more money than anyone expected. Everything costs more than you budget-----uniforms, balls, goals, nets, field-lining equipment (and paint), scorable items (table, horn, clocks, etc), and then player registration with USL (the national body overseeing the sport---required @ appx \$30 each player), team registration with league (amount changes each year), possibly having to rent a field to play/practice on, transportation to/from games, etc etc. Plus, each kid has to have their own equipment and that costs.....a lot.

8. Our league needs commitments (verbal, with money to follow) from new teams by September of each year. Why? So we can start working on schedules in October. We have had teams in the past say "count us in", then the schedule is prepared by the league, and then in December the teams say "sorry, we could not get our team/coaches/etc group together". And then the league has to re-do an entire schedule. This is a "no-no"!!!!!!!
9. recognize the inherent liability in lacrosse of a flying lacrosse ball. And therefore, before you ever put a team out on the field for a practice---formal or informal---**HAVE EVERY KID AND COACH REGISTERED WITH USL (appx \$30/yr) AND THEREFORE COVERED BY THE USL INSURANCE PLAN.** At \$30/year, it is the best and cheapest insurance program you will ever have

Some cost estimates are as follows:

Figure each player can spend about \$300+ (boys, less for girls) on equipment.....shoes, stick, gloves, arm and shoulder pads, helmet, team jersey and shorts, etc, etc.

Then the team has to spend at least \$1,000 on the following.....at least 2 goals and nets, field liner (and paint) to put the lines on the field, scorer's table (and miscellaneous equipment there such as clocks, score book, horn, etc), lots of lacrosse balls for practice (they seem to disappear faster than cool weather as summer approaches).

And then there is the league fee for each team (varies each year) which basically covers the refs for the season.

If you do not have a field offered to you by your school (and most of our teams do not, as they are "clubs" and not school teams), then possibly you will have to pay for the use of a city park or the school field. Cost.....unknown.

And every number I have given you above seems to be light, as teams find ways to spend more money than anyone ever budgeted.

Still want to join AYLL or AGLA with a new team? Great, because we want to expand. Your next step would be to contact the appropriate Board of Directors and talk with someone there about where you stand with the (informal) list above and any other questions that you or the Board may have.

Welcome (hopefully) to lacrosse in Arizona.....