

PAL 2026

BOYS SIXES RULE MODIFICATIONS

GRADES 2nd- 3rd

1. PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT:

The Olympic “Sixes” format is fast-paced, inclusive, and ideal for developing fundamental lacrosse skills in small-sided environments. However, minor modifications are necessary to ensure safe, age-appropriate play for **2nd and 3rd grade boys** who are still early in their physical, cognitive, and technical development.

This document outlines recommended adjustments to the Sixes rule set to support:

- Proper skill development
- Player safety
- Fair, fun, continuous play
- Balanced participation for all athletes

2. CORE SIXES PRINCIPLES:

The following core features of Olympic Sixes remain intact:

- **6v6 format** (5 field players + 1 goalie)
- **Continuous play** (no on-field faceoffs after goals except for start of quarterS)
- **NO shot clock** modified for youth (details below)
- **Small-sided, high-touch environment**
- **Emphasis on speed, ball movement, and equal playing time**

3. RULE MODIFICATIONS FOR 2ND & 3RD GRADE

A. FIELD SIZE AND LAYOUT:

- **Reduced field length:** 60–70 yards
- **Reduced width:** 30–40 yards
- **Soft boundaries:** Cones or temporary lines preferred

B. EQUIPMENTS & SAFETY ADJUSTMENTS:

- **No body checking;** stick checking limited to **controlled poke checks only**
- **No one-handed checks**
- **Goalie equipment:** Standard youth gear + optional padded shirt
- **Modified-pocket sticks** encouraged for consistency and safety

C. GAME PLAY ADJUSTMENTS:

1. Shot Clock

- **NO Shot Clock for 2nd and 3rd grade teams**

2. Game Duration

- **Four 10-minute quarters**
- **Running clock** except during timeouts or injuries
- **2 Timeouts** per game

3. Restarts

- After goals, the **defensive team immediately starts with possession** (no faceoffs).
- Goalie will be allowed to make one UNCONTESTED outlet pass to a teammate 5 yards above Goal Line Extended and below.
- Once the ball touches the ground or the intended player, riding 5 yards and below goal line extended may resume.

4. Substitutions

- **On-the-fly substitutions allowed**
- Early-season games may use horn substitutions if needed

5. Faceoffs

- 4 Faceoffs per game. 1 at the start of each quarter.
- Assuming fields will be on pre-lined football fields, three players will be behind the football hash marks on the defensive end, and two players will be on the offensive end.
- Once the ball is possessed or has crossed the hash marks, full play resumes.

6. Penalties

- If the offending team has possession of the ball, or the ball is loose at the time a foul is committed, then possession shall be awarded to the non-offending team at the spot of the ball when the foul occurred.
- If the non-offending team has possession of the ball at the time a foul is committed, then the foul shall be a FAST BREAK from MIDFIELD.

7. Shot out of bounds

- A shot hitting the goal post, crossbar or Goalkeeper, that goes out of bounds, will result in possession to the offensive team.
- A shot that misses the goal that does not touch a defensive Player, goal post, crossbar or Goalkeeper, before going out of bounds will result in possession to the Defensive team.

D. OFFICIATING MODIFICATIONS:

- **One official** is sufficient for this age group
- Officials encouraged to provide **instructional verbal cues**

- Penalties enforced softly with emphasis on learning

4. LOPSIDED SCORE / MERCY RULE ADJUSTMENTS:

To ensure sportsmanship, maintain competitive balance, and keep all players engaged, the following modifications apply when a game becomes one-sided (6 Goal Mercy Rule):

A. Possession Reset for Trailing Team

- After every goal scored by the leading team, the **trailing team receives possession** at midfield.

B. Mandatory Line Rotation

- If a team leads by **6 or more goals**, coaches must rotate all players to ensure balanced participation.

C. Shooting Restrictions

- If the lead reaches **6 goals**, the leading team must complete **two passes** in the offensive half, involving 3 different players, before attempting a shot.

D. Ending the Mercy Rule

- If the trailing team reduces the margin below **6 goals**, normal rules resume.

Rationale:

These adjustments preserve the integrity of the Sixes format while promoting sportsmanship, safety, and an enjoyable experience for all athletes.

5. PLAYING TIME & TEAM COMPOSITION GUIDLINES:

- **Roster size:** 12–15 players
- **Equal playing time** strongly recommended
- Rotate lines every **60–90 seconds**
Rationale: Ensures fairness, development, and reduced fatigue.

6. SPORTSMANSHIP & COACHING EXPECTATIONS:

Coaches are expected to prioritize:

- Skill development over competition
- Ball movement and spacing
- Positive reinforcement
- Exposure to all positions for all players
- Eliminating stalling or intentional slow play

7. BENEFITS OF SIXES FOR YOUNGER PLAYERS:

- More ball touches and repetitions
- Simplified rules accelerate learning
- Encourages creativity and movement
- Ideal for small-town programs with limited roster numbers
- Supports long-term development and enjoyment

8. SUMMARY OF KEY MODIFICATIONS (at a glance)

Category	Olympic Sixes	Youth (Grade 2–3) Adjustment
Field Size	70 x 36 yards	60–70 x 30–40 yards
Shot Clock	30 seconds	No Shot Clock
Game Length	4×8-min quarters	4×10-min quarters
Checking	Limited	No body contact
Ball Type	Standard ball	Standard ball
Faceoffs	Start of Game / Start of second half	Start of each quarter
Restarts	Goalie clear	Trailing team gets ball (mercy rule)
Subs	On the fly	On the fly or horn (early season)
Crease	9 ft	9 ft
Officials	2	1 instructional
Mercy Rule	Rare	3-pass rule; mandatory rotation

9. CLOSING STATEMENT

These proposed modifications maintain the excitement and developmental value of Olympic Sixes while making the format safe, fair, and age-appropriate for **2nd and 3rd grade athletes**.