

**GUILFORD COLLEGE**  
**NCAA SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR SPORT SAFETY**

The NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports encourages coaches of collision sports to discuss the following information with their teams at the onset of the season, to put it on each player's locker for emphasis and then to remind them of the essentials periodically during the season:

- 1.) Serious head and neck injuries leading to death, permanent brain damage, or quadriplegia (extensive paralysis from injury to the spinal cord at the neck level) occur each year in athletics. The toll is relatively small (less than one fatality for every 100,000 players and an estimated two to three non-fatal severe brain and spinal cord injuries for every 100,000 players), but persistent. (They cannot be completely prevented due to the tremendous forces occasionally encountered with collisions, but can be minimized by manufacturer, coach, and player compliance with accepted safety standards.)
- 2.) The NOCSAE seal on a helmet indicates that a manufacturer has complied with the best available engineering standards for head protection. By keeping a proper fit, by not modifying its design, and by reporting to the coach or athletic trainer any need for its maintenance, the athlete is also complying with the purpose of the NOCSAE standard.
- 3.) The rules against intentional butting, ramming, or spearing the opponent with the helmeted head are there to protect the helmeted person much more than the opponent being hit. The athlete who does not comply with these rules is the candidate for catastrophic injury. For example, no helmet can offer protection to the neck, and quadriplegia now occurs more frequently than brain damage. The helmet cannot always protect you from injuries that may result from slashing or any other kind of direct contact that may occur during play, nor can a helmet protect you from a blow from an opponent that was intentional or accidental.

The typical scenario of this catastrophic injury in football/lacrosse involves lowering one's head while making a tackle/contact. The momentum of the body tries to bend the neck after the helmeted head is stopped by the impact, and the cervical spine cannot be splinted as well by the neck's musculature with the head lowered as with the preferred "face up, eyes forward, neck bulled" position.

- 4.) Because of the impact forces in football/lacrosse, even the "face up" position is no guarantee against head or neck injury. Further, the intent to make contact "face up" is no guarantee that this position can be maintained at the moment of impact.

Consequently, the teaching of playing techniques that keep the helmeted head from receiving the brunt of the impact are now required by rule and by coaching ethics. Coaching techniques teach athletes to maintain or regain the "face up" positioning during the course of a play, must be respected by the athletes.

A **WARNING LABEL** has been placed with each helmet to remind the user of the **RISK** and to **WARN** him against dangerous conduct. This label should **ALWAYS** appear on the outside of the helmet and it reads as follows:

**FOOTBALL WARNING**

**DO NOT use this helmet to butt, ram, or spear an opposing player. This is in violation of the football rules and can result in severe head, brain, or neck injuries, paralysis, or death to you and possible injury to your opponent.**

**There is a risk these injuries may occur as a result of accidental contact without intent to butt, ram, or spear.**

**No helmet can prevent all such injuries.**

**LACROSSE WARNING**

Lacrosse is a contact sport played with sticks and a hard ball moving at high speed. This means you can be injured while playing the sport. To reduce the risk of injury, you must exercise common sense and obey the rules at all times. For example, do not use this helmet to butt, ram, or spear another player. This can severely injure you.

Even when you play lacrosse according to the rules, you expose yourself to serious injury. THIS HELMET WILL NOT PROTECT YOU AGAINST ALL INJURIES; AMONG OTHERS, NECK AND HEAD INJURIES.

Alteration of the helmet can increase your chance of injury. This helmet should not be worn if cracked or otherwise damaged. Use this helmet for FIELD LACROSSE ONLY.

Athletes, it is strongly encouraged that you adhere to these suggestions and rules, as no one can afford to suffer the consequences! Inspect your helmet on a daily basis for any defects or irregularities. Report any problem with your helmet to your coach PRIOR to beginning practice.

To assure that both the parent and the athlete have read and understand this notice, please sign and return this form to the address below.

Athlete Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Sport: \_\_\_\_\_

Athlete Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Return Both Pages To: Kirsten Schrader, ATC-L  
Head Athletic Trainer  
Guilford College  
5800 West Friendly Ave.  
Greensboro, NC 27410