



US Lacrosse, Positive Coaching Alliance and BYLW all endeavor to make lacrosse a positive, character-building experience for every athlete and to make the experience a more successful one for coaches, parents, fans and officials. ***We are working to make the de facto youth sports culture one in which every member of our lacrosse community 'Honors the Game'.***

BYLW began using Honor the Game stickers, which are handed out at the end of each game, in 2007. It has been a huge success with our clubs and players. The sticker is not meant to recognize an "MVP performance", but instead to recognize a player who epitomizes sportsmanship and the spirit of the game. Maybe it's a goalie who was under constant attack by your offense, but never gave up. Perhaps a middy who was hustling "everywhere" on the field or the attacker who unselfishly makes that "extra" pass to a "more" open player even though he could have taken the shot himself. It may even be a defender who congratulated the other team on a great goal or helped an opponent to his feet after they had fallen. Honoring the Game can take many forms and all should be recognized and rewarded.

With bringing the 3/4 Division under the BYLW umbrella for the 2009 season, the BYLW Board has decided to extend the HTG recognition program to those teams, in addition to the teams in the 5/6 Division. At the 3/4 level, we suggest that the **coaches** from each team choose two to three players from the opposing team who they feel should be honored. For the 5/6 Division, we suggest you choose two of your **players** as "HTG Captains" to make the selection of who they feel deserves the honor.

The Honor the Game ceremony takes place at the conclusion of each match. The ceremony typically goes as follows:

- The players should gather (helmets off) at mid-field or on the spectator sideline to be more inclusive of the parents and fans and to clear the field for the next game.
- Usually the home team starts by making their presentations to the visiting team.
- The award presenter (Coach or Player) steps forward with a sticker and calls out the recipient's jersey number who then steps forward toward the presenter.
- **Before exchanging the sticker**, the presenter should describe the reasons why this player is being recognized. (**5/6 Coaches:** Make sure your "HTG Captains" are prepared to describe in at least **modest** detail the reasons why they are recognizing the other player)
- 5/6 Coaches are encouraged to embellish the remarks of their presenters so the recipient is made to feel honored by the award.
- The presenter then shakes hands with the recipient (gloves off) while exchanging the sticker with the left hand.
- This then repeats once more for the home team and then twice for the visiting team.
- Given that each team will have a 10 game season and 25 stickers, you may find occasion to hand out more than two stickers in a given game. For 5/6 coaches, you may want to award a third sticker at your home games, calling it a "Coaches Award".

Toward the middle to end of the season, it is not uncommon for coaches to "confer" with each other before a game about their own players who may be deserving of the recognition, but perhaps have been overlooked in previous matches. The opposing team can then be on the look-out for those players who are honoring the game but are perhaps doing so quietly.

You will receive 25 stickers for each 3/4 and 5/6 team that you declared for the 2009 season.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any BYLW Board Member for further clarification.