



OWFL Rules & Rule Modifications 2023 – U9

NOTE: This document only highlights rules that are called differently for OWFL U9 play. Most fouls (push, block, offside, etc.) are not outlined in this document. For a list of major, minor, restraining line and goal circle fouls, see the most up-to-date version of the [World Lacrosse Women's Field Rules Book, 2022-2024 edition](#). Rule modifications contained in this document should be taken as the official OWFL rule when they conflict with a rule in the rule book.

GAME SET-UP	
Ball Used	Pink soft ball is used.
Field & Lines	Small field used, 36m x 70m; Restraining Line = centre line, 11m semi-circle fan. See OWFL 2023 Field Lining Guide .
Sub Box	NEW in 2023: Shared substitution box at all levels. See OWFL 2023 Field Lining Guide .
# of Players	6 + GK (7 total) / Play 4v4 in attacking/defensive ends, hold 2 + GK behind the Restraining Line.
Quarter Length	10 min.
Stop Time	Last 30 seconds of every quarter.
After Goals	Draws to start quarters only. Goalies clear the ball after goals. After a goal, players from the team that scored MUST retreat and touch centre line with their stick before re-defending. Violation = Major Foul. Ball carrying team awarded the ball at the centre line. Opponent moved 4m behind. Whistle start.
Mercy Rule	Time runs in last 30 seconds of any quarter when a team leads by 12 goals.
Stick Checks	No pre-game stick checks by officials for illegal sticks/pocket depth.
GOALIES & THE CREASE	
Ball in Crease Duration	NEW in 2023: 5 seconds is the new World Lacrosse standard. Count begins once the goalie has possession . Violation = Goal Circle Foul. There are significant changes to possession rules in the crease. See OWFL Crease Rules & Modifications 2023 for details.
Attack in Crease	NEW in 2023: Attack players may play a loose ball in the crease. Their feet may follow-through the crease after the shot completely crosses the goal line. See OWFL 2023 Crease Rules & Modifications for details.
Defense in Crease	NEW for U9: Defense may <i>move through</i> the crease. They should not <i>remain</i> in the crease. Called if/when impacting play (like 3 Seconds). Exception: The defensive player(s) marking the ball carrier within a crosse length may remain in any portion of the crease while defending. Violation = Goal Circle Foul.
Deputy	NEW in 2023: Defense may bat or flick the ball to their goalie while moving through the crease. Only the goalie may "trap" a loose ball in the crease. The goalie must be the one to clear the ball from the crease. Violation = Goal Circle Foul.
Goalie Leaving the Crease	NEW in 2023: When the attacking team has the ball, or was the last team to possess the ball, and the goalie leaves the crease (BOTH feet outside the goal circle), the attacking team is automatically granted their required passes to shoot/score. Exception: The defensive team, including the goalie, has the ball, or was the last team to possess the ball, and the goalie is outside the crease, the attack will not automatically be granted 2 passes if/when they regain possession. The goalie must return to the crease following a turnover. Violation = Goal Circle Foul.
DRAW SET-UP	
Draw Usage	Draws only at the start of every quarter.
Goalie Positioning on the Draw	Goalies must remain in their crease during the draw.
Goalie Positioning after the Draw	Goalies may not cross centre line.
Player Positioning on the Draw	3 players in on the draw. All other players need to be inside/below the 11m fan.
Possession on the Draw	No possession required. All players released on the whistle.
GAME PLAY & FOULS	
Minor Fouls in Marking Area	NEW in 2023: When the defensive team commits a minor foul in the Marking Area (fan), the attack player who was fouled will be awarded the ball on the Marking Area line, in line with the foul, not necessarily on a hashmark. The Marking Area is NOT cleared.
Body-to-Body Contact	Updated for 2023: Legal defense-initiated body-to-body contact, <i>which may include the shaft of a stick that is NOT horizontal</i> , only permitted within the Advantage Flag Area (see Appendix 2.A for AFA definition). Violations = Major Foul.
Stick-to-Body Contact	Updated for 2023: No horizontal stick-to-body contact is permitted at any time. The intent is to eliminate the middle of the shaft of a defender's stick from contacting the ball carrier's arm once or multiple times in a row. The defender's stick head should NOT be parallel to the butt-end of the stick or (as on the draw) within approximately 30° from being parallel with the ground. Violations = Major Foul.
Stick Checking Modifications	No stick checking is permitted. Violation = Major Foul. Incidental stick-to-stick contact may occur and is not inherently a foul.
Shooting Space Exception	NEW in 2023: Rule 20.B.7 See Exception: If the whistle is blown for a Shooting Space violation, between a) the moment the shot has been released and b) a goal is scored (11.A.2); the goal will count. If the goalkeeper saves the shot while in the Goal-Circle or the shot hits the post; the goalkeeper is given possession of the ball inside the Goal-Circle and play is re-started on the official's whistle. Procedure: The official who blew their whistle for the violation should indicate the Shooting Space violation before waving off that call (use no goal signal). Note: If a shooter is called for a Dangerous Propel, the goal will NOT count. Resume play with a throw (Shooting Space and Dangerous Propel are offsetting Major Fouls).
5 Second Rule	Closely Guarding: A defender who is goal-side, within a stick length, with their stick 'up', their torso typically facing a ball-carrying opponent. When a defender does these first three italicized actions together, they are actively engaging their attacker, and the 5 Second Count begins. An attacker must run, dodge, back away, sidestep, pass or shoot (if permitted) to break one or more of the three above components to end the count. The count always resets from zero when the same or another ball carrying attacker becomes closely guarded. ① <i>Guidance: Stick "up", means that the head of the defender's stick is above the butt of their own stick. Their stick should not be horizontal, as no horizontal stick-to-body contact is permitted at U9/U11. Defenders on-ball may take one hand off their stick to block a passing lane or occupy more space, and the 5 Second Count stays ON if activated. Two hands on a stick is not a requirement.</i> ① <i>Guidance: Stick length, includes the length of a defender's stick and arm when the stick/arm is extended.</i> ① <i>Guidance: Goal-side means the defender is between the ball carrier and their own goal circle/net.</i> ① <i>Guidance: Officials should not start the Five Second count immediately after a new player receives a pass or picks up a ground ball. The official may give a new ball carrier 2 seconds to situate themselves with the ball before enacting the 5 Second Count. This is necessary as we do not want athletes to be rushed and officials are not always looking on-ball. The count should be signaled with an audible "1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5" and a low, chopping motion with one arm, as per the 5 Second Count on the goalie clearing the ball from the crease.</i> ① <i>Guidance: For clarity, the 5 Second Count is not called when:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A defender is within a stick-length with their stick up, but not goal-side.• A defender is goal-side and within a stick-length, but their stick is not up.• A defender is goal-side and their stick is up, but they are outside of a stick-length.
1 Attempted Pass Rule	1 attempt at an overhand pass is required before an attacking team may take a shot on goal/score. The pass does not need to be caught but can be picked-up from a ground ball or bounce. The pass must be caught or picked-up in the attacking end of the field to count. Teams are encouraged to attempt multiple passes before going to goal. The ball is live off a rebound (the attacking team may continue to shoot until the defense gains possession). Violations (ie. a shot is taken prior to one attempted pass being made) = No goal. Turnover to the goalie. Whistle start.

