



OWFL Crease Rules & Modifications 2024

Note: Rule 17, The Goal-Circle, has been significantly altered from the previous rule book. See the most up-to-date version of the rules book here: [World Lacrosse Women's Field Rules Book, 2022-2024 edition](#). In this document, rules that represent changes from the **2022 OWFL Season** are called out in **yellow** for clarity. No changes have been made from the OWFL rules used in 2023. Items in ~~strike through~~ do not apply to OWFL play and are rewritten or clarified in **RED**. These rules have been rewritten for development purposes only.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

- **Removal of "Deputies"**: Defense may possess the ball within the Goal-Circle and move it out of the Goal-Circle even when the goalkeeper is in the Goal-Circle.
- **"Possession"**: Defender = ball in their Crosse; Goalkeeper = ball in their Crosse or under their Crosse (trapped) (Rule 17.A.1)
- **New Definition of "Grounded"**: One foot in/one foot out = in the Goal-Circle.
- **Stick Checking**: The goalkeeper cannot be checked/interfered with when they are in possession of the ball in the Goal-Circle (Rule 17.A.2. & 17.A.13.e). A defender can be legally checked while they are in the Goal-Circle when they have possession of the ball (Rule 17.A.3).
- **5-Second Count**: The defensive team has 5-seconds to clear the ball from the Goal-Circle upon gaining possession (Rule 17.A.4).
- **Defensive Players Moving Through the Goal-Circle**: For WL, the ball carrier being below or above the GLE impacts when off-ball defenders can move through the Goal-Circle. On-ball defenders can be in the Goal-Circle at any time. In OWFL, rule is modified to allow defensive players to move through the Goal-Circle at any time.
- **Attacking Team Changes**: Rule 17.A.13 - An attack player may play a ball within the Goal-Circle, but they must not: (17.A.13.a) Step on or over the Goal-Circle line to play the ball on a shot, (17.A.13.b) Step on or in the Goal-Circle until whole ball passes completely over the goal-line, (11.A.2) (after shooting), (17.A.13.c) Initiate contact with the goalkeeper, or a defender, (17.A.13.d) Cause a defender to make contact with the goalkeeper, or (17.A.13.e) Interfere with the goalkeeper or their Crosse in any way. (11.A.7)
- **Related – Major Fouls, Rule 20.A.13: Illegal Defending**: A defender may pick up a rolling ball or a bouncing ball, in the Goal-Circle. They must not save a shot on goal.

POSSESSION IN THE GOAL-CIRCLE

17.A.1 In the Goal-Circle the goalkeeper or a defender has possession of the ball if they have one or both feet **Grounded** in the Goal-Circle **and**

- the ball is in their Crosse, or
- the ball is in the Goal-Circle AND either in the pocket or trapped under the goalkeeper's Crosse.

① As long as any part of their foot / body is touching the Goal-Circle, they are considered to be grounded in the Goal-Circle.

① A defender in the Goal-Circle cannot cover the ball – only the goalkeeper can trap the ball under their Crosse in the situation described above

17.A.2 When in possession of the ball in the Goal-Circle, the goalkeeper's Crosse cannot be checked.

17.A.3 When in possession of the ball in the Goal-Circle, a defender's Crosse can be checked. Note: OWFL No Deputy Rule. The goalkeeper MUST be the one to clear the ball from the goal circle. **Violation = Goal Circle Foul.**

① Grounded in the Goal-Circle while trying to play a ball which is outside the Goal-Circle, e.g. pick up, scoop, flick, or rake, they are not in possession of the ball.

17.A.4 When inside the Goal-Circle, the goalkeeper, or the defender must move the ball out of the Goal-Circle within 5 seconds of gaining Possession of the ball in the Goal-Circle.

① The official will count the 5 seconds out loud while using a visible, hand chopping motion to count each second that the ball remains in the Goal-Circle.

17.A.5 If the goalkeeper or a defender gains Possession of the ball outside the Goal-Circle, they may return the ball to the Goal-Circle for one 5-second count.

17.A.5.a A goalkeeper or a defender cannot re-enter the Goal-Circle with possession of the ball in their Crosse.

① They may throw or roll the ball into the Goal-Circle and then follow it into the Goal-Circle.

17.A.6 Once the defending team has moved the ball out of the Goal-Circle, they must not return the ball to their Goal-Circle until it has been Played.

17.A.7 If a goalkeeper or a defender step out of the Goal-Circle with the ball in their Crosse, they may not return the ball to their Goal-Circle until it has been Played.

17.A.8 The goalkeeper or a defender may rake the ball into their Goal-Circle if they are Grounded in the Goal-Circle. (19.A.11) **Defenders in the goal circle may bat or flick the ball to their goalie while standing inside the crease. They may not cover the ball per rule 19.A.11., which states: A player must not cover a ground ball with their Crosse or any part of their body when it prevents an opponent from making a legal play on the ball.**

17.A.8.a In the process of bringing/raking the ball back into the Goal-Circle, the goalkeeper/defender may cover the ball with their Crosse as long as this does not prevent an opponent from making a play on the ball. (See "Covering" Rule 19.A.11.)

17.A.9 The goalkeeper may stop the ball with their hand, body and/or their Crosse. If they catch the ball, they must put the ball in their Crosse to proceed with the game.

17.A.10 The goalkeeper must remove a ball lodged in the goal netting, their clothing or pads, and place it in their Crosse and proceed with the game.

① The Official may signal time-out to assist the goalkeeper with dislodging the ball from their clothing, equipment, or the goal netting. The goalkeeper will start with possession and the 5-second count will begin at the whistle to restart play.

17.A.11 When completely outside the Goal-Circle, the goalkeeper or a defender, cannot step on the Goal-Circle line or back into the Goal-Circle if they have possession of the ball.

① The goalkeeper is outside the Goal-Circle to pick up a ground ball and steps back into the Goal-Circle. **ILLEGAL: the goalkeeper was Grounded outside the Goal-Circle. To resume play, the goalkeeper remains at the spot of the foul (inside the Goal-Circle), and the attack is awarded a Free Position where the MA joins the GLE.**

ATTACK

17.A.12 Attacking players are not allowed to enter the Goal-Circle or have their feet GROUNDED in the Goal-Circle or on the Goal-Circle line at any time.

17.A.13 An attack player may play a ball within the Goal-Circle, but they must not:

17.A.13.a Step on or over the Goal-Circle line to play the ball on a shot,

17.A.13.b Step on or in the Goal-Circle until whole ball passes completely over the goal-line, (11.A.2)

17.A.13.c Initiate contact with the goalkeeper, or a defender,

17.A.13.d Cause a defender to make contact with the goalkeeper, or

17.A.13.e Interfere with the goalkeeper or their Crosse in any way. (11.A.7)

① 'Play' includes shoot, shot, pick-up, flick, pass and other legal actions. This means that a shot can be initiated inside the Goal-Circle, whether it is bouncing, Grounded, in the air, caught or intercepted.

① The shooter may enter the Goal-Circle after the ball has crossed the goal-line.

① Defenders who have legally established their position near the Goal-Circle before the shot must not be penalized for illegal contact caused by the attack shooter or one of their teammates.

DEFENSE

17.A.14 When the defending team has possession, only one player the goalkeeper is allowed to remain inside the Goal-Circle.

① This is usually the goalkeeper but, when the goalkeeper is out of the circle, this can be a defender.

17.A.15 When the attacking team has possession, only the goalkeeper may remain in the Goal-Circle for the purpose of saving a shot.

17.A.16 Only the goalkeeper is allowed in the Goal-Circle for the purpose of saving a shot on goal. If a defender is in the Goal-Circle, they must immediately leave the Goal-Circle when the opposing team gains possession of the ball. A defender attempting to save a shot on goal, while in the Goal-Circle, is a major foul. (20.A.13)

17.A.17 Players in their Defending Area may move through their Goal-Circle. They should not remain 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.**

17.A.17.a If the attacking team has possession of the ball in their opponent's Defending Area below Goal Line Extended, defensive Players are permitted to run through any portion of their Goal Circle while defending; however, only the defensive player(s) marking the ball carrier within a Crosse length, may remain in the crease while defending.

17.A.17.b If the attacking team has possession of the ball in their opponent's Defending Area above Goal Line Extended, the defensive players are only permitted to run through the portion of the crease below Goal Line Extended while defending; however, the defensive player(s) marking the ball carrier within a Crosse length may remain in any portion of the crease while defending.





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① Any defender running through the Goal-Circle must still abide by all provisions of the Shooting Space and Three Seconds rules. (20.A.21 & 20.A.22)

- ① For example, a defender may run through the Goal-Circle
- when they are marking the attack player with the ball, or
 - when they are marking a non-ball attack player, or
 - when they are not marking any attack player, or
 - to play the ball within the Goal-Circle.

① If a non-ball attack player settles at the edge of the Goal-Circle or below the Goal-Circle, any defender(s) marking them while in the Goal-Circle, must step out. If the attacker begins to move again, the defender(s) may step back into the Goal-Circle and move through to stay with the attack player.

GOALKEEPER

17.A.18 When the goalkeeper is completely outside the Goal-Circle, they lose all of their goalkeeping privileges.

① From inside the Goal-Circle, the goalkeeper may, with one or both feet, step or stand on the Goal-Circle line. As long as her feet are touching any part of the Goal-Circle line, she/her is considered to be inside the Goal-Circle.

① When the goalkeeper is completely outside of their Goal-Circle, they are not exempt from obstructing the shooting space, using her body to save a shot (20.A.13), or body ball (19.A.10), or covering (19.A.11).

17.A.19 They must not

17.A.19.a Throw any of their Crosse / equipment to another player.

17.A.19.b Step on the Goal-Circle line or back into the Goal-Circle if they have possession of the ball. (17.A.11)

① The goalkeeper straddles the Goal-Circle line to pick up a ground ball and steps back into the Goal-Circle. LEGAL: the goalkeeper was Grounded inside the Goal-Circle.

17.A.20 When inside the Goal-Circle, they must remove a ball lodged in the goal netting or their Crosse, place it in their Crosse and proceed with the game. (17.A.10)

B PENALTIES

17.B.1 When the **attack** commits a Goal-Circle foul:

17.B.1.a The goalkeeper will take the Free Position inside the Goal-Circle.

17.B.1.b The player who fouled will move 1m to the side of the Goal-Circle.

17.B.1.c All other players must move at least 1m away from the Goal-Circle.

① If the goalkeeper is completely outside the Goal-Circle when the attack commits a Goal-Circle foul, a player on the defending team closest to the Goal-Circle, which may or may not be the goalkeeper, shall take the Free Position inside the Goal-Circle.

17.B.2 When a **defender** commits a Goal-Circle foul:

17.B.2.a The attack will be awarded a Free Position where the MA joins the GLE.

17.B.2.b The player who fouled will move 4m behind the player taking the Free Position.

17.B.2.c All other players will move 4m away from the spot where the Free Position has been awarded.

① An unprotected defender is allowed in the Goal-Circle as described above, but they are not allowed into the Goal-Circle to save a shot. This is a Major Foul in the Goal-Circle and must be administered as a Major Foul – see Rule 20.

17.B.3 When the **goalkeeper** commits a Goal-Circle foul:

17.B.3.a The attack will be awarded a Free Position where the MA joins the GLE.

17.B.3.b The goalkeeper will remain in, or return to, their Goal-Circle.

17.B.3.c No defender is placed 4m behind.

17.B.3.d All other players will move 4m away from the spot where the Free Position has been awarded.

17.B.4 When a major foul is carded during Goal-Circle play, the game will resume according to Rule 20. During a Scoring Play, the game will resume according to Rule 21.

