

WSLA Coaches NRI

David Almond – Board Chair

Holly Whitman – Education Co-Chair

Kaitlyn Thompson – Education Co-Chair, Youth Co-Chair



2026 WWLOA BOARD

Board Chair:

David Almond

Past Chair:

Edith Harris

Education Chairs:

Holly Whitman & Kaitlyn
Thompson

Secretary:

Anna Gustafson

Treasurer:

Jess Kast

Adult Officials Co-Chairs:

Matt Saxon & Brian Jovag

Youth Officials Co-Chairs:

Kaitlyn Thompson &
Erin Steckline

Registrar:

Clelie Fielding

At-Large Members:

Amy Seachriest, Aanya
Lee, JD Loveless

Web Manager:

Tsering Yuthok Short

WSLA Liaison:

Jeannette Wake



It's a Joint effort!

WSLA + WWLOA



Positive Game Experience

HONOR THE GAME

- If you want coverage for **YOUR games**, please be respectful to **YOUR officials** and Honor the Game.
- If you have a bad experience or teaching moment, please submit feedback via the WWLOA or WSLA website or email/call me:

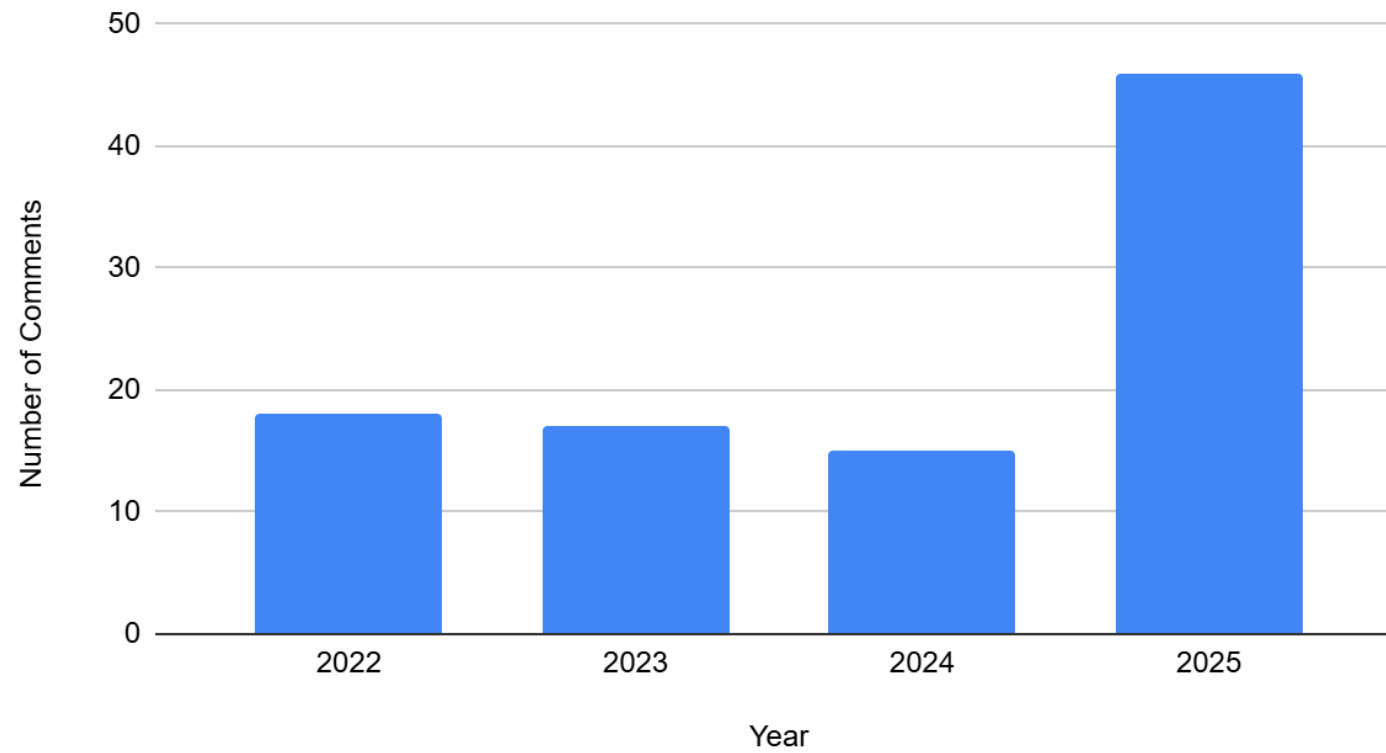
wwloaboardchair@gmail.com

206-650-9449

- If you have a positive experience, PLEASE submit feedback via the WWLOA or WSLA website.

Coach Feedback

Number of Comments vs. Year



Examples of Coach Comments

- [She] did a great job in an intense game! She was assertive and kind - we really appreciated her.
- This is the second game where there have been repeated fouls that have caused injuries that have not been addressed.
- They made great calls especially when the play was rough.
- I was not confident that this ref knows the rules.
- ...she took the time to explain the foul to the girls, which I believe is necessary at the 10U...

Comments from Junior Officials

- ...both coaches were making comments about my officiating and calling out things that I had missed (this was a 10U game so it's hard to watch everything with only one ref).
- [The coach] was repeatedly arguing calls and telling my partner and I that we were wrong...He was intimidating towards my partner and I, and extremely disrespectful.

Comments From A Junior Official

I made a call but did not blow my whistle loud enough for the player to hear, but the [blue] coach on the sideline did. By the time I realized they hadn't heard my whistle the play had already moved on and the [red] team had gotten the ball and was running down the field. I understand that I made a mistake and that I should have re-whistled but since the play had continued on I was just in a hurry to catch up with the players. The [blue] Coach then yelled at me ("YOU WHISTLED REF" "WHAT THE HECK REF" etc.) multiple times about the whistle, even when the play had made it to the opposing side of the field. The intensity of the yelling made me cry after the 3rd quarter but I was able to continue refing to finish the game.

...Unfortunately, this was not the only thing that had happened though, the game was hard to ref, lots of skirmishes which made it hard to see who had actually fouled. This made the coaches and players(both sides) a little mouthy when it came to calls. The sideline was like this as well. They were constantly yelling at the other ref about her skills. "learn how to use your whistle ref", was one of the main things they said.

This year has been hard as a ref and I have to seriously consider whether I have the strength mentally to come back next season.

Junior Official Green Whistle Initiative

“If the whistles are green, they are under 18”

- **Green Whistles** are used to identify our junior officials, reminding everyone involved in our sports community to prioritize respect and appropriate conduct towards our officials.
- The hope is that when someone sees a **Green Whistle**, they will pause and reflect on what their role is in creating a positive game experience, instead of fixating on calls or criticizing officials.



WSLA RULES

Communication with Game Officials for ALL Youth Divisions (10U, 12U and 14U):

- **Only the head coach and team captains** are permitted to interact with the officials while the game is in progress. However, there is an exception for the 10U division: for teaching and learning purposes, all 10U players may communicate with the officials during play
- In addition, **only the head coach and team captains** are allowed to ask officials questions before the game begins, as well as during timeouts and between quarters. Officials are expected to address these questions as time permits.

WSLA RULES


Communication with Game Officials for ALL Youth Divisions (cont'd):

- **Coaches, players, other team personnel, and fans** are not permitted to make comments to the officials during the game. Furthermore, negative remarks about the officials or their officiating are **expressly prohibited**, both during and after the game.
- Any violation of these communication guidelines will be considered a misconduct foul and will result in the **head coach being issued a yellow or red card**.

WWLOA 2026 INITIATIVES





- **All Junior Officials** must attend a full day of classroom training. Previously, returning J.O.s only attended a 3-hour refresher.
- **All ADULT L1** officials were also asked to attend a full day training. Previously all returning officials were only required to attend the 3 hour refresher
- **Junior Official specific** classroom training. Previously new J.O.s trained alongside new Adult Officials.
- Stronger emphasis on **pre-game consistency** using scripted C&C cards and the youth comparison chart.
- **TEXT GROUPS:** All J.O.s will be assigned to a Text Group with Adult Mentors. Mentors will check-in weekly but J.O.s will be encouraged to reach out with questions or concerns..

A large orange circle on the left side of the slide, partially cut off by the edge.

WWLOA 2026 INITIATIVE


MENTOR BENCH OFFICIAL (MBO)

- HAND SELECTED J3 OFFICIALS AND YOUNG ADULT OFFICIALS.
 - Approximately 40 Youth Games (about 25% of all youth games) will have an MBO.
 - MBO will be located in vicinity of the scorer's table and will be in addition to a game's on-field officials.
 - MBO's are to support and help in development of on-field officials.
- 
- A yellow dashed line in the bottom right corner, consisting of several short, curved segments.

A large orange circle is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially cut off by the edge. The text 'WWLOA 2026 INITIATIVE' is written in white, sans-serif font across the middle of this circle.

WWLOA 2026 INITIATIVE

MENTOR BENCH OFFICIAL (cont'd)

- MBO participates in **pre-game** meeting and any other meetings during the game.
 - Is available at the Table for questions from Table personnel and coaches.
 - **MBO will** help monitor and empower on-field officials in dealing with poor sideline behavior.
 - MBO **will not** override any call on the field.
- 
- A series of four short, thick yellow dashes are arranged in a curved, upward-sloping line in the bottom right corner of the slide.

WWLOA 2026 INITIATIVE

MENTOR BENCH OFFICIAL (cont'd)

- Please be respectful of the purpose of the MBOs
- MBOs are not there to listen to complaints or coach chatter the entire game. Please use the post-game feedback form regarding official performance
- MBOs are NOT there to:
 - Undermine the field officials
 - Talk poorly of the field officials to any table/coach/team personnel
 - Step onto the field to make calls or correct improper procedures of the field officials (feedback will be given at appropriate times)
 - Directly comment on whether a foul was appropriately called and/or set up.



2026 USAL/NFHS New Rules



2026 NEW RULES:

- 2-4-5: Stick checks may be requested at any point during a quarter break, halftime, a team time-out, prior to the start of an overtime period, prior to the start of a draw, and immediately following goals in regulation and overtime periods.

Rationale: Specifies the appropriate times when stick check requests may be made to eliminate potential gamesmanship, maintain pace of play, and allow officials to focus on administration of the game.



2026 NEW RULES:

- 2-8-3 (NEW) & PENALTY: No on-field player can wear an audio or video device during the game.

Rationale: Clarifies the prohibition of electronic communications with and by players during the game and aligns with other NFHS rules codes.



2026 NEW RULES:

- 4-3-3d: If a possession time-out is called when the goalkeeper has possession of the ball in the goal circle, play will resume at the closest dot and any player may restart play (whistle start)

Rationale: Aligns the restart procedure for a team time-out when the goalkeeper has possession of the ball in the goal circle with other team time-outs when the ball is in the critical scoring area.



Scenario

White #15 shoots on goal and the Blue goalie makes a save. The official begins the 10-second count. When the official reaches “5”, the Blue team calls time-out.

Following the time-out, how does play resume?



2026 NEW RULES:

- 5-2 PENALTY 1: When one player draws illegally, the free position may be taken by any player on the opponent's team at the spot of the ball.

Rationale: Improves the flow of the game without disadvantaging the non-offending team.





2026 NEW RULES:

- 7-3 PENALTIES 1a, 3a: When a goal circle foul is committed, the offending player shall move 4 meters *AWAY* from the player taking the free position instead of behind.

Rationale: Improves the flow of the game and creates consistency in penalty administration of non- major fouls.



Scenario

White #12 scores a goal but her momentum carries her into the goal circle.

What steps does the official take?



WSLA Rule on Sideline Managers

2026 rule change/update

- Each team's sideline manager **must be at the field 10 minutes before** game start/prior to the Captains and Coaches (C&C) meeting
 - At Youth Games the sideline managers will take part in the C&C meeting
 - At High School Games immediately after the C&C meeting, the officials will walk over to the fan sidelines and meet with the sideline managers.
- If a team's sideline manager is not at the field at the time of the C&C meeting, the team shall be assessed **a minor foul** and the opposing team shall begin the game with a free position at the center

2026 USAL/NFHS POINTS OF EMPHASIS

- Use of the Green Card/Delay of Game
- **Efficient** Draw Administration
- Identifying and Managing Fouls During Scoring Plays
- Youth: Stick to body contact, 3 Seconds Good Defense, and forcing through





2026 USAL POE:

Use of Green Cards/Delay of Game

For the second year in a row, USAL is encouraging officials to use our green cards for all things related to issues that interrupt the flow of the game. Effective use of the green card will enforce fair play and minimize repeated violations.

Examples:

- Defenders failing to promptly move 4m behind or away from a free positions

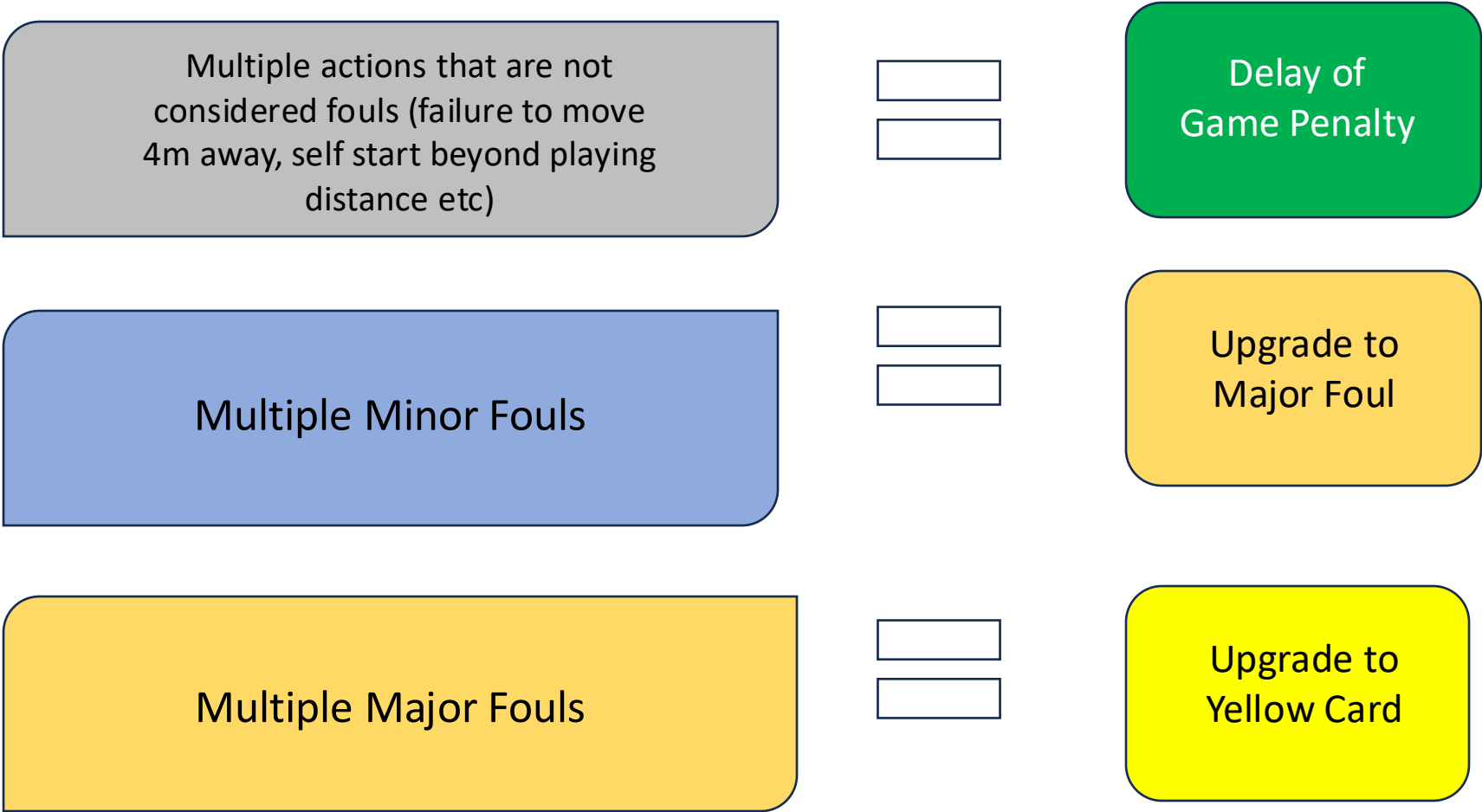
-At high school level: the player with the ball does not have to stop if they have an advantage, but the player who fouled must make an effort to go behind or away (depending on the severity of the foul).

-Defenders can re-engage should the attack player continue without a pause.

-YOUTH players must pause to acknowledge the foul, and the player who fouled must make an effort to go behind or away as above.

- Players failing to clear the penalty zone.
- Teams failing to promptly return to the field after a time out or time between quarters has expired.
- Repeated false starts by the defense

Use of cards for Repeated Violations:





2026 POE: Efficient Draw Administration

Consistent AND EFFICIENT when setting
up draws!

Efficiency on the Draw

- Limit post-goal celebrations and huddles. Return to the center line quickly after goals to start the next draw.
- Efficient post-goal substitutions. Remember, substitutes can enter the field after the goal is scored. Always enter and exit through the substitution area.
- Players that are uncooperative or continue to move after the sticks are set should be penalized for a delay of game.

2026 USAL POE:
Identifying and
Managing Fouls During
Scoring Plays



Identifying and Managing Fouls During Scoring Plays

- “Increased attention to offensive and defensive fouls during a scoring opportunity is needed because of a high risk of illegal play...”
- “Taking swift and stringent actions in these situations will lead to a safer game and a better experience for participants.”

Youth Specific



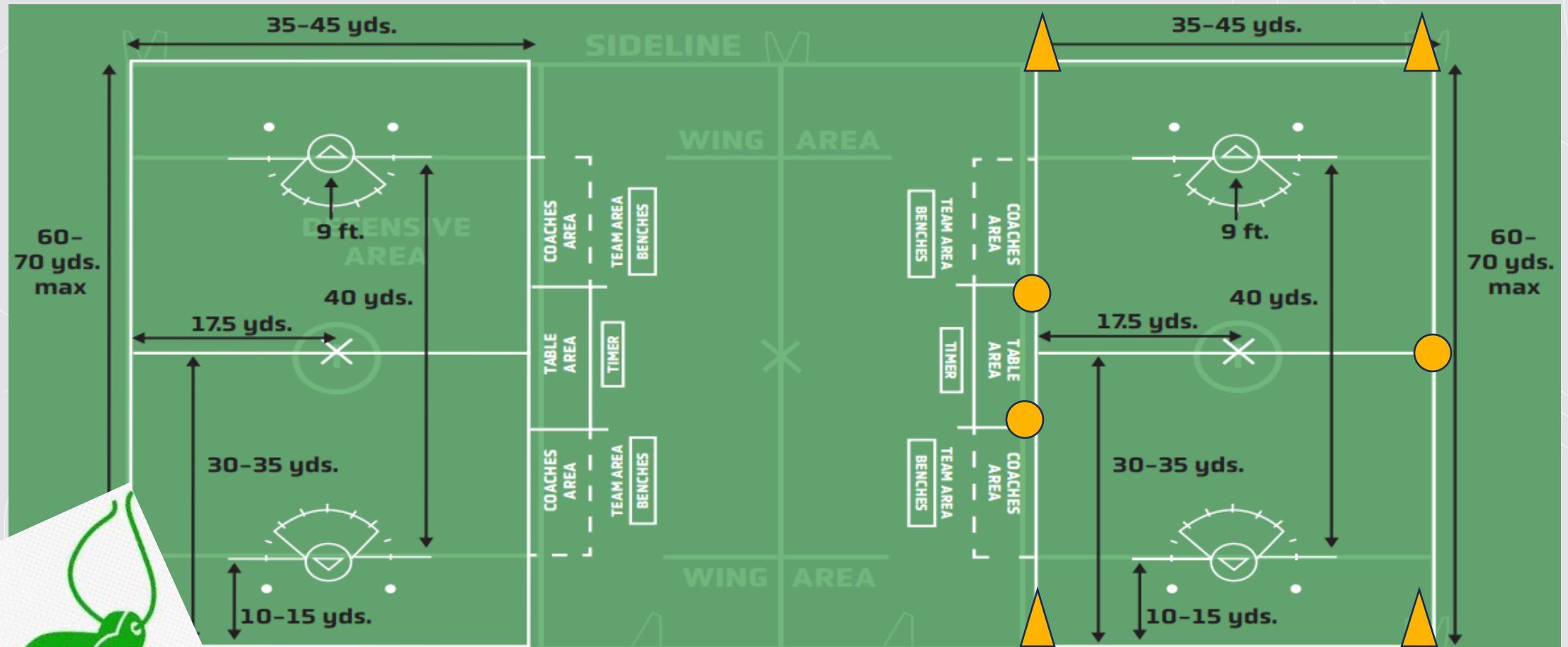
2026 USAL RULE CHANGE - 14u ONLY



14u may now have Deputy Goalies

- May be in the goal circle when the goalie is NOT
- May only enter when their team is in possession of the ball, and leave immediately if possession is lost
- May prevent a ROLLING ball from crossing the goal line
- Still only has 10 second to clear the ball, start from when the BALL ENTERS THE Goal Circle
- May pick up the ball WITHIN the goal circle, place it in the crosse, and proceed with exiting the Goal Circle

10U & 12U - Short Sided Field



There MUST be 8m &
midfield line clearly marked!!



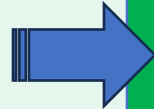
YOUTH Clarification: Checking



14U:
Transitional checking



12U:
Modified checking



10U:
No checking

Checking above the shoulder is allowed IF:

- Checker is even with or in front of ball carrier
- Entire checking motion is outside of the ball carrier's 12 inch sphere

CHECKING MOTION must begin below the ball carrier's shoulder

Motion must be down and away from ball carrier's body

• Checking from behind: Checking motion must begin below the ball carrier's shoulder

WSLA/USAL Comparison Chart: CONTACT



10U

- NO Stick to Stick
- NO Stick to Body
- NO Body to Body

12U/14U

- NO Stick to body initiated by the defense
- NFHS Rules for Body to body (no displacement)

Youth Specific: WSLA 12U Game modifications



- 12U games will be played on a short field
- 7 field players and a GK
- 2 players behind the restraining line
- Draws only at the beginning of the quarters
- 1 pass attempt prior to a shot
- GK clear after a goal is scored

NEW 2026

10U and 12U Mechanics after a Goal:

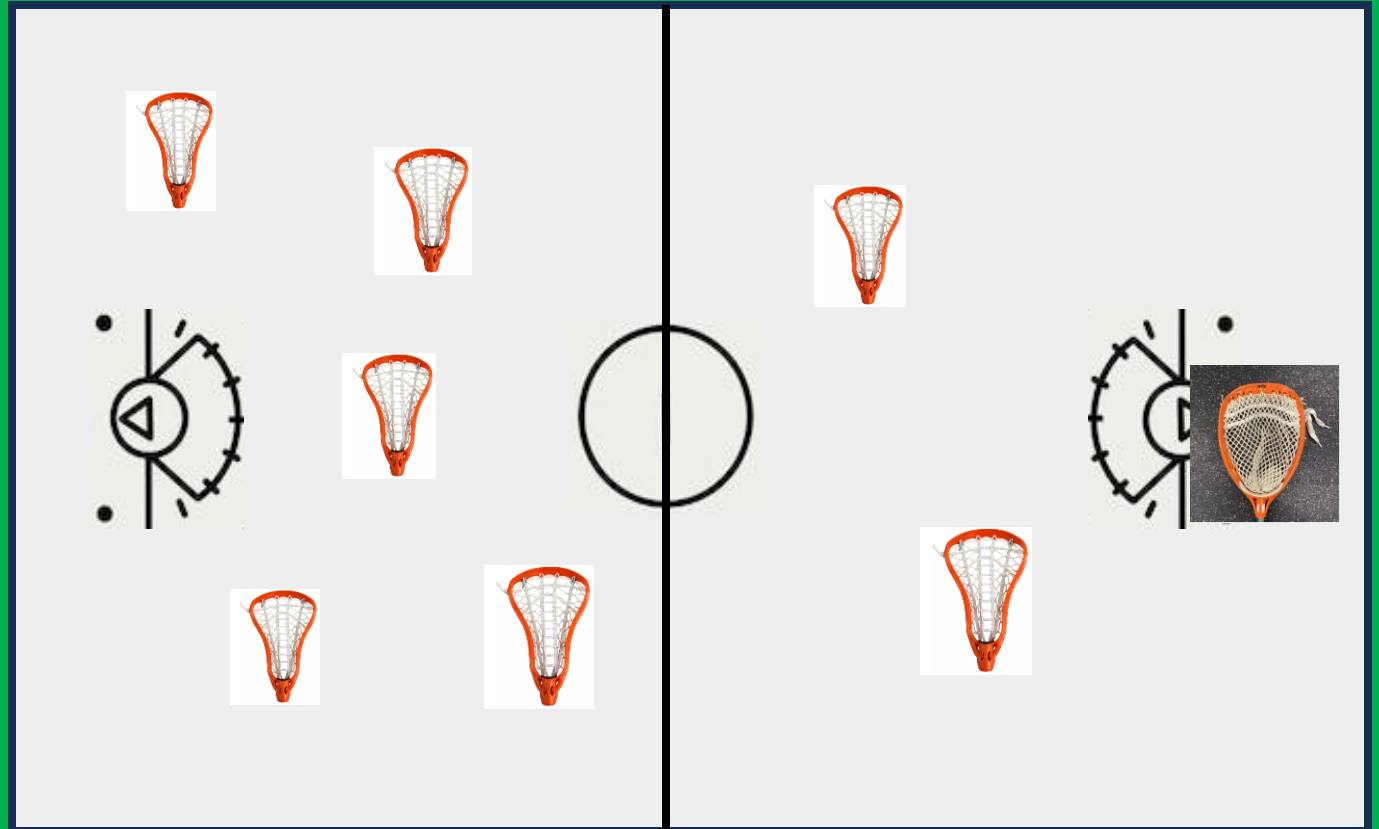


- Official signals the goal
- All opposing players will be cleared TO MID FIELD(as goalie is getting the ball out of the net)
- When opposing team is completely over midline, official will begin their 10 second count
- The goalie may clear the ball at any time and does not have to wait until opposing team is over midline.

Offsides: 10U and 12U

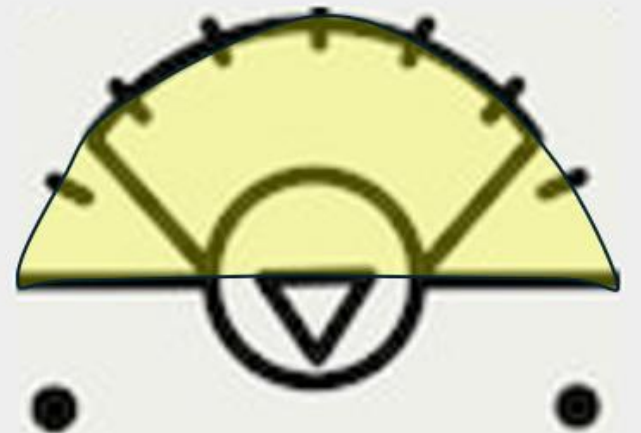


- Restraining line is at midfield
- No more than 5 **FIELD** players in either end



Youth Specific: Shooting Space

- 10U/12U– shooting space applies when ball is within 8m of goal and above GLE
- 14u – HS shooting space rules apply (within the CSA, above GLE)



Youth Specific: (WSLA RULE): Pass rule prior to shooting

- 10u – 1 attempted pass prior to shooting
- 12u – 1 attempted pass prior to shooting
- 14u – no pass attempts required

Attempted pass:

- Does not need to be successful
- As long as the passing team maintains possession, pass attempt is fulfilled
- Needs to be an actual pass attempt, not a dump into teammates stick



Youth Specific: 12U and 10U One pass Rule

- Each time there is a change of possession, official will raise an arm with 1 finger in air
- When they feel the pass attempt has been fulfilled, they will lower their arm
 - This is the signal for the players that it is ok for them to shoot
- If a shot is taken while their arm is still up- MAJOR FOUL for illegal shot
- Defense gets ball at top of 8m, WHISTLE START



Youth Specific: 3 Seconds Closely Guarded



- When a defensive player marks up in the proper position to perform a high school style check, officials will begin counting OUT **LOUD** 'One, Two...'
- If the defender moves out of a 'checking position', the count is stopped (this typically happens when the ball carrier moves the ball to a 'safer' position)
- When the defender regains a 'checking position and stance with two hands on the stick', the count restarts
- If an official reaches a count of Three, a whistle will be blown, the official will raise their hand with 3 fingers up in the air and signal direction the ball will go.
- Defense gets the ball, all others 4m away, self start.



Youth specific-WSLA Mercy Rule



- 10u – not applicable
- 12u – not applicable
- 14u – 4 goal differential
 - At captain and coaches meeting, each head coach will declare if they would like to utilize their right for free positions at center should their team be down by 4+ goals.
 - This decision will be in effect for the entire game, cannot change
 - Coaches don't need to agree. They each choose for their own team.

2026 GIRLS YOUTH RULES COMPARISON CHART

WSLA Specific rules in RED

Category	USL 6U & 8U	USL 10U	USL 12U	USL 14U
Cards	No cards, teams do not play short	No cards, teams do not play short, PLAYER IS SUBBED	NFHS Cards	NFHS Cards
Checking	No checking	No checking	Modified checking	Transitional checking, modified checking from behind
Contact	No stick to stick, body to body, or body to stick contact.	No stick to stick, body to body, or body to stick contact.	Stick to body contact initiated by defense prohibited. Incidental contact ok. NFHS body to body contact	Stick to body contact initiated by defense prohibited. Incidental contact ok. NFHS body to body contact
Covering Ball	No covering ball with stick or body	No covering ball with stick or body	No covering ball if opponent in playing distance	No covering ball if opponent in playing distance
Defending Goal	No defending goal by standing in the 5-yard space in front of goal unless marking	Shooting Space rule applies in 8m	Shooting Space rule applies in 8m	NFHS Shooting space rule applies
Deputies	Goalkeeper optional and not recommended for 6U. No deputy	No deputy	No deputy	Deputy allowed
Field Lines	Goal circle with 6' or 8.5' radius / No restraining line	Goal circle, 8m arc , half field line	Goal circle, 8m arc, half field line	NFHS field lines
Field Size	Small sided field	Small sided field	Small sided field	Full field
Goals	3'x3' or 4'x4'	6'x6'	6'x6'	6'x6'
Length of Game	4 x 10-minute running clock / 5-minute halftime	4 x 10-minute running clock / 5-minute halftime	4 x 12 -minute running clock / up to 10-minute halftime	4 x 12-minute running clock / up to 10-min halftime
Mercy Rule	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	4-goal differential mercy rule is opted in/out by each coach at C&C meeting
Offsides	Not applicable	5 Field players in each end	5 Field players in each end	NFHS offside procedures
1 v 1 Defense	1v1 defense required	1v1 defense in midfield	Not required	Not required
Players	5v5 / No Goalkeeper	8v8 with goalkeeper	8v8 with goalkeepers	12v12 with goalkeeper
Restraining Line	None	Center Line	Center Line	NFHS
Start After Goal	Ball to defender at side of goal circle / Player self-starts	Goalkeeper clear, scoring team moves across midline prior to 10 second count	Goalkeeper clear, scoring team moves across midline prior to 10 second count	Draw
Sticks	Small stick / No pocket limits	Modified Pocket	NFHS stick and pocket	NFHS stick and pocket
3-Seconds Closely Guarded	3-Seconds closely guarded rule applies	3-Seconds closely guarded rule applies	3-Seconds closely guarded rule applies	Not applicable
3-Seconds in 8M Arc	Not Applicable	3- Seconds Applies	NFHS	NFHS
Timeouts	1 team timeout	1 team timeout	2 team timeouts	2 team timeouts
Minimum Pass Rule	One pass attempt prior to shot	One pass attempt prior to shot	One pass attempt prior to shot	Not applicable



Coach/Team Game Feedback Form
Use this form for feedback about a specific coach or team



Feedback Form on Game Officials
Use this form for feedback about a specific official

Please familiarize yourself with this chart and have at every game

Easy link to feedback forms for officials





WWLOA Season Areas of Focus For Officials:

- **Safety is #1**
 - Use our whistles, call the fouls
 - If that doesn't work, use our cards (Green, Yellow or Red)
- **Fairness**

“Officials are professionals and are therefore expected to conduct themselves as such and in a manner that demonstrates total impartiality, courtesy and fairness to all parties.” (USAL Code of Conduct)
- **Professionalism**
 - Composure: Keep our emotions in check, even when others aren't
 - Lean on our partner for support in challenging situations



Questions from coaches



A screenshot of a lacrosse game in progress. Three players are visible on a green field: two in white jerseys and one in a red jersey. They are all holding lacrosse sticks and appear to be in motion. A referee in a black and white striped shirt is also visible in the lower left. The field has white and purple yard lines.

	MOUNTAIN RIDGE	7	2nd 05:06
	RIVERTON	4	
<small>KSLSPORTS REWIND 6A SEMI-FINAL</small>			





@KSLSPORTSREWIND



-0:11

1x



NFHS



BELMONT

7

4

WATERTOWN



3rd

BELMONT HS GIRLS VARSITY LACROSSE 4/7/25



-0:10

1x







WOODS CROSS

0



VIEWMONT


0

1st

11:31





	MAPLE MOUNTAIN	3	1st
	PARK CITY	2	04:25

Pause (k) KSLSPORTS REWIND 5A SEMI-FINAL

**MENTAL PERFORMANCE COACHING**

**KSL SPORTS**



   @KSLSPORTSREWIND





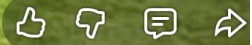
STANFORD
0-1

12

ESPN+ 4th
0:14

13

YALE
0-0



5 NORTH CAROLINA

14

SHOTS
27

2 BOSTON COLLEGE

11

SHOTS
34

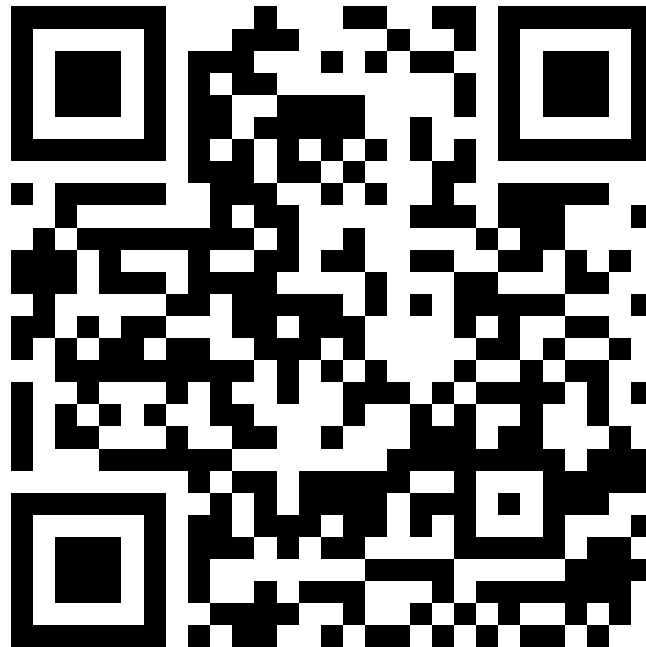
2nd :29.2

UNC: MAN-UP



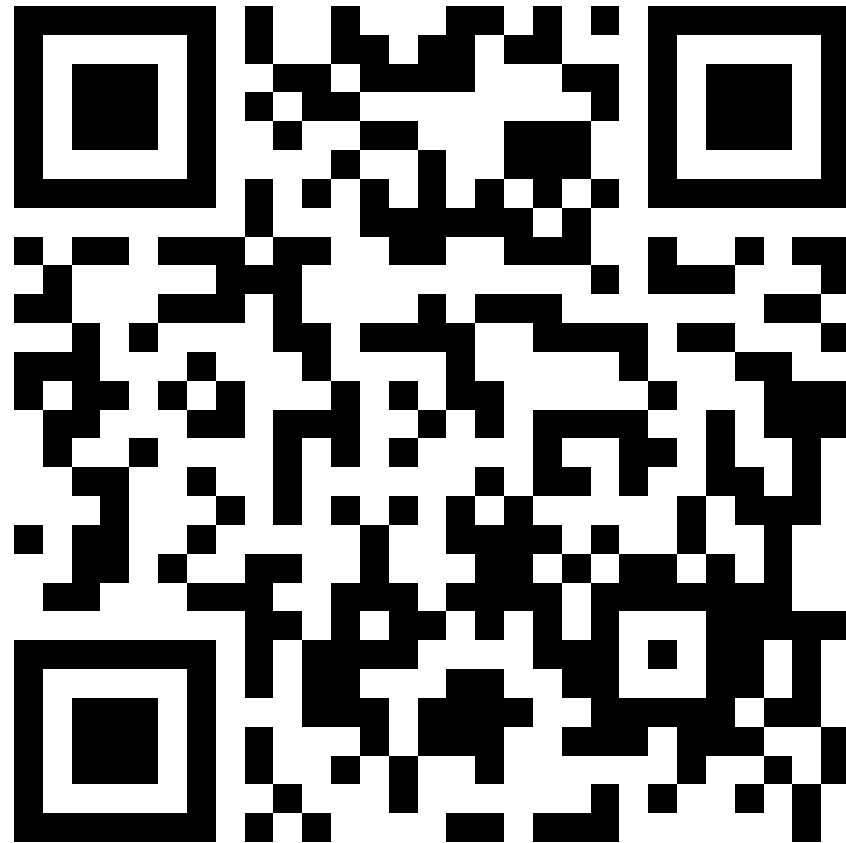
K

WWLOA invites all coaches to attend a full day officials training at a reduced fee of \$15. Come see what goes in to becoming an official, learn more about the rules, official positioning and responsibilities, and SO MUCH MORE!
(we hear the pizza is great!)



We would love your feedback!

Thank
You!!!



*Have a great
season*

