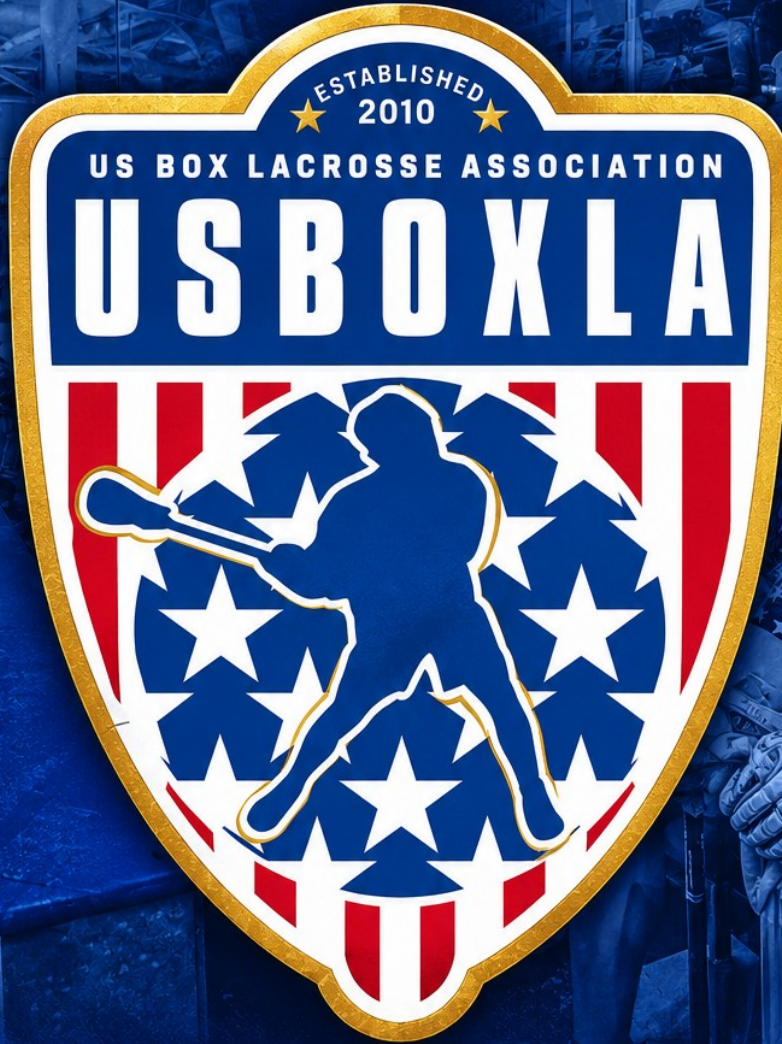


2027



**UNITED STATES
BOX LACROSSE ASSOCIATION**

RULE AND SITUATIONAL BOOK

2027 USBOXLA RULE AND SITUATIONAL BOOK

US Box Lacrosse Association

The Official US Box Lacrosse Association (USBOXLA) Rule and Situational Book contains the most comprehensive set of playing rules developed for the sport of box lacrosse in the United States.

Copies of the Official USBOXLA Rule and Situational Book are distributed in a variety of ways. USBOXLA registered players, coaches and officials may obtain a personal copy by accessing their current USBOXLA membership account at www.membership.usboxla.com. Officials can access a copy of the Official USBOXLA Rule and Situational Book during their certification process at www.academy.usboxla.com.

The USBOXLA Rule and Situational Book has been designed to include both administrative rules and rules of play. Administrative rules deal with setup and preparation of the game, length of games, floor markings, arena sizes and officiating processes.

Rules of play are in-game rules that deal with goal scoring, penalty assessment, mandatory equipment and player conduct.

Administrative rules can only be changed with permission from USBOXLA, obtained through the tournament sanctioning process. Conduct rules can only be changed at the discretion of the USBOXLA Board of Directors and through submission of a rule change/addition form.

Sanctioned USBOXLA tournaments must adhere to the rules set forth in this publication to establish consistency and uniform game play within the sport of box lacrosse in the USA, regardless of where it is played.

*****The US Box Lacrosse Rule and Situational Book was designed to work in conjunction with both the USBOXLA Official Game Sheet and the USBOXLA Referee Certification Course. These three modules work in unison and are for USBOXLA-sanctioned organizations, leagues and tournament play only.*****

Rules Committee:

Shaydon Santos (Executive Director), Adam Gardner (Director of Officiating).

Rule Change Submission and Addition Process:

New rule suggestions and edits to current rules can be submitted for discussion and approval to the USBOXLA Rules Committee for inclusion into the rules of play following the US Box Lacrosse Nationals.

Submissions can be brought forth via email to any member of our Rules Committee by September 10th of each year. The new USBOXLA Rule and Situational Book will be updated and available to all members on or before November 1 of each year.

Proposed rule submissions or additions can be sent to the Director of Officiating Adam Gardner via email (a.gardner@usboxla.com).

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RULE #1 – THE BOX

- A. Box lacrosse must be played in an area called a “box”.
- B. The box must be enclosed by a containment device or ‘boards’ which must be no less than 3’6”. The boards may consist of safety glass, plastic or wood and must be free from any obstructions or objects that may cause injury to the participants.
- C. The boards may or may not be topped with a containment device surrounding it.
- D. The end boards must have a uniform surface. Indoor soccer goals must be securely closed without protrusion or exposed sharp edges that may cause injury.
- E. All doors must open away from the playing surface.
- F. The box may have either one or two doors per player bench.
- G. The penalty bench must have its own door, separate from the players’ bench.

SITUATION #1

Question: What is the procedure if you find problems with the box that may pose a safety issue to the participants?

Answer: The game must not start with dangerous items exposed.

SITUATION #2

Question: What is the procedure if the ball touches the safety netting that is hanging over the boards or on the ceiling?

Answer: The ball must be deemed out of bounds.

RULE #2 – THE PLAYING SURFACE

- A. USBOXLA floor markings, indoor soccer floor markings or roller rink floor markings can accommodate game play.
- B. The goal crease must consist of a circular line around the goal and all the space within the flat circle.

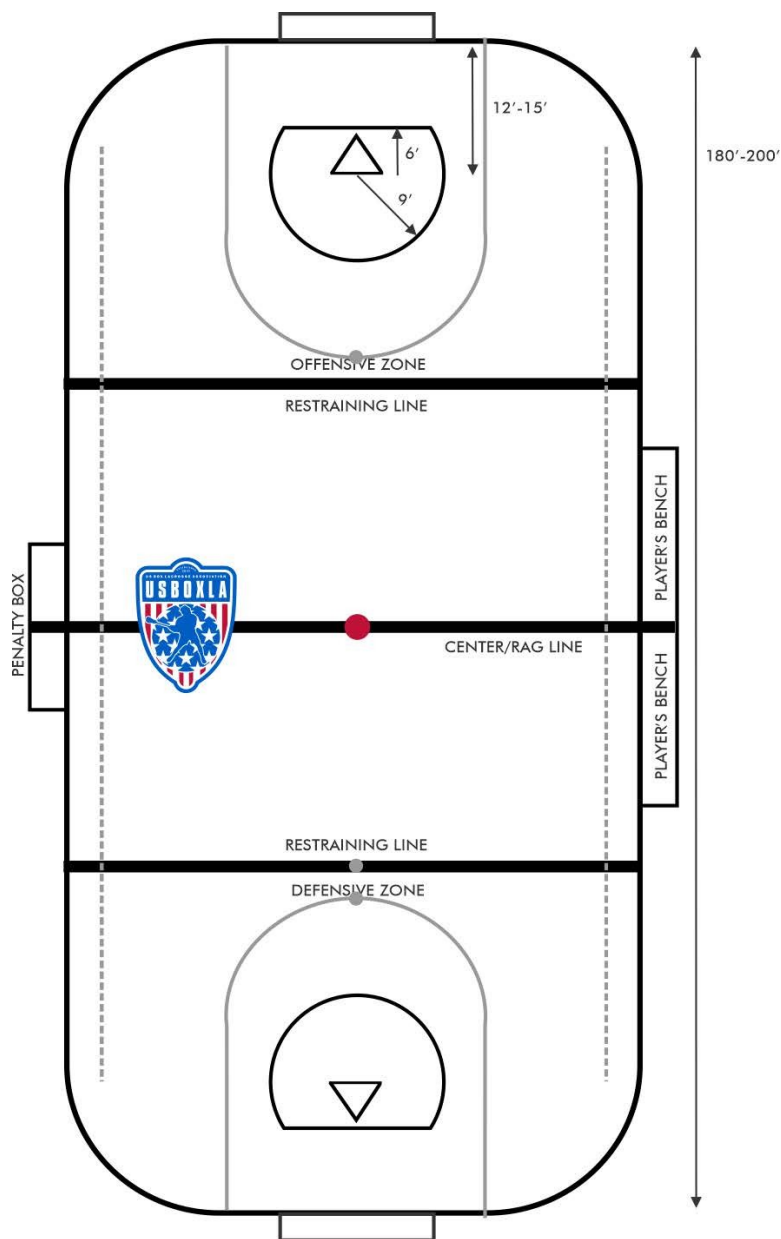
C. The goal crease area is to be a circle with a 2.74 m (9') radius, with a flat 1.83 m (6') section extending behind the goal line to the back of the crease.

D. The center face-off location will have a center dot.

RULE #3 – THE BOX DIMENSIONS AND FLOOR MARKINGS

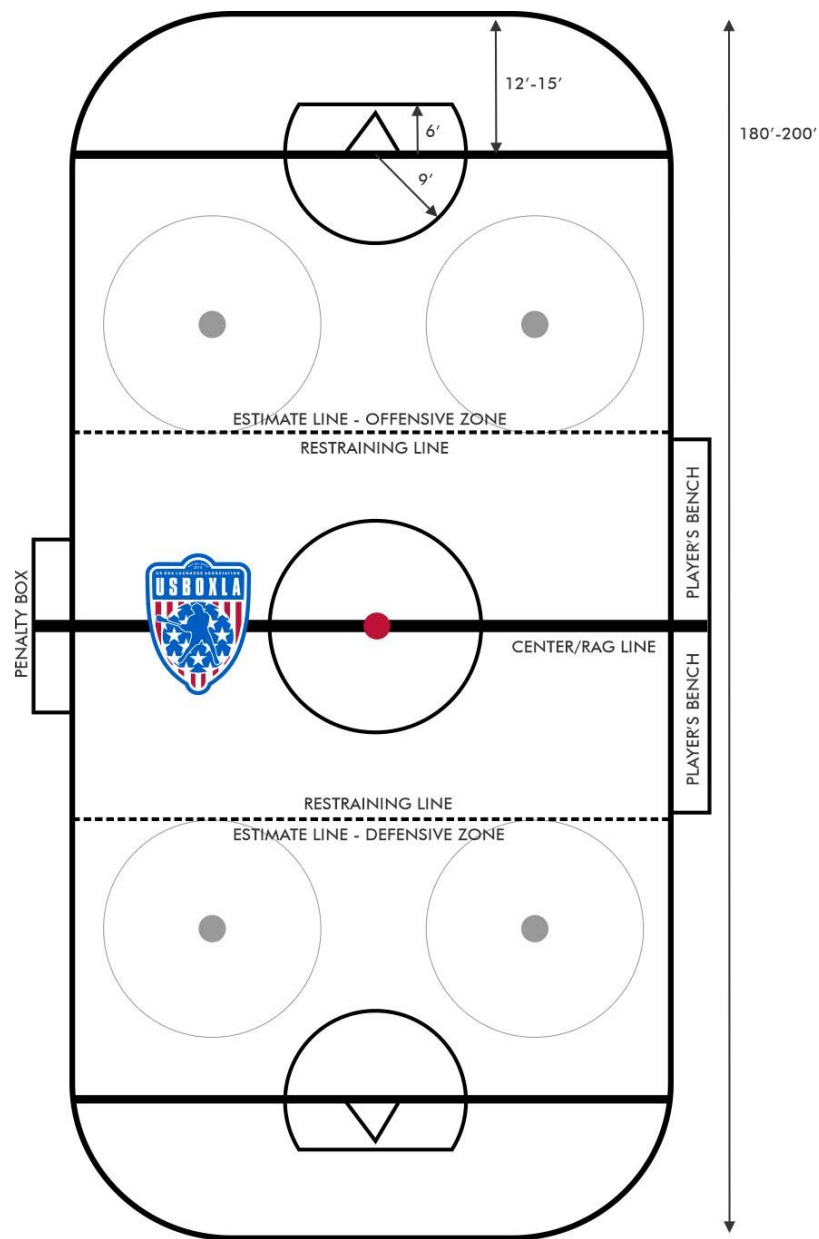
All three USBOXLA-approved floor marking layouts below share the same offensive-zone crease dimensions (9' radius, 6' flat) and overall floor length of 180'–200'.

Indoor Soccer Floor Markings



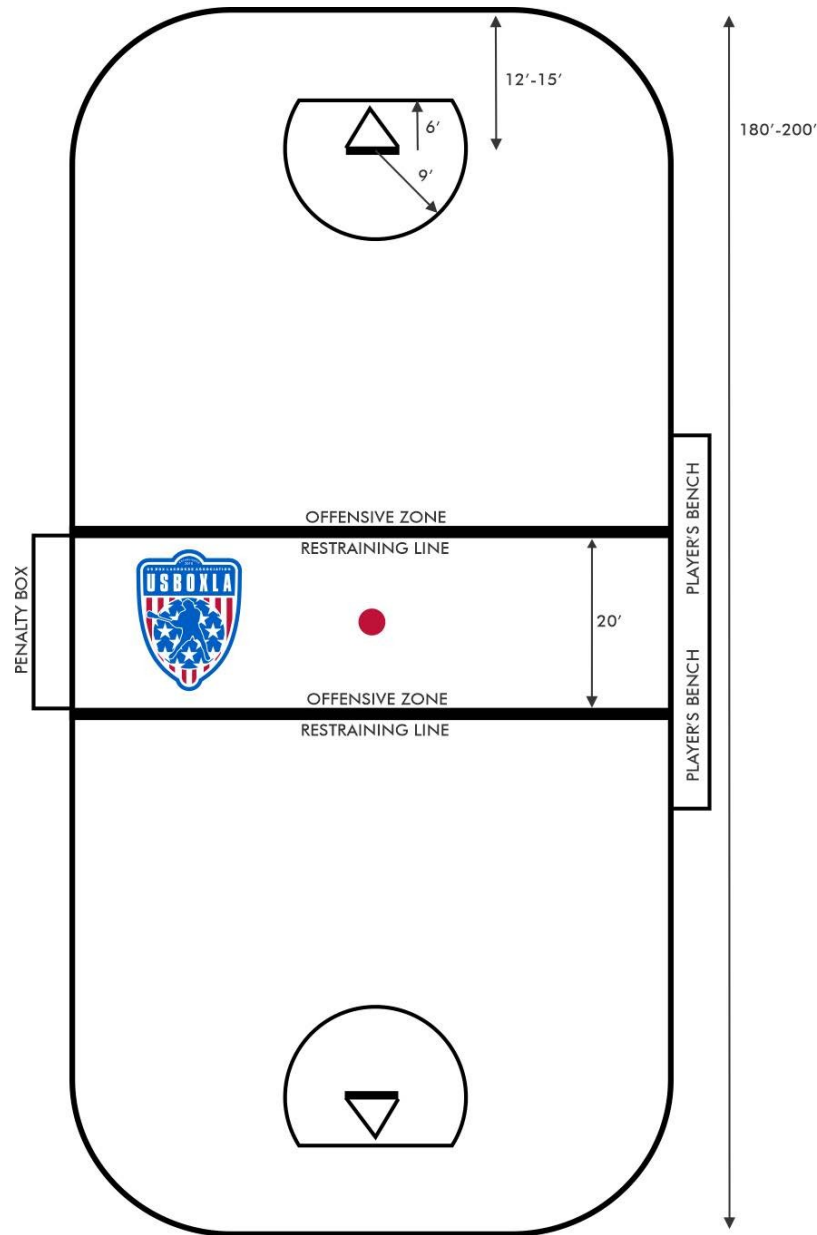
NOTE: the line is labeled "Center/Rag Line" in this diagram; for rule purposes, this is referred to as the Rag Line throughout (see Rule #40).

Inline Rink Floor Markings



NOTE: the line is labeled "Center/Rag Line" in this diagram; for rule purposes, this is referred to as the Rag Line throughout (see Rule #40).

Optimum/USBOXLA Floor Markings



RULE #4 – THE CREASE

A. When a player or goaltender has possession of the ball in their own crease, no contact of any kind can occur by a defensive player. If any contact is made while the team is in possession of the ball inside the crease, a penalty for interference is assessed.

B. The defending team has five seconds to move the ball out of their crease once in possession of the ball. The player or goaltender must pick up the ball as soon as possible and cannot delay gaining possession of the ball. The ‘five second count’ begins from the moment the player could reasonably have gained possession of the ball, not from the moment they actually pick it up — a player or goaltender may not stall in the crease to delay the count.

C. An attacking player may not reach into the crease to play the ball. If any contact is made with the defensive team's stick, body or the goal post/crossbar while the ball is loose, then possession is awarded to the defensive team inside the crease.

D. Players cannot pass back to the goaltender or a player in the crease.

E. Players in possession of the ball cannot carry the ball back into the crease. “Back in” must be an intentional movement of the ball back into the crease. For a violation of D or E, possession is awarded to the other team in the corner, away from the middle of the floor.

F. Any crease call violation to the offensive team must be restarted with a quick restart behind the offensive team's defensive half. If the ball continues past the center line the ball must be restarted at the center line.

G. Any offensive player entering the crease on their own accord is considered a crease violation and play is blown down immediately. If an offensive player is pushed or checked into the crease by the defensive team, the offensive player must exit the crease immediately and may not be in the crease while a ball is loose in the crease or when a goal is scored. (The official may treat this as play-on/advantage to maintain the pace of play.)

SITUATION #1

Question: An attacker cuts through the defender's crease on a loose ball?

Answer: Illegal play. If the attacker runs through the crease on his/her own accord the play is blown dead and possession awarded to the non-offending team. The player cannot be the first to play the ball or be involved in the play.

SITUATION #2

Question: An attacker cuts through the defender's crease to check the ball carrier?

Answer: Illegal play. 2-minute Interference penalty (INT).

SITUATION #3

Question: An attacker intentionally stick checks the goaltender who is in the crease and the ball is within the cylinder?

Answer: Illegal play. 2-minute Interference penalty (INT).

SITUATION #4

Question: An attacker intentionally stick checks or body checks the goaltender or player who is in the crease with possession of the ball?

Answer: Illegal play. Minor, major, or match penalty for Interference (INT).

SITUATION #5

Question: A goalie keeps his foot firmly planted in the crease while reaching out of the crease to pick up a loose ball. The goalie gains possession of the ball and while bringing the ball back into his/her crease the goalie is stick checked before the ball crosses the cylinder of the crease.

Answer: This is a legal play. The ball can be played by the defender until it crosses the cylinder of the crease.

SITUATION #6

Question: Can a player perform an 'Air Gait' - an acrobatic scoring move where a player jumps from behind the goal crease and scores a goal in mid-air by dunking the ball over the top goal crossbar and lands on the opposite side of the crease.

Answer: Air Gaits are allowed, but if contact is made with the goaltender before or after a goal is scored the play is immediately stopped and a penalty is assessed to the attacker based on the severity of the contact - minor, major, or match penalty for Interference (INT). The line is part of the crease and an attacking player cannot step on it. Contact with the post and crossbar is allowed.

RULE #5 – THE PLAYERS BENCH AND PENALTY BOX

The box must be equipped with two uniform player benches. Each bench must have either one or two doors.

NOTE: The Change Box: This area should be marked on all playing surfaces and will start 2 feet before the door closest to the net you are defending at the start of the first period and will extend 2 feet past your bench door closest to the center line. Players must have one foot in the change box before another player may leave the change box (If this is not the case and the team is in possession of the ball, it will lose possession. If the team is not in possession of the ball, it will be assessed a penalty for Too Many Players.). If change boxes are not marked, a legal change is defined as being no more than one stick length away from the bench door nearest your goalie or door closest to the center line. The change box does not extend beyond your side of center. If the opposing team is within your change box, a penalty should be assessed for Too Many Players or Interference.

SITUATION #1

Question: What happens when one team continually leaves the door to the players' bench unlatched or open?

Answer: If the door is open, give one warning. On the second and all subsequent occurrences, assess a bench minor (BM). If a player is checked through an unlatched door, do not give a warning, but immediately assess a bench minor.

SITUATION #2

Question: What team has the choice of benches and end to defend?

Answer: The home team gets to choose benches and must also start with their goalie in the end closest to their bench.

THE PENALTY BENCH

The box must be equipped with separate penalty benches for each team.

RULE #6 – SCORE AND TIMING DEVICES

Each box must have a scoring device and at least one 30-second shot clock.

SITUATION #1

Question: What happens if there is no shot clock, or it is not operational?

Answer: The officials on the floor are responsible for the 30-second count. The officials may use their field-style device worn on the waist. If this device is not available, the trail official is responsible for the 30-second count. The trail official will also yell out "ten seconds" and will count out the final five seconds as follows (5,4,3,2,1, blow whistle).

RULE #7 – THE LACROSSE STICK

A. The player's stick must measure no more than 46" and no less than 40" in overall length, and no more than 8", nor less than 4.5" in width. The measurement for width is to be inside frame measurement. Nothing may be added to or attached to the outside of the stick. Note: In U13 and all lower divisions, the minimum length of the stick must be 34".

B. No stick may be constructed, modified or strung in any way to withhold the ball from play or give a player an advantage over their opponent. All sticks must be made of metal, plastic or composite.

C. The goalkeeper's stick may be of any desired length, but must not be more than 17" in width. Nothing may be added to or attached to the outside of the stick. The measurement for width is to be the outside frame measurement. (No use of large wall type sticks)

D. A minor penalty must be assessed to any player who uses an illegal stick in a game, and that stick must be placed in the timekeeper's area for the remainder of the game. Measurements or other examinations must be performed during a stoppage in play after a request to the Referee-in Charge by the Captain or Alternate Captain. The player must be on the floor at the time. A bench minor penalty must be assessed to a team requesting a stick measurement provided the stick in question is legal. Bench minor penalties require the removal of any player on the offending team without a substitute for two minutes, unless terminated early by a goal. Note: If the ball becomes stuck in a player's stick other than the goaltender at any point in the game this is treated as a turnover. This includes during a face-off.

SITUATION #1

In order to measure a stick, all of the following conditions must apply:

- The stick must be on the floor and used in the play immediately prior to the request.
- The referee must be able to obtain the stick before it leaves the floor.
- If the player attempts to leave the floor after a measurement is requested by the official, automatically assess a 2-minute minor for Unsportsmanlike Conduct and complete the measurement of the stick.

SITUATION #2

Question: Can a goal be disallowed for an illegal stick?

Answer: No. A stick can be measured after a goal or penalty shot but in no case can a goal be disallowed.

SITUATION #3

Question: How does a referee conduct a stick measurement?

Answer: The ball must travel freely between the sidewalls from the top of the head to the bottom of the throat. If the ball does not pass freely, assess a minor penalty and keep the stick until the remainder of the game. The stick must not be less than 4.5 inches in width at its widest point.

SITUATION #4

Question: How does a referee conduct a stick measurement during an overtime shootout?

Answer: A stick measurement request must be made prior to the referee blowing his whistle to begin the shootout attempt. If the stick is “legal” the complaining club forfeits their next shootout attempt. Should this occur during the first set of three shooters, the next shooter listed becomes ineligible to shoot until such time as all eligible players have participated in the shootout. Their next shootout attempt would be recorded as “no goal”. If the stick is “illegal”, the offending team forfeits that shootout attempt by that player and the player becomes ineligible to participate in the shootout. This shootout attempt would be recorded as “no goal”.

SITUATION #5

Question: How does a referee conduct a stick measurement during a shootout penalty shot?

Answer: A stick measurement request may be made prior to a penalty shot following the guidelines below: If the stick is “legal” the complaining club is assessed a bench minor penalty and a player is placed in the penalty box immediately. Regardless of the result of the penalty shot, the bench minor penalty is assessed and served. If the stick is “illegal” the player will be assessed a minor penalty. He will be ordered to obtain a new (second) stick prior to the penalty shot. After that player takes the shot, that player will be required to serve his penalty.

RULE #8 – THE BALL

The balls used in all games must conform to NCAA rules and be USBOXLA approved. The balls used in all games must be of the same color.

RULE #9 – THE NETS

The goals must be USBOXLA approved and 4'x 4.4'. The goal post can be of any color. The mesh can be of any color, but it is suggested that black mesh be used.

RULE #10 – THE UNIFORM

Each team must have distinct and matching uniforms. There must be ten-inch numbers on the back. Captains and assistant captains will have a four-inch “C” or “A” on the front of the jersey. A team may have one captain and two assistants. Uniforms must have contrasting numbers and colors. Uniforms must have at least four-inch numbers on both sleeves of the jersey or a four-inch number on the front of the uniform.

Jersey conflicts - The home team will be required to make a change in uniform if deemed necessary by the officials and coaches.

RULE #11 – PLAYER EQUIPMENT

Mandatory player equipment includes: protective gloves, mouthpiece, shoulder pads and elbow/slash guards. Optional equipment, but highly recommended are bicep pads and rib/kidney pads. Players participating on the floor without mandatory player equipment will be assessed a game ejection and a major penalty. Players must not be allowed to wear jewelry other than that which identifies a medical condition.

Mouth guards: If a mouth guard is not worn, or is not worn the way it was designed to be worn (covering the teeth and fully inside the mouth), the player will be warned to “wear it legally.” If a player continues to play illegally and is in possession of the ball or the ball is loose, the following escalating penalties apply for that player:

- 1st infraction: Loss of possession — the ball is awarded to the non-offending team.
- 2nd infraction: A 2-minute minor penalty for Unsportsmanlike Conduct.
- 3rd infraction: A Match Penalty.

NOTE: Footwear: No dangerous footwear is allowed (Note: Steel-toed shoes are allowed only for the goalie). Rubber sole lacrosse or basketball shoes are the standard. Field cleats or turf shoes may be permitted if the facility allows their use.

Helmets: All helmets must be NOCSAE approved.

RULE #12 – GOALTENDER EQUIPMENT

1. All goaltender equipment must conform to the natural shape of the body.
2. All goaltenders must wear the corresponding numbered padding for their age group.
3. If a team asks for the referee to inspect the goalie, the referee will check to make sure that the goalie is wearing the correct number and will check to see that the goalie conforms to the natural shape of the body.
 - Shoulders are rounded and not square.
 - Leg pads taper at the knee and get smaller towards the bottom of the leg. No wings/flared-out padding from the legs and feet of the goalie are allowed.
 - Jersey does not hang below the crotch of the goalie causing the ball to be caught.
 - Jersey does not hang unnaturally from the underarms draping below and causing a net like area to stop the ball.

A violation of any of these rules will result in a 2-minute minor penalty and must be immediately corrected before returning to play.

RULE #13 – GOALTENDER EQUIPMENT CHARTS

Sizing is determined by age division as follows. Age division names have been updated for 2027 (see note below).

Chest and Arm Protectors

Category Tag	Age Range	Division
CAT #3	17-18 Years	HS Elite
CAT #3	15-16 Years	U17
CAT #3	13-14 Years	U15
CAT #2 (see Dallas Eliuk Rule #15)	11-12 Years	U13
CAT #2	7-10 Years	U11

* Pants don't need to be box lacrosse specific and do not require a Tag.

RULE #14 – THE DESIGNATED GOALTENDER

Each team may only have one designated goalkeeper on the floor at a time. The goalkeeper may be removed and a player substituted at any time, but that player does not have the privileges of the goalkeeper. Goalkeepers with equipment problems are not allowed to go to their bench until after the referee has inspected the equipment and granted them permission to do so.

SITUATION #1

Question: What is the procedure if the goaltender goes to their own bench without asking to do so? This includes water or adjustment to equipment.

Answer: The goalkeeper must be substituted for or assessed a delay of game penalty if the team does not want to substitute for the goalkeeper. The only exception to this rule is if there is a delayed penalty and the goalie heads to the bench to get an extra player on the floor.

SITUATION #2

Question: Are water bottles permitted on the back of a goalie's net?

Answer: No. Goalies are allowed to go to their benches for water during a stoppage in play each period as close to the period halfway point as possible. Goalies and coaches can request a water break by signaling the referee. The referee will allow both goalies to go to their benches for a quick water break. In cases of extreme heat this procedure can be repeated at the referee's discretion.

RULE #15 – THE DALLAS ELIUK RULE (GOALTENDER EQUIPMENT FIT)

NEW FOR 2027 - This rule is new for 2027 and applies specifically to the U13 division.

In the U13 division, there is a wide range in how goaltender equipment fits players at this stage of development. Some U13 goaltenders wear a properly-fitted Cat 2 chest protector, while others wear a Cat 3 that is oversized for their frame. A goaltender in properly-fitted equipment is generally easier to score on than one wearing oversized equipment — but wearing correctly-sized gear is important for a young goaltender's long-term development, and teams should not be discouraged from using it.

A. Before the start of a U13 game, the head coaches of both teams must agree on goaltender equipment sizing.

B. If the head coaches agree that both goaltenders may wear Cat 3 equipment, the game proceeds normally.

C. If one team's goaltender wears properly-fitted Cat 2 equipment and the other team's goaltender wears Cat 3 equipment, the game will start with the score at 3-0 in favor of the team using the properly-fitted Cat 2 goaltender, to offset the competitive advantage of the oversized equipment.

D. If the head coaches cannot agree, the on-site USBOXLA Game Play Coordinator will be called upon to resolve the dispute before the game begins.

RULE #16 – THE TEAMS

Each team can consist of a maximum of 24 players - 22 runners and 2 goalies. The minimum is six players - five runners and one goalie, who must be wearing the appropriate goalkeeper equipment.

RULE #17 – BENCH PERSONNEL

Only players in uniform and wearing helmets, along with coaches, managers, and trainers, are permitted on the player bench. A maximum of four non-playing personnel are allowed on the bench. All players must have their helmets on when not on the floor. Any non-player who enters the floor without the referee's permission will be ejected from the game and a 2-minute Bench Minor (BM) penalty will be assessed. A maximum of one team personnel is allowed to be in the penalty bench area, unless attending to an emergency situation. This includes any person present for media coverage.

RULE #18 – THE GAME

OFFICIAL USBOXLA GAME

1. U11 to HS Elite divisions consist of three 15-minute running-time periods with a 2-minute intermission between each period.
2. The last minute of the game's final period is stop time.
3. Each team has one 30-second timeout per game. In medal-round games that reach overtime, each team is also given one additional 30-second timeout for use during the overtime period. An unused regulation timeout does not carry into overtime — it is forfeited at the end of regulation. A timeout must be called by a player on the floor, when their team has possession of the ball or during a stoppage in play. The coach instructs a player to call it.

NOTE: If there is any deviation from official USBOXLA game time, an email must be sent prior to the start of the event and must be approved by a USBOXLA Executive Director or the Director of Officiating.

OVERTIME SHOOTOUT

Both teams must select three different players. Players may be selected by their coach right before it is their turn to shoot and do not need to be preselected. Teams must alternate penalty shots. The team with more goals after the three shooters from each team have completed their shots wins. If the score is still tied after the first three shooters from each team, a new sudden-death single round will commence. Players may shoot only once until every eligible player on the roster has shot.

SHOOTOUT PROCEDURE

There will be a 1-minute rest after the end of regulation time in which coaches will select their first shooter.

1. The home team must have the choice of shooting first or second. This order will not change during the course of the entire shootout.
2. The teams will not change ends for the shootout. The teams must alternate shots.
3. Three players from each team must participate in the shootout and they must proceed in such order as the coach selects. All players are eligible to participate in the shootout, including those who are serving penalties and remain in the game. Any players that have received a game ejection or match penalty are not eligible to participate in the shootout.
4. Guidelines related to stick measurement requests during the shootout are outlined in Rule 7 Situation 5.
5. Once the shootout begins, the goalkeeper cannot be replaced unless he/she is injured. No warm-up is permitted for a substitute goalkeeper.

6. Each team will be given three shots. After each team has taken three shots, if the score remains tied, the shootout will proceed to a "sudden death single round" until there is a winner. A 'round' means both the home and visiting teams shoot.
7. No player may shoot twice until everyone on the roster has shot.
8. Unequal Roster Sizes: If one team has fewer available shooters than the other (due to roster size, injury, ejection, etc.), the team with the larger group of available shooters is not required to exhaust its full roster before repeating a shooter. That team may begin repeating shooters, starting with its first shooter again, once it has used the same number of shooters as the smaller team has available. A team is not penalized for carrying a larger roster.
9. If a rostered player cannot shoot because of injury or refuses to shoot, then the opposing team can choose any player on their team to take the next shot regardless of whether that player has shot already.
10. Regardless of the number of goals scored during the shootout portion of overtime, the final score recorded for the game will give the winning team one more goal than its opponent, based on the score at the end of overtime.

RULE #19 – APPOINTMENT OF OFFICIALS (On-floor and off-floor)

Directors must appoint two referees and a game timekeeper for each game. One referee must be designated as the "head referee" and conduct the face-off at the start of each period. The head referee must have the final say in any dispute.

RULE #20 – REFEREES

- A. The referees have full control of the game and everyone in it, and they enforce the rules in this book. Their authority starts 5 minutes before the scheduled game time and lasts until both teams have fully left the box.**
- B. Referees wear the official USBOXLA uniform shirt, black shoes, socks, and black shorts or pants with minimal logos. The referee jersey can be worn tucked in or untucked, but both officials in a game must match each other. Black baseball hats (or referee baseball hats) may only be worn outdoors. Note: each sanctioned league or tournament decides for itself whether jerseys are tucked in or untucked, set by the league/tournament director or referee-in-chief.**
- C. Referees are impartial — they don't favor either team.**
- D. Referees make sure players are properly dressed and using approved equipment.**
- E. Referees make sure the game timekeeper is in place and the clock and signal equipment are working properly.**
- F. Referees report every penalty, goal, and assist to the game timekeeper.**
- G. Referees make sure only players actually in uniform are listed on the official score sheet.**
- H. Referees keep opposing teams' players separated on the penalty bench.**

I. If neither assigned referee shows up for the start of the game, the two coaches agree on substitute referees together.

J. Officials may wear a black protective helmet/visor, but it isn't required.

HEAD REFEREE (SHOT CLOCK OPERATOR)

The head referee may be equipped with a small remote device to operate the 30-second shot clock. This role may be performed by the game timekeeper as well.

RULE #21 – GAME TIMEKEEPER

A. Before the start of the game the game timekeeper must ensure both clubs have filled out the score sheet of all players in uniform on the official score sheet. The captains, assistant captains and goalkeeper must be designated on the official score sheet.

B. The game timekeeper must keep an accurate record of all goals, penalties, assists and appropriate times when they occurred.

C. The game timekeeper must indicate the times at which all penalties start and end. He/she must also indicate, upon the request of a penalized player, the correct time in which their penalty expires. The game timekeeper must have the sole authority of informing penalized players when they may leave the penalty box.

D. The game timekeeper must inform the referees when a player gets his/her fourth penalty (or a combination of minor/major penalties).

E. At the conclusion of the game the game timekeeper must complete all information required on the score sheet including referee signatures, summary of goals, assists and penalties.

SITUATION #1

Question: What penalties must the game timekeeper immediately report to the referees?

Answer: The fourth penalty, which results in a game ejection.

RULE #22 – ABUSE OF OFFICIALS

A. First infraction: A major penalty must be assessed for unsportsmanlike conduct to any player who shows disrespect for a referee's ruling or uses obscene, profane or abusive language directed toward any person in the arena. Second infraction: An immediate game ejection.

B. In cases involving a coach, non-playing bench personnel or an unidentified player on the bench, a bench minor will be assessed to the offending team. If any coach or non-playing bench personnel continue their actions after being assessed with the initial bench minor, a game ejection will be assessed.

C. A match penalty must be assessed to any coach, non-playing personnel or player of any offending team who throws anything on the playing floor either during game play or any stoppage in play.

SITUATION #1

Question: Can a coach or non-playing personnel be assessed these penalties:

Answer: A 2-minute minor penalty? Yes.

Answer: A major penalty? No.

Answer: A match penalty? Yes.

RULE #23 – ADJUSTMENT TO EQUIPMENT

Play must not be delayed or stopped to make adjustments to equipment or sticks, however, the goalkeeper can request a stoppage in play from the referee in order for a coach or trainer to adjust their equipment. A player who is delaying the game or asking to make an adjustment to their equipment should be sent off the floor to do so except in the case of the goalie where stated above.

RULE #24 – BALL OUT OF BOUNDS

The ball is not out of bounds until it touches something that is not in bounds such as an on-field player, floorboards or containment system. A player may reach over the boards to catch a pass. Mesh containment soccer netting, lights, players on the bench are all considered to be out of bounds. Each USBOXLA-sanctioned league may change this rule depending on the type of containment system they are using, provided the change in rule does not put players, coaches or spectators at increased risk of injury or jeopardize the intent of said rule.

SITUATION #1

Question: What is the procedure if ...

Answer: ... a shot goes off the back boards then off the crossbar and then out of bounds? Possession is awarded to the offensive team.

Answer: ... a shot goes off the back boards then off the goaltender and then out of bounds? Possession is awarded to the offensive team.

Answer: ... a shot goes directly out of bounds? Possession is awarded to the defensive team.

Answer: ... a shot hits the goalie and then goes out of bounds? Possession is awarded to the offensive team.

Answer: ... a shot hits the crossbar or post and goes out of bounds? Possession is awarded to the offensive team.

RULE #25 – POSSESSION AND AWARDED POSSESSION

A. No player must be within 9' of a player being awarded possession.

B. Any crease call violation to the offensive team must be restarted with a quick restart behind the offensive team's defensive half. If the ball continues past the center line the ball must be restarted at the center line.

C. Possession must not be awarded to any player within 15' of their opponent's goal crease.

D. Play starts with a whistle.

E. When a shot hits the goalie's mask or throat protector play is immediately stopped, the referee checks for injury and possession is awarded to the goalkeeper or defensive team in his/her crease.

SITUATION #1

Question: What is the procedure if Player A is standing too close to Player B, who has been awarded possession?

Answer: Instruct Player A to immediately provide Player B at least 9 feet. If A refuses to provide the requested space, assess a 2-minute minor penalty for Delay of Game.

SITUATION #2

Question: What is the call if Player A is standing on the edge of Player B's crease, who was just awarded possession of the ball inside the crease?

Answer: Allow play to continue. If any contact is made with Player B (runner or goalie) inside of the crease when they are in possession of the ball, assess a minor penalty for Interference.

RULE #26 – BALL STRIKING REFEREE

If the ball strikes a referee it must be considered in bounds unless the ball goes directly into the goal (the ball may hit the goaltender to be considered directly into the goal). If that is the case there must be a face off.

RULE #27 – PLAYING WITH A BROKEN STICK

A. A broken stick is defined as a stick, which in the opinion of the referee, poses a danger to anyone in the game. If a player's stick breaks he/she must drop it immediately. A minor penalty will be assessed to any player who plays with a broken stick. A goalkeeper may play with a broken stick provided they remain completely in their own crease. If any part of their body exits the crease, a minor penalty will be assessed to the goalkeeper.

B. If a player or goalkeeper becomes separated from their stick they may continue to play without a stick.

C. A player whose stick is broken may not receive a stick thrown to him/her from their bench. A goaltender may play with a stick passed along to him/her from another player during play. A major penalty will be assessed to any player in violation of this rule.

RULE #28 – DEAD BALL CONTACT

After any whistle, horn, or dead ball, any player who makes intentional contact with another player will be assessed a penalty. Examples include, but are not limited to, stick checks, body checks, or pushing. Note: This is not to be confused with Delay of Game. Delay of Game refers to not dropping the ball after a whistle or horn, or rolling the ball away from an official or an opponent.

RULE #29 – MINOR INTERFERENCE

A. Possession is awarded to the non-offending team.

B. Called only when it occurs close to the ball.

C. Occurs when players push their opponent to gain an unfair advantage.

D. Contact is expected – but cannot gain visible advantage.

E. Occurs most frequently with moving picks and loose ball interference.

F. Not called when play is at the other end of the floor.

G. Away from the play “It’s a penalty or it’s nothing”.

H. If overly aggressive or dangerous, a referee can assess a minor, major or match penalty for interference as well.

NOTE - LOOSE BALL INTERFERENCE:

1. When the ball is loose, all players must play only the ball. Never can there be any bodily interference with a player attempting to pick up the ball.
2. The severity of the interference will determine the penalty. A less severe infraction results in a possession call. A ‘take out’ hit would be a minor or a major penalty, and finally a Match penalty would be assessed for hits that are determined to be an attempt to Injure.

SITUATION #1

Question: When the ball is loose, can 2 players play ‘man ball’?

Answer: NO. Any player who doesn’t play the ball will be assessed with an interference call.

SITUATION #2

Question: Can players away from the loose ball have any contact with an opposing player

Answer: NO. Any contact when the ball is loose must be assessed with an interference penalty.

SITUATION #3

Question: Can a player receive a Major or Match penalty for a ‘clean’ take out hit on a loose ball?

Answer: YES. A violent hit no matter how clean on an opposing player attempting to pick up a loose ball must be assessed a minor or major penalty. If the hit is deemed as an attempt to injure the player will be assessed a Match penalty.

NOTE – OFF-BALL CONTACT:

1. When an opposing player is in the offensive zone the defender may cross check the player pushing him anywhere in the offensive zone.
2. The offensive team must have possession of the ball in order to engage in off-ball contact.
3. The offensive player must be in the offensive zone or an interference call must be assessed.
4. Offensive players cannot cross check back in retaliation or an interference call must be assessed.

SITUATION #1

Question: An offensive player is trying to cut through the middle to receive a pass, and the defender is cross-checking him to keep him outside of the middle. Must a penalty be assessed?

Answer: NO. Off-ball contact is allowed.

SITUATION #2

Question: A defender is pushing the offensive team’s star player toward the boards in the offensive zone when he does not have the ball. Must a penalty be assessed?

Answer: NO. Off-ball contact is allowed.

RULE #30 - MINOR PENALTIES

- A. A minor penalty is a 2-minute removal of the offending player (other than the designated goalkeepers) without substitute, unless terminated early by a goal.
- B. Bench minor penalties require the removal of any player of the offending team (other than the designated goalkeepers) without substitute, unless terminated early by a goal.
- C. If a team is shorthanded due to one or more minor penalties and the opposing team scores, the minor penalty with the least amount of time remaining is released. Major penalties are never released early and must be served for the full 2 minutes.

RULE #31 – MAJOR PENALTIES

MAJOR PENALTY PROCEDURE (updated for 2027): A major penalty no longer runs as 5 minutes of game clock time. A major is signaled and whistled dead using the same delayed-penalty procedure as any other penalty under Rule #36

Once play is whistled dead, a penalty shot is awarded to the non-offending team, taken per the standard procedures in Rule #37 — the non-offending team may choose any player to take the shot. If a goal was scored by the non-offending team during the delayed-penalty window, the goal counts and the major penalty is still imposed in full afterward (see Rule #36 C); it is not wiped out by the goal the way a minor penalty would be.

After the penalty shot, the offending player goes to the penalty box to serve a 2-minute NON-RELEASEABLE penalty, regardless of whether a goal was scored on the penalty shot. The non-offending team is then awarded the ball at center to resume play — not a face-off. This is the only situation in which play resumes without a face-off after a goal or the start of a period.

The penalty is still recorded and tracked as a major penalty (not a minor) for all other purposes — including the Bully Rule (Rule #32) and the tournament-wide ejection threshold — even though only 2 minutes are actually served in the box. The game clock will never show a full 5-minute major penalty being served.

This possession-at-center resumption (instead of a face-off) applies only to the penalty shot described above, immediately after a major penalty is called — it does not apply to any later goal scored while the 2-minute penalty is still being served, which resumes with the normal post-goal face-off under Rule #41. It also applies even if the offending player's 2-minute penalty is still being served when the period ends: the next period still begins with the non-offending team taking possession at center, not with the normal start-of-period face-off. This is distinct from a standalone penalty shot (e.g., a breakaway foul under Rule #37 C), which is not tied to a major penalty and always resumes with a face-off regardless of whether a goal is scored.

- A. A major penalty results in a mandatory penalty shot for the non-offending team, followed by the offending player serving a 2-minute non releasable penalty. The offending player must remain in the penalty box for the entire 2 minutes and may return to the floor after the full 2 minutes have elapsed. The designated goalkeeper does not serve the penalty; a substitute player serves it as provided in Rule #34.
- B. A major penalty is NEVER released early. It does not matter how many goals are scored during the 2-minute penalty — the offending team remains shorthanded for the full 2 minutes. The penalized player must remain in the penalty box until the full 2 minutes have elapsed and may return to the floor only after the penalty expires.
- C. A player is automatically ejected when he/she receives their third major penalty or any four total penalties. A substitute must serve the player's penalty time.

D. When a player or goalkeeper is assessed a major penalty and one or more minor penalties at the same time, the minor penalty must be served first for purposes of minor-penalty release. If the non-offending team scores, any eligible minor penalty may be released according to Rule #39, but the major penalty continues to be served for its full 2 minutes and is never released early. If another player from the same team is assessed a minor penalty at the same time as a major penalty, the minor penalty is handled under the normal release rules and the major penalty remains in force for the full 2 minutes.

E. Coincidental Major Penalties: If players from both teams are assessed an equal number of major penalties from the same incident, those penalties are considered coincidental and cancel each other out in terms of on floor player strength. Each penalized player must still serve the full 2-minute penalty in the penalty box and will be released at the next stoppage in play after the full 2 minutes expires. If the number of majors assessed is unequal between the two teams (e.g., 2 majors for Team A, 1 for Team B), only the matching penalties are coincidental; the extra, uncoincided major is treated as a normal major penalty, including its automatic penalty shot, and does create a manpower disadvantage for that team.

SITUATION #1

Question: Does the game clock stop the moment a major penalty is whistled dead?

Answer: No special treatment — the game clock isn't affected by a major penalty. It simply runs under the normal rules in Rule #18: continuously as running time, except during the last minute of the game's final period, which is stop time. The penalty shot that follows a major penalty is no exception — per Rule #37 C, the clock keeps running during penalty shots too, except in that same final minute.

SITUATION #2

Question: If a goaltender receives a major penalty, does the goaltender serve the 2-minute penalty, or does a substitute goalie need to be ready first?

Answer: The goaltender stays in net. Per Rule #34 (Goaltender Penalties), a goaltender is never sent to the penalty box for a minor or major penalty — a substitute player serves the 2-minute penalty in their place. No backup goaltender is required.

SITUATION #3

Question: Two players from Team A and two players from Team B are all assessed major penalties from the same incident. Is this coincidental?

Answer: Yes. Since the number of majors is equal (2 for each team), these are coincidental major penalties. All four players serve their full 2-minute penalties, but no penalty shots are awarded, since coincidental majors do not carry the automatic penalty shot. Neither team is considered shorthanded — both teams simply play with 2 fewer players on the floor at the same time.

SITUATION #4

Question: Team A commits a major penalty while Team B has possession. Team B scores before the whistle is blown. What happens?

Answer: The major is a delayed penalty, the same as any other penalty under Rule #36 — play is not whistled dead the instant the foul happens, since the offending team (Team A) does not have the ball. The goal by Team B counts. Once the play is whistled dead, Team B is awarded a penalty shot, and the offending Team A player goes to the penalty box to serve the full 2-minute penalty. If Team B scores again while that 2-minute penalty is still being served, the goal counts and the major penalty is not released. Team A remains shorthanded until the full 2 minutes have elapsed and the penalized player returns to the floor.

RULE #32 – GAME EJECTION PENALTIES

Game ejection penalties require the removal of the player or bench personnel for the remainder of the game. Any other penalties assessed to the player will be served by another player of that team. Players, coaches or bench personnel who are assessed a game ejection penalty must stay in the dressing room or vacate the arena.

GAME EJECTION PENALTY

A. Rule #22 B & C Abuse of Official

B. Bully Rule

1. Any player who is assessed four minor penalties, three major penalties or any combination of minor and major to get four total penalties in a single game will be ejected from that game. A substitute must serve the player's penalty.
2. Delayed penalties cancelled by goals will be recorded on the official score sheet and count toward the Bully Rule.
3. Infractions that cause a penalty shot will be recorded on the official score sheet and count toward the Bully Rule.

NOTE: See Rule #31 for the tournament-level ejection threshold of 4 total major penalties across a single tournament, which is separate from and in addition to the single-game Bully Rule above.

RULE #33 – MATCH PENALTY

A match penalty (MP) is a major penalty (see Rule #31 — an immediate penalty shot for the non-offending team, followed by a 2-minute penalty served by a substitute) combined with an automatic game ejection for the offending player. A match penalty is assessed for a severe action where the player is reckless in behaviour, acting in complete disregard for his/her own, another player's, coach's or official's safety, or where the actions are seen as attempting to injure or to cause an injury. The player receiving a match penalty is removed from the game immediately and may also be suspended for additional games — including the remainder of the tournament — at the discretion of the USBOXLA League Director or Tournament Director, who will rule on the incident.

A. A match penalty requires the removal of the offending player from the game (game ejection), in addition to the penalty shot and 2-minute non-releasable penalty described in Rule #31.

B. A substitute player must serve the 2-minute penalty time (following the penalty shot) but does not count against that substitute player's penalty total.

C. The offending player must go to the dressing room or leave the rink area immediately.

D. Referees must fill out a Special Incident Report after the game on the back of the game sheet.

E. An automatic match penalty will be assessed to any player playing without the mandatory equipment.

F. USBOXLA Game Play Coordinator or Tournament Director is notified and will make a decision on the length of any additional suspension, which may include suspension for multiple games, up to the remainder of the tournament.

RULE #34 – GOALTENDER PENALTIES

A goalkeeper must not be sent to the penalty bench for any minor or major penalty. Instead, a substitute player who was on the floor at the time of the infraction will serve the penalty. The official scorekeeper will record the penalty to the goalkeeper (regardless of who serves it) on the official score sheet and count it toward the Bully Rule.

If a goalkeeper is ejected for too many penalties under the Bully Rule or receives a match penalty, a substitute player will take the goalkeeper's place in the penalty box, and a substitute goalkeeper must enter the game. If no substitute goalkeeper is available, the game must be forfeited by the offending team.

RULE #35 – MULTIPLE PENALTIES / PENALTY SHOT

At the time the delayed penalty is blown dead, Team A has two players serving penalties and a third penalty is assessed to Team A. A penalty shot will be awarded to Team B. The third penalty will be recorded by the scorekeeper for the Bully Rule. Regardless of the outcome of the penalty shot, the floor strength will remain the same as it was prior to the penalty shot. The penalty shot serves as a substitution. If the third penalty is a major, that player still serves a 2-minute non-releasable penalty and exits the box at the first stoppage after it expires, but the team's floor strength does not drop any further. Once the penalty shot(s) are complete, play resumes with the non-offending team taking possession at center (not a face-off).

SITUATION #1

Question: Team A already has 1 player in the penalty box. On the same stoppage, two of Team A's players are both assessed major penalties (their 2nd and 3rd penalties overall). How is this handled?

Answer: The first of the two new majors is handled normally under Rule #31: that player goes to the box (bringing Team A to 2 players in the box) and serves a 2-minute penalty, Team B gets 1 penalty shot for it. The second of the two new majors is now Team A's 3rd penalty overall — Team B gets 2 additional penalty shots for it instead of a further manpower disadvantage, per Rule #37 B. That player still serves a 2-minute non-releasable penalty and exits the box at the first stoppage after it expires, but Team A's floor strength does not drop any further. In total: 3 penalty shots are taken, both penalized players serve 2 minutes, and once the shots are complete, play resumes with the non-offending team taking possession at center (not a face-off).

Example	Team A	Team A 3rd Penalty	Answer
3rd Penalty is Minor	A1, 2 Min @10:00 A2, 2 Min @9:30	A3, 2 Min @9:00	1 Penalty Shot for B, A3 penalty is recorded for the Bully Rule. A3 does not serve. Play restarts with Team B taking possession at center (not a face-off).
3rd Penalty is Major	A1, 2 Min @10:00. A2, 2 Min @ 9:30	A3, Major @9:00	2 Penalty Shots for B. This satisfies both the 3rd-penalty swap and the major's automatic shot under Rule #31. A3 serves a 2-minute non-releasable penalty and exits the box at the first stoppage after it expires. Floor strength is unchanged. Play restarts with Team B taking possession at center (not a face-off).

RULE #36 – CALLING OF PENALTIES

This rule explains when the referee's whistle actually stops play for a penalty. Most fouls are not whistled dead the instant they happen — the referee waits for the right moment so the offending team doesn't benefit from stopping play early. This waiting period is called a “delayed penalty.”

A. Delayed penalty (offending team does not have the ball): If a foul worth a minor, major, or match penalty is committed by a player whose team does NOT have the ball (except for a crease-checking foul, which is whistled immediately), the referee raises an arm instead of blowing the whistle right away. Play continues. Once the offending team actually gets control of the ball, the referee blows the whistle, stops play, and assesses the penalty. The shot clock may reset more than once while this is happening. Play is only stopped once the offending team gains possession, or for any other normal reason play would stop anyway.

B. Immediate penalty (offending team has the ball): If a foul worth a minor, major, or match penalty is committed by a player whose team already has the ball, the referee blows the whistle immediately and assesses the penalty right away — there is no delay in this case.

C. What happens if a goal is scored during a delayed penalty: If the team that didn't commit the foul scores a goal before the whistle is blown, and the penalty waiting to be called is a minor, that minor penalty is wiped out completely — it is never assessed or served. But if the pending penalty is a major or match penalty, the goal does not erase it: the major/match penalty is still assessed, the automatic penalty shot under Rule #31 still happens, and the offending team serves the full 2-minute penalty. A major penalty is never released early, regardless of how many goals are scored.

D. What happens if a goal is scored while a team is already shorthanded and picks up another penalty: Say a team is already playing shorthanded from an earlier minor penalty. If that same team commits another foul (delayed penalty pending) and the other team scores before the whistle blows, the goal counts as normal. The new penalty is still assessed, but the earliest eligible minor penalty the team was already serving may end immediately under Rule #39. This early-ending rule applies only to minor penalties. A major penalty must always be served in full for 2 minutes and is never cut short or released by a goal.

E. A delayed penalty situation ends (the whistle blows) as soon as any of the following happens:

- The team that's about to be penalized gains possession of the ball.
- Any other normal reason play would have stopped anyway (ball out of bounds, etc.).
- The team that's ahead on the delayed penalty scores a goal on their opponent's empty net (this is allowed and the goal counts).

RULE #37 – PENALTY SHOTS

A penalty shot is a free, unopposed attempt to score — just the shooter and the goalkeeper, no other players involved. It's awarded in three situations:

A. Too many players with under 2 minutes left: If the defending team is caught with too many players on the floor with less than 2 minutes remaining in the game, the attacking team gets a penalty shot.

B. A team's 3rd penalty while 2 are already in the box: If a team already has 2 players serving penalties and picks up a 3rd penalty, that 3rd penalty is swapped out for penalty shots instead of reducing the team's floor strength any further. If the 3rd penalty is a minor, that player does not serve; if it is a major, that player still serves a 2-minute non-releasable penalty and exits the box at the first stoppage after it expires. A 3rd penalty that is a minor gets 1 shot; a 3rd penalty that is a major gets 2 shots (this covers both the 3rd-penalty substitution and the major's automatic shot under Rule #31 — they are not added together separately). Goals scored on these shots do not shorten any penalties already being served. Play resumes with the non-offending team taking the ball at center — not a face-off.

C. A clear scoring chance is broken up by a foul: If a player in the offensive zone, in possession of the ball, with a clear lane to the goalkeeper (no defender between them), is fouled and loses a real scoring chance because of it, the referee can award a penalty shot to restore that chance. Getting a shot off before being fouled doesn't automatically rule this out — if the foul from behind cost the player a better chance, the shot can still be awarded.

How a Penalty Shot Works

A. The referee places the ball on the center face-off spot. On the whistle, the shooter picks up the ball and attacks the goalkeeper. The shooter must keep moving forward toward the goal the whole time — once the ball is shot, the attempt is over. There's no second chance off a rebound, with one exception: if the ball goes into the net off the goal post, crossbar, or goalkeeper — including a shot that hits the goalkeeper and goes directly into the net — that still counts as a goal. The attempt is considered finished the moment the ball crosses the goal line or stops moving.

B. Only the goalkeeper (or a legal backup goalkeeper) may defend the shot.

C. The goalkeeper must stay inside the crease.

D. The team facing the penalty shot is allowed to switch goalkeepers beforehand, but whichever goalkeeper takes the shot must then stay in the game until the next stoppage of play.

E. Every other player on the floor must go to their bench while the shot is taken.

F. If the penalty shot was awarded because a specific player was fouled, that same player must take the shot.

G. In every other case, the shooter is whoever the non-offending team's coach chooses.

H. If the player awarded the penalty shot also committed a foul on the very same play, they still get to take their shot first — they only go serve their own penalty afterward. The one exception is a match penalty: in that case, the fouled player doesn't shoot at all, and the team's coach picks the shooter instead.

If Something Goes Wrong During a Penalty Shot

- A. If the goalkeeper leaves the crease, or commits any foul, during the shot: the shot is still allowed to happen. If it fails, the shooter gets to try again.
- B. If the goalkeeper's foul during the shot would normally be a minor penalty: no penalty is added, but the shooter gets a second attempt.
- C. If the goalkeeper's foul during the shot would normally be a major penalty: the shooter gets a second attempt, and the goalkeeper still gets the normal major penalty on top of that.
- D. The goalkeeper can try to stop the shot any legal way — but throwing a stick or object, or knocking the goal out of place on purpose, results in an automatic goal for the shooter.
- E. If someone from the defending side (player, goalkeeper, coach, or bench staff) distracts or interferes with the shooter and that's why the shot missed, the shooter gets a second attempt, and the defending team gets a bench minor penalty.
- F. If someone from the shooting team distracts or interferes with the goalkeeper and that's why the shot went in, the goal is disallowed, and the shooting team gets a bench minor penalty.

What Happens Right After a Penalty Shot

- A. Normally, play restarts with a face-off at center after any penalty shot — the one exception is the automatic shot that follows a major penalty (Rule #31), where the non-offending team simply gets the ball at center instead.
- B. A penalty already being served in the box doesn't end just because a goal is scored on a penalty shot.
- C. The clock keeps running during penalty shots, except in the last minute of the game.
- D. Officials should work together to set up and take the penalty shot as quickly and smoothly as possible.

RULE #38 – PENALTY GOALS

- A. A goal will be awarded to the attacking team when the defending team has taken their goalkeeper off the floor and an attacking player has possession of the ball in the offensive zone, without a defending player between himself and the opposing goal, and he is prevented from scoring as a result of an infraction committed by the defending team.
- B. A goal will be awarded when an attacking player, in the act of shooting the ball into the goal (between the normal position of the posts and completely across the goal line), is prevented from scoring as a result of a defending player or goalkeeper displacing the goal post, either deliberately or accidentally.

C. A goal will be awarded when a goalkeeper attempts to stop a penalty shot by throwing his stick or any other object at the player taking the shot or by deliberately dislodging the goal.

RULE #39 – RELEASE OF PENALTIES

In the case of an opposing team's goal, eligible minor penalties are released according to the penalties first recorded and the time remaining. Major penalties are never released early and must be served for the full 2 minutes.

Example	Team A	Team B	Answer
Minor Penalty	A1, 2 Min @10:00	Goal scored @8:50	A1 released @8:50
Major Penalty	A1, Major @10:00	Goal scored @8:50 Goal scored @8:30	Major penalties are never released. A1 must serve the full 2 minutes regardless of goals scored, and is released at 8:00.
Minor and Major Penalty	A1, 2 Min @10:00 A2, Major @9:00	B1, 2 Min @9:30 Goal scored @8:50	A1 is released @8:50
Major and Minor Penalty	A1, Major @10:00 A2, 2 Min @9:00	B1, 2 Min @9:30 Goal scored @8:50	A2 is released (A1 major is unreleasable)
Minor Penalties	A1, 2 Min @10:00	B1, 2 Min @9:30 Goal scored @9:00	No players are released; floor strength remains even at 4 vs. 4

RULE #40 – RAG LINE VIOLATION AND 10-SECOND COUNT

A. Upon possession, a team that is shorthanded has 10 seconds to clear the ball across the Rag Line into its offensive end. The Rag Line is usually the far-end face-off restraining line, but depending on the facility layout, the center line may be used. If the team does not clear the ball across the applicable Rag Line within 10 seconds, play is stopped and the ball is awarded to the defending team.

B. Once the Rag Line is crossed, or if the shorthanded team is awarded possession in the attacking zone, the Rag Line becomes 'hot' and the ball may not cross back over into the shorthanded team's defensive zone.

C. If the ball does cross back over the Rag Line, play is stopped and the defending team is awarded possession.

D. The Rag Line is normally the far-end face-off restraining line. If the facility layout provides a center line that is designated for use as the Rag Line, that center line may be used instead. The applicable line must be identified before the game and used consistently.

E. If a shot on net occurs that would cause the shot clock to be reset and the ball goes back over the Rag Line, this is not considered a violation. The shorthanded team, upon gaining possession, has 10 seconds to get the ball back across the Rag Line.

F. If the ball is intentionally batted or deflected back over the Rag Line by the opposing team, this is not a violation. The shorthanded team still has 10 seconds to get the ball back across the Rag Line.

RULE #41 – THE FACE-OFF

A. A face-off occurs at the start of each period of play and after every goal scored, except as provided in Rule #31 (Major Penalties), where play resumes with the non-offending team taking possession at center instead of a face-off after the mandatory penalty shot.

B. Players will stand on their own side of the center line with their right shoulder facing their defensive end.

C. Both hands and feet of the player must be to the left of the head of the stick and not touching the head of the stick

D. Both hands must be on the stick at the start of the face-off.

E. The stick must be on the ground in a straight line with the head of the stick being held straight up and down parallel to the center line.

F. The ball will be placed on the ground between the two sticks, the players' pockets will be pushed out and the sticks can be touching the ball.

G. The referee will place his hands/point down at the sticks and say "set", after which any movement will result in possession awarded to the non-offending team. The referee then blows the whistle.

H. The first motion of the sticks must be pulling back and away from the ball before the ball can be clamped and raked out.

RULE #42 – POINT OF EMPHASIS: CHECKING FROM BEHIND

A. A major or match penalty must be assessed to a player or goalkeeper who, at the discretion of the referee and based on the degree of violence of the impact, intentionally pushes, body-checks, illegally cross-checks, or hits an opposing player from behind anywhere on the floor.

B. Where a player is high sticked, cross-checked, body-checked, pushed in any manner from behind into the boards or goal net, in such a way that the player is unable to protect or defend him/herself, a Match penalty must be assessed.

C. Checking From Behind is defined: intentionally pushes, body-checks, illegally cross-checks or hits an opposing player from behind anywhere on the floor; intensity of impact affects only the type of penalty assessed.

SITUATION #1

Question: Can a check from behind ever be a possession call?

Answer: No. Checking from behind is the most dangerous check in the game and is a mandatory penalty, regardless of severity. A deliberate check from behind near the boards or goal post will be a major or match penalty. A check from behind after a stoppage in play will be a major or match penalty.

NOTE: The minimum penalty is a Major penalty. Do not substitute with a less severe penalty! This is the most DANGEROUS CHECK in the game and must be enforced to the letter.

NOTE: The Referee standard is: "If you see it, you will call it!" If the player turns his back to receive a check then there is no call. Be mindful of what occurs immediately after a shot on net or a goal. This rule is to be strictly applied. This is a safety issue and must be enforced as the objective is to prevent serious neck, back and spinal cord injuries.

RULE #43 – POINT OF EMPHASIS: SLASHING

A. A minor, major or match penalty at the discretion of the Referee must be assessed to any player who slashes an opponent with the stick.

B. A slash must be defined as:

- Swing of the stick intended to intimidate opponents, with or without contact.
- Swing of the stick towards an opponent involving any significant degree of force.
- Swing of the stick towards an opponent involving a baseball or golf type grip.
- Swing of the stick that results in contact to vulnerable or unprotected areas (gloves/hands, arms, wrist, knee, hamstring, calf, ankle, foot, back, ribs) of an opponent, regardless of the degree of violence or force.
- Aggressive use of the stick that is not a true attempt to dislodge the ball from the stick.
- One hand stick checks are legal as long as the above conditions do not occur.

NOTE: If a player is assessed a major or match penalty under this rule, time must be served by any player (other than the designated goalkeepers). If a goalkeeper is assessed a minor, major or match penalty under this rule, time must be served by any player

C. A minor or major penalty must be assessed to a player/goalkeeper who while in the process of shooting or passing, follows through with the stick and slashes an opponent. Should a goal be scored on the shot, the goal must be awarded and the penalty assessed.

NOTE: Unintentionally striking an opponent who is moving into the range of the follow through of a shot or pass should not be penalized.

SITUATION #1

Question: Does a player have to hit an opponent to be penalized for slashing?

Answer: NO. Any player who swings the stick at an opponent whether in or out of range must be penalized for slashing.

SITUATION #2

Question: Can a slash be called a Match Penalty?

Answer: Any slash or swing with intent to injure must be called a Match Penalty.

SITUATION #3

Question: Can a player slash a non-ball-carrier?

Answer: No. Non-ball-carrying offensive players cannot be slashed in any way at any time.

SITUATION #4

Question: When is a follow through slash not called?

Answer: Any player unintentionally striking an opponent who is moving into the range of the follow through of a shot or pass must not be penalized.

RULE #44 – INFRACTION CHART

The referee, at his discretion based on the severity of the violation, must assess a penalty to any player who incurs the following infractions below.

Infraction	Description	Severity
BOARDING (BRD)	Any player or goalkeeper who body-checks, cross checks, pushes or causes an opponent to be thrown violently into the boards. If a player takes more than 3 hard steps to 't-bone' a player into the boards.	Minor / Major / Match
BUTT ENDING (BE)	Jabbing an opponent with the butt end of a stick. Doesn't need to make contact with the player – it can be an attempt. Ice picks would be considered a butt end.	Major / Match
BENCH MINOR (BM)	Any coach, bench personnel, or players on the bench who verbally abuse an official or opposing player. After a warning a Bench Minor (BM) may be assessed for keeping the gate open.	Minor / Match
CHARGING (CHG)	Any player or goalkeeper who runs, jumps into or charges an opposing player where a violent collision occurs.	Minor / Major / Match
CHECKING FROM BEHIND (CFB)	Any player who intentionally pushes, body-checks, illegally cross checks or hits an opposing player from behind anywhere on the floor. NOTE: The most dangerous infraction in the game. All incidents are a penalty, regardless of severity. A deliberate check from behind near the boards or goal posts will be a major or match penalty. If a player is vulnerable and cannot protect himself by getting his hands up, you must assess a Match penalty.	Major / Match
CROSS CHECKING (CC)	A cross check applied below the waist, on top of the shoulder, applied when an opponent is not on their feet, applied to an opponent outside of the offensive zone. A major extension of the defender's arms in delivering a 'blow'.	Minor / Major / Match
DELAY OF GAME (DG)	A delay of game must be given to any player in possession of the ball who does not immediately place the ball on the ground on a shot clock violation, or does not give the proper space to an offensive player on a newly awarded possession, or deliberately stops the progress of play.	Minor
ELBOWING (EB)	Assessed to any player who used their elbow to foul their opponent.	Minor / Major / Match
FIGHTING (MP)	Any altercation including a player who incites or instigates a fight. Any punch	Match

Infraction	Description	Severity
	thrown is a Match Penalty (MP).	
GOALTENDER INTERFERENCE (INT)	Penalty will be given for any offensive player who makes any contact with the opposing team's goalie/player while that goalie/player is contained within the cylinder of the crease.	Minor / Major / Match
HANDBALL (HB)	Any player or goalkeeper who catches (not touches) the ball outside of their goal crease.	Minor
HIGH STICKING (HS)	Any contact to an opponent's neck, face or helmet. NOTE: Incidental contact with the helmet should be disregarded. If a player deliberately ducks causing the high sticking this should be disregarded as well.	Minor / Major / Match
HOLDING (HLD)	Any player or goaltender who impedes an opponent's progress by holding with his/her arms, hands or legs.	Minor
INTERFERENCE (INT)	When a player purposely prevents an opponent from regaining their stick. When a player violently hits another player when the ball is loose (without possession). When checking players who are either coming on or off of the floor for line change. Violent checks into open gates will result in a Match penalty (MP).	Minor / Major / Match
ROUGHING (RO)	Any player or goalkeeper who uses unnecessary roughness during a game.	Minor / Major / Match
SLASHING (SL)	Any player or goalkeeper who deliberately slashes an opponent with his/her stick. Contact does not need to be made. The purpose of a stick check is to dislodge the ball	Minor / Major / Match
SPEARING (SP)	Spearing is the stabbing of an opponent with the head/mouth of the stick.	Major / Match
THROWING STICK (TS)	Any player or goalkeeper who throws their stick or any other piece of equipment at the ball or opponent.	Major / Match
TOO MANY PLAYERS (TMP)	If on defense, Too many players on the floor will be assessed a penalty. If the violation occurs with less than 2 minutes in the game a penalty shot will be awarded.	Minor / Penalty Shot
TRIPPING (TR)	Any player or goalkeeper who uses their stick or any part of their body to trip an opponent.	Minor / Major / Match
DEAD BALL CONTACT	After any whistle/horn or dead ball, any player makes intentional contact with another player.	Minor / Major / Match

RULE #45 – USBOXLA SANCTIONED TOURNAMENT PLAY

NEW FOR 2027

This entire section is new for the 2027 USBOXLA Rule and Situational Book and applies specifically to USBOXLA-sanctioned tournament play.

BULLY RULE – TOURNAMENT EJECTION

Any player who receives a total of 4 major penalties during a single tournament will be ejected from the event.

FIGHTING

Zero tolerance for punches thrown. Any punch thrown can result in entire tournament suspension.

NOTE: USBOXLA Game Play Coordinators will be notified of any fighting major (which is an automatic match penalty). A match penalty is a major penalty, game ejection, plus potential suspension for any number of additional games including the entire tournament. The USBOXLA Game Play Coordinator will rule on multiple game suspensions dependent on the severity and intent of the altercation.

ABUSE OF OFFICIALS

Please note the USBOXLA Game Play Coordinators will not tolerate abuse of the officials or any staff by fans, parents, players or team officials. The USBOXLA Game Play Coordinators have the discretion to call bench penalties, remove parents/fans from the facility or issue a team disqualification in such occurrences.

ON-FLOOR CALL APPEAL PROCESS

There is no appeal process to protest an on-floor call or outcome. The referees' call on the floor will stand.

OFFICIAL USBOXLA GAME PLAY

- 3 x 15 min running time periods (3 x 13 min if 50 min slots)
- 2 min rest between periods.
- The last minute of the third period is stop time.
- The game clock starts at the correct time whether teams are ready or not. Any team in violation will be assessed a 2-minute Delay of Game penalty.
- 1 x 30-second timeout per game, plus 1 additional 30-second timeout per overtime period in medal-round games. Unused regulation timeouts do not carry into overtime.
- If tied after regulation time teams immediately proceed to a USBOXLA Shootout (3 shooters each and home team decides on whether they will shoot first or second).
- Medal Games (sudden death period) will have a 5-minute sudden-death overtime period immediately following the conclusion of regular time. Goalies do not switch ends. One timeout per team. The overtime period runs continuously except for the last minute, which is stop time (consistent with Rule #18). If tied after 5 min, teams proceed into a USBOXLA Shootout to determine a Medal Champion.

POOL AND BRACKET PLAY

Seeding from pool play is determined in this order:

- Points – 2 points for a win; 0 points for a loss.
- Head-to-Head
- Goal Differential – A team's total goals scored minus total goals allowed. The higher differential wins the tiebreaker.
- Goals Allowed – The total goals scored by a team's opponents. The smallest total wins the tiebreaker.
- Goals Scored – The total goals scored by a team. The higher total wins the tiebreaker.
- Coin Toss - If teams remain tied after all of the above, a coin toss will be used to determine final seeding.

USBOXLA GAME PLAY COORDINATORS

There are on-site USBOXLA Game Play Coordinators at the event. If you have questions or concerns, they will help. The USBOXLA Game Play Coordinator is the designated authority for resolving any disputes not settled between the two head coaches (for example, equipment or eligibility disagreements under Rule #15), and their ruling on such disputes is final. Please note that there is no appeal process to protest an on-floor call or outcome. There is zero tolerance for abuse, which could result in team disqualification or additional penalties for your team or organization.

FORFEITS DURING TOURNAMENT PLAY

If a team forfeits a game during tournament play, that team's full results for the tournament are wiped out — regardless of whether a particular game has already been played or not. Every one of that team's games, whether already completed or still remaining on the schedule, is recorded as a 1-0 win for the opposing team. This prevents the forfeiting team's partial or inconsistent schedule from distorting the standings or seeding for the remaining teams.

FACILITY OR SAFETY ISSUES

A facility or safety issue that prevents a game from being completed (see Rule #1) will be resolved by the USBOXLA Game Play Coordinator on-site, who will determine whether the game is replayed, resumed, or recorded as a forfeit or a tie, based on the circumstances.