



The Rules of Flat Track Roller Derby

2025 Change Summary

Summary of changes to *The Rules of Flat Track Roller Derby* effective January 1, 2025.

4.1.2. Impact with an Illegal Blocking Zone

~~For safety reasons, any forceful contact initiated with the head or neck, intentional use of the head or neck to positionally block, or intentional and forceful jabbing with elbows or strikes with knees should be penalized regardless of impact.~~

The following types of contact/blocks should be penalized regardless of the impact on the Target:

- Forceful contact initiated with the head or neck;
- Intentional use of the head or neck to positionally block.

4.1.3. Other Illegal Contact

Actively maintaining a stopped position which impedes an opponent should be penalized regardless of the initiator of the contact.

4.1.5. Unsporting Contact

Some contact is considered unsporting, either because it falls outside the boundaries of expected normal gameplay or is inherently unsafe. Examples of such actions include:

- Pinning an opponent, such as between an appendage and the body, or by hooking a limb around an opponent's limb
- Engaging in dangerous and illegal actions that pose a substantial hazard to oneself or another

Legal means of blocking do not include pinning or holding an opponent, even if the contact is made using legal Blocking Zones. Skaters who restrict opponents in this way should be penalized based on how the contact impacts a receiver's safety.

4.5. Fouling Out & Expulsions

Timing Skaters Removed From Play

In the event a Skater is to be removed from play mid-Jam and would be In Queue upon reporting to the Penalty Box, that Skater should not be instructed to return to play. Instead, they should be instructed to remain standing beside the Penalty Box until a seat opens and their penalty time can begin.

5.1. Staffing

One Referee is designated the Head Referee. In addition to their authority on matters such as communications with Teams and expulsions, it is also the Head Referee's responsibility to oversee the safety of all participants during a game. In instances where a Skater has repeatedly proven to be a significant safety concern to themselves or others on the track, the Head Referee may use their discretion to remove that Skater from play, without the necessity of an expulsion.

Glossary

Ceding

A Skater who enters the track from Out Of Bounds in a way that results in an illegal gain of position may Cede that gain without penalty. In order to Cede, the Skater must immediately return Fully Out of Bounds ,

In Bounds

A Skater is ~~in-bounds~~ In Bounds if the only points at which they are touching the floor are on or in between the track boundary lines. ~~Once touching beyond the track boundary, a Skater is considered to be in-bounds again once all parts of the Skater that are touching the floor are on or between the track boundary lines.~~ A Skater who touches the floor beyond the track boundary with only one arm or hand is still considered ~~in-bounds~~ In Bounds (see also out of bounds, straddling).

Lineup Time

The time where the period clock continues to run between the end of one Jam, and either until the start of the next Jam (when a maximum of 30 seconds have elapsed) or a timeout is called, whichever occurs first. There may only be one Lineup Time between two consecutive Jams, and the Lineup Time cannot be restarted if stopped for a timeout.

Out of Bounds (Fully)

A Skater is fully Out of Bounds when they meet the criteria for being Out of Bounds, and no parts of the Skater's body or equipment are touching the floor on or between the track boundary lines (also see Out of Bounds, In Bounds, Straddling).

Role

Each Skater has one of three Roles: Jammer, Pivot, or Blocker. The Role of Jammer may be transferred to the Pivot once per jam by a Star Pass. The Role of Pivot may not be transferred during a Jam.

Yielding

A Skater who is required to Yield must allow any Skaters in their vicinity to assume a superior Relative Position. A Skater who allows a reasonable time for this to occur has Yielded, whether or not any Skaters took advantage of the opportunity.

Casebook

Scenario C4.1.5.E

White Blocker and White Pivot make a two person wall with their shoulders touching. Red Jammer attempts to get between them by initiating with their shoulder. White Pivot disengages while White Blocker adjusts so that Red Jammer's shoulder is between White Blocker's inner upper arm and body. White Blocker then exerts constant downward force on Red Jammer's shoulder.

Outcome: White Blocker is penalized.

Rationale: Legal forms of blocking do not include holding an opponent, even when that contact is otherwise made with legal Blocking Zones and/or to legal Target Zones. A Skater must be able to disengage from a one-on-one block without breaking an opponent's hold.

Keep in Mind: During the course of normal gameplay Skaters may unintentionally become entangled. If this contact is accidental, such as due to two Skaters falling, no penalty is warranted.

Keep in Mind: If instead of applying constant downwards force White Blocker rapidly applied their entire body weight downwards onto Red Jammer's shoulder, White Blocker should be expelled.

Scenario C4.1.5.F

Red Blocker initiates a shoulder-to-shoulder block against White Pivot. As White Pivot moves laterally, Red Blocker adjusts and places their leg in front of White Pivot's leg so that the back of their upper thigh initiates to the front of White Pivot's hip. White Pivot leans over and traps Red Blocker's thigh between their upper arm and body and does not release the contact when Red Blocker attempts to remove their leg.

Outcome: White Pivot is expelled from the game.

Rationale: Restricting opponents by intentionally trapping or grabbing is considered outside the realm of normal gameplay. Grabbing an opponent's leg in this way is an additionally dangerous and unsporting tactic, as it directly affects a Skater's ability to balance and maintain a safe skating stance.

Scenario C4.2.1.N

White Jammer removes their helmet cover and attempts to pass it to White Pivot. During this process, White Jammer drops the Star. White Pivot takes a knee briefly to recover the star before handing the Star back to White Jammer.

Outcome: No penalty.

Rationale: The Jammer or Pivot may briefly adopt a down position to recover a helmet cover on the ground. There is not sufficient impact on gameplay if the Skater immediately acts to reestablish themselves in a legal position after the recovery.

Keep in Mind: Assuming a downed position to recover a helmet cover is only legal if it is brief and has no other impact on gameplay. A Skater who fails to immediately return to a blockable status (by crawling or continued kneeling, for example) should be penalized.

Scenario C4.3.E

Having been released from the Penalty Box, White Blocker heads back to the track, using a forearm to push a Referee out of the way so they can keep the line.

Outcome: White Blocker is expelled from the game.

Rationale: ~~Intentional or negligent contact to Officials is unsporting, as it renders the Official unable to keep their attention on the game. Contact to an Official who does not expect it or to an Official who is not wearing safety equipment is also unsafe.~~ Some intentional contact between Skaters and Officials, such as non-forceful touching to indicate location or actively absorbing contact to increase safety, is not an expellable offense. However forceful contact to Officials which is avoidable or negligent is unsporting.

Keep in Mind: ~~Skaters and Officials routinely collide during the course of normal gameplay. This is usually unintentional and unavoidable, in which case it should not be penalized.~~ Forceful contact to an Official which is avoidable or negligent always warrants an expulsion. These actions are considered sufficiently dangerous or unsporting and should not be reduced to a penalty without an accompanying expulsion.

Scenario C4.3.N

Red Jammer moves through the Pack and is legally blocked by White Blocker into the infield, immediately colliding with the Jammer Referee which causes the Jammer Referee to fall.

Outcome: Red Jammer is not penalized.

Rationale: Skaters and Officials routinely collide during the course of normal gameplay. This is usually unintentional and unavoidable, in which case it should not be penalized even if the contact is considered forceful.

Scenario C4.3.O

Having been assessed a penalty, White Pivot exits the track and heads towards the Penalty Box. As White Pivot skates they approach an Outside Pack Referee, who is skating at a consistent speed and distance from the track boundary. White Pivot does not adjust their trajectory, and impacts the Outside Pack Referee in the back, which causes the Referee to stumble briefly.

Outcome: White Pivot is expelled from the game.

Rationale: Contact to an Official who does not expect it or to an Official who is not wearing safety equipment is unsafe and negligent.

Keep In Mind: If the Outside Pack Referee had a sudden change of position causing White Pivot to collide with them, White Pivot should not be penalized as the contact is considered unavoidable in this instance.

Scenario C4.3.P

Red Blocker attempts to block White Jammer, misses, and ends up Out of Bounds. While attempting to return In Bounds, Red Blocker's shoulder brushes the elbow pad of an Outside Pack Referee.

Outcome: Red Blocker is not penalized.

Rationale: The contact between Red Blocker and the Official was not forceful. No penalty should be assessed, even if the contact is considered avoidable.