

Tournaments and Sanctioned Play for Non-Skating Officials

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Agenda

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 - v. Penalty Lineup Tracker

Why should you listen to me?

I have officiated over 260 roller derby games in WFTDA, MRDA, and JRDA, including JRDA Champs. I am Head NSO at Denver Roller Derby. I have trained dozens of NSOs in multiple states.

But you should listen to me because **I'm going to tell you why** we do what we do.

Derby has a lot of rules, and even more conventions.

Some of them are near-universal. Others are not.

That's why I always want to tell you why and equip you to understand the impact of the decisions you make.

Understanding Tournaments and Sanctioned Play

Types of Derby Games

Sanctioned: ranked play following 100% of WFTDA regulations.

Regulation: unranked play following 100% of WFTDA regulations. In practice, considerably less strict than Sanctioned on paperwork, but follows all of the rules.

Home/Mixer: often but not always regulation; sometimes doesn't meet high standards.

Other: exhibition games, abbreviated games (20 minute halves, 1 period, etc.), nonstandard rules.

Scrimmage: informal, practice-oriented games that aren't intended for the public and are usually not played to regulation standard.

Tournaments can include any type of derby game, but often focus on sanctioned play.

Part 1: Being an Official

Officiating is a Team Sport

Our goal is to make roller derby **safe, fair, and fun**, in that order. We are highly skilled professionals, capable of understanding and applying complex rule sets in fast-moving play.

Some of the principles I officiate by:

- **Support each other**, but do not let your own responsibilities lapse to do so.
- **All failures are team failures**. Anything that goes awry, multiple people can catch.
- **Mistakes happen**. What matters is how we manage the impact as a team.
- **Be an example** to all derby participants of how the game should take place.

Professional Conduct

Tournaments and sanctioned games are very different environments than scrimmage.

- **You represent the officials community, the host league, and roller derby.**
- When in doubt, ask your crew head or head NSO.
- Do not consume alcohol or drugs while working or in uniform.
- Phone in pocket unless you're using it as a calculator.
- Do not use profanity or other inappropriate language while junior skaters are present, or at any time during a juniors bout.
 - It's in the JRDA Rules. **Take it seriously.**
- Do not comment on the physical appearance of any other participant.
- Follow the WFTDA Uniform Policy and any specific guidance from the head NSO.

Professional Conduct: Favoritism

Everyone agrees that officials should not show favor to either team. Exactly what that means is not agreed upon by everyone.

Some general principles:

- No team logos on your uniform.
- Don't cheer or celebrate events on the track while you're in uniform.
 - Change out of uniform to cheer.
- If you discuss gameplay with other officials, be aware that others may be listening.

Not showing favoritism doesn't mean not having fun. You don't have to be a robot.

Officiating History and References

Every game you work goes into your officiating history. Officiating history shows the breadth and depth of your experience, and how you've grown during your career.

Virtually all tournaments and most sanctioned games will require an officiating history with your application.

- [Start Officiating History](#)

Many applications also seek references. Think about who your mentor is, who you work well with, and whose opinion you value. Ask them before you list them as a reference.

Navigating Local Expectations

Derby is very conventional, and **conventions vary**. You may be surprised when you officiate in new locales. This can be frustrating but also productive.

- **Ask why.**
- "Be curious, not judgmental".
- Accept and share practices with an open mind.
- Use your knowledge of the rules and the sanctioning policies as backstop.

Part 2: Sanctioning

Understanding Sanctioning

All games have impact, but only sanctioned games grant **rankings points**. Rankings points are critical to teams' competitive futures.

- Championship eligibility
- Ability to schedule games with appropriate opponents
- Entry to tournaments
- Financial impact (teams spend money on games based on expected rankings points)

Sanctioned games are also important for your official's history.

- Demonstrates your ability to officiate higher-level derby.
- Used to assess fitness for tournaments.

Definition (*WFTDA Sanctioning Policy*)

A WFTDA-sanctioned game is a game played between two charter teams from different WFTDA leagues for the purpose of obtaining WFTDA Ranking game points. The game must be played according to the following policies with no deviations:

- The Rules of Flat Track Roller Derby
- WFTDA Officiating Cues, Codes, and Signals
- WFTDA Officiating Procedures for The Rules of Flat Track Roller Derby
- WFTDA Risk Management Guidelines
- WFTDA Charter Roster Policy
- WFTDA Forfeit Policy
- WFTDA Expulsion and Suspension Policy
- All games and uniform requirements listed in this document

Understanding Sanctioning

Sanction can be revoked. Officials play a key role in upholding the sanction requirements.

✓ Played by the rules

✓ Paperwork correct and on time.

✓ No errors impacting the outcome.

Sanctioning is the ultimate line of defense: "We have to do it this way for the sanction."

This is your license to be loud about doing derby right.

What Gets Submitted for Sanction?

- ✓ Scores: within 24 hours.
- ✓ IGRF: within 48 hours.
- ✓ Statsbook: within 2 weeks.

The statsbook requires the Head NSO to enter:

- IGRF, including rosters
- Paperwork for score, lineups, and penalties (SK and PLT or PT + LT)
- Official Review sheets
- Suspension/Expulsion sheets

Penalty box paperwork (PBT) is not required, but often helps the Head NSO resolve confusion elsewhere.

A Detour into Statsbooks: The IGRF

Section 2. SCORE & PENALTIES (Complete DURING or IMMEDIATELY AFTER game)									
HOME TEAM					VISITING TEAM				
Period 1	Points	10	Penalties		Period 1	Points	8	Penalties	
Period 2	Points		Penalties		Period 2	Points		Penalties	
TOTAL POINTS:		10	PENALTIES:	0	TOTAL POINTS:		8	PENALTIES:	0
The Official Score in this game required adjustment:				Reason for OS adjustment:					
Expulsion/Suspension notes:		Suspension was served by:							
Expulsion:							Suspension:		YES NO
Expulsion:							Suspension:		YES NO
Expulsion:							Suspension:		YES NO

Your Head NSO is responsible for completing this sheet. **Scorekeepers** and **penalty lineup trackers** are responsible for supplying totals and counts.

(Think about the design of your paperwork and how it facilitates this need).

A Detour into Statsbooks: Star Passes

JAM	Jammer's Number	LOST	LEAD	CALL	INJ.	N	Trip 2	Trip 3	Jam Total	Game Total	JAM	Jammer's Number	LOST	LEAD	CALL	INJ.	N	Trip 2	Trip 3	Jam Total	Game Total
5	198								0	0	5	808		X	X			4		4	4
SP	67						4		4	4	SP*									0	4
6	12		X	X			4	2	6	10	6	35						0		0	4
7	198	X				X			0	10	7	808	X					0		0	4
SP	67						0		0	10	SP	99							4	4	8

During statsbook data entry, scorekeeping and lineup tracking paperwork **must align horizontally for the same jam**. This is why we use the notation we do for star passes.

Many paperwork mysteries start to make sense when you explore the Statsbook.

Part 3: Tournaments

Why Tournament?

A derby tournament is a major production involving dozens of people and thousands of dollars. Tournaments can include sanctioned, regulation, and other games. They can span one to many days.

As an official, tournaments can offer opportunities:

- to meet highly skilled officials from outside your local community;
- to rack up a *lot* of games for your officiating history;
- to learn one or more roles in great depth;
- to participate in **very high quality roller derby**.

Tournament Structure

Around the Tournament

- Officials applications
- Acceptances weeks in advance
 - Make sure to confirm your attendance!
- You may be on a static or fluid crew.
- You may have a crew head, or game-by-game HNSOs.

Days Of

- Every tournament handles officials meetings and reporting times differently. Ask!
- Be on time! Do not make your crew head look for you at 10 minutes to first whistle.
- Schedules may shift. Be ready to pivot.

Example Schedule

	Day 1 (Sat)				
	G1 (11 AM)	G2 (1 PM)	G3 (3 PM)	G4 (5 PM)	G5 (7 PM)
Rotation	A	A	B	B	A
CHNSO	Drummer	Drummer	Roslin	Roslin	Drummer
JT	Draper	Draper	Gaeta	Zarek	Draper
PLT	Holden	Holden	Roslin	Roslin	Holden
PLT	Drummer	Drummer	Adama	Adama	Drummer
SK	Miller	Havelock	Anders	Anders	Miller
SK	Johnson	Johnson	Baltar	Baltar	Johnson
SBO	Nagata	Nagata	Tigh	Tigh	Nagata
PBM	Ashford	Ashford	Agathon	Agathon	Ashford
PBT	Burton	Burton	Thrace	Thrace	Burton
PBT	Meng	Meng	Tyrol	Tyrol	Meng

This is a "static-crew" schedule. "Fluid crews" are also common. Roles can change frequently and you may not be staffed in the same slot every game. Plan ahead!

Taking Care of Yourself

It's important to keep yourself in good shape so you can support your crew and do your job.

- **You are allowed to ask for what you need to be successful.**
 - You're an asset to the event, not a burden.
- Feed and water yourself.
 - Many tournaments provide lunch.
 - Grab the healthy snacks.
- Know where your breaks are. Recharge your way. Leave the venue.
- Get enough sleep.

Positional Sessions

Each 15-minute session includes foci on practice and communication, scenarios for discussion, and resources. **We will not cover everything today**; you're encouraged to consume resources at home.

Scorekeeper *SK*

Excellence in Practice

Scorekeeping is a paperwork-heavy position. It is **critical** that scorekeepers know all of the nuances of the paperwork from the WFTDA Statsbook Manual.

- **Know the paperwork.**
 - Star passes for either or both teams
 - No initials versus zero-passes (and with star passes!)
 - What constitutes a Lost Lead
 - Overtime jams
- Understand the Engagement Zone and where scoring trips start and end.
 - When to close out with a zero
- Know when you're allowed to make score corrections.
- Don't let things slide. Stop the game and ask questions if there's confusion about the score.

Scenario

Is this paperwork valid? What happened?

JAM	Jammer's Number	LOST	LEAD	CALL	INJ.	NI	Trip 2
5	198	X	X	X		X	

Scenario

Is this paperwork valid? What happened?

JAM	Jammer's Number	LOST	LEAD	CALL	INJ.	NI	Trip 2
5	198						0
SP	67						4

Scenario

The game ends. The scorekeeper identifies a math error that didn't change the outcome of the game, but did change the final score.

What happens?

Excellence in Communication

Jam Ref

- Meet and learn their signals before game.
- Echo all points with your hand. Hold points as long as they do.
- If anything is unclear, get their attention before the next jam starts. **Be loud.**

Score Table

- Confirm the score with SBO after **every single jam.**
- Relay all Star Passes to SBO and other SK.
- Call out Lead, Lost, No Initial, completed initial, and other jam events.

Head NSO

- Total scores **for the period** after each period (for the IGRF).
- Confirm final math as quickly as possible.
 - Final score (last jam total)
 - Period 2 total
 - Score adjustments

Resources

- [WFTDA Online Learning: Intro to Score & Clocks Training for Officials](#)
- [WFTDA Statsbook Manual](#)
- [WFTDA Officiating Procedures](#)
- [Dot System](#) (*optional*)

Penalty Box Timer *PBT*

Excellence in Practice

- Skaters can count! Release them on time.
 - Practice cueing skaters with "stand" and "done" at the 20 and 30 second mark.
- Maintain a rigorous penalty count on the right side of your paperwork.
 - Use different symbols (| and • are common) for Periods 1 and 2 so that you're always ready to confirm the game total and period total for a skater.
 - Watch double penalties. Skaters get **one entry-to-the-box line, but two tallies.**
- Use **one or two** stopwatches.
 - One takes a lot of practice, but allows you to time 3 or 4 skaters at a time.
 - Ask for help from your PBM if you get overwhelmed.

Excellence in Practice

- Understand which facets of your role matter most.
 - i. Timing correctly (immediate high impact).
 - ii. Maintaining accurate penalty counts (near-term high impact).
 - iii. Doing the rest of your paperwork (low impact).

Scenario

The Penalty Lineup Tracker approaches during a Team Time Out. They want to verify penalty counts. You have 45 seconds.

What do you need on your paperwork?

00

|||••

12

•

34

|•

389

600

7

|

741

9

99

Scenario

You have two Red Blockers seated in front of you. One Blocker stands just as the Red Pivot arrives. Your Penalty Box Manager seats the Red Pivot in front of you.

Your brain starts to melt.

What do you do?

Excellence in Communication

- Use loud, clear verbal cues with skaters. **You must use the official Color, Number, (Stand/Done) cues, with no exceptions.** See the Cues, Codes and Signals document for how to cue multiple skaters at once.
- Accompany verbal cues with hand cues.
 - Hand cues are undocumented but required by Officiating Procedures 7.1.
 - Stacktrace will demonstrate.
- Proactively advise your PBM when a skater reaches 5, 6, or 7 penalties.
 - Check with your PBM if they'll signal this to the PLT or want you to do so.
- Validate penalty counts per-skater every stoppage of play.
 - Compare your tallies with your entry lines.
 - Wait for PLT to approach and check counts with you.

Resources

- [WFTDA Online Learning Course: Intro to Penalty Box Training for Officials](#)
- [WFTDA Statsbook Manual](#)
- [WFTDA Officiating Procedures](#)
- [WFTDA Officiating Cues, Codes, and Signals](#) covers cues, including uncommon ones like "Timing Stopped".

Jam Timer *JT*

Excellence in Practice

Jam Timers have no paperwork. Like Penalty Box Managers, Jam Timers spend 95% of their time in routine and 5% applying deep knowledge of rules cases.

- **The scoreboard is the official clock!**
 - Always issue cues from the scoreboard, not your stopwatch.
 - Many scrimmage-trained JTs get this wrong.
- Use two stopwatches so that you have a backup for every game segment.
- You can correct the period clock during a stoppage of play.
- You can correct the jam clock during the jam if it fails to start.
- Understand the "final 30 seconds" / "last jam" rules.

Excellence in Practice

- Know when not to start a jam.
 - No jammer fielded / no blockers fielded at 30s.
 - Time Out or Official Review legally requested.
 - Ineligible skaters on track.
 - Queued skaters not on track.
 - Medics not in position.
 - Venue safety issue.
- Be aware of JRDA's Sudden Scoring and Injury Continuation rules.
- Know how to run an Overtime Jam.

Scenario

The lineup clock reaches 25 seconds. Four Red Blockers, four White Blockers, and a White Jammer are lined up in position. You do not see a Red Jammer behind the jam line.

What do you do? What whistles and hand cues do you issue?

Scenario

The pack is in Turn 1. Two skaters are behind the Engagement Zone. One of them collapses to the ground. The referees are focusing on a rapid play taking place at the pack.

What do you do?

Excellence in Communication

Make sure your Scoreboard Operator knows how you will signal clock adjustments. Signal an adjustment or an all-clear **every stoppage of play**.

Watch for scoreboard malfunctions. Be ready to use your backup clocks to cure them.

Know who can call a Time Out or Official Review, and check them during lineups.

Watch for officials out of position. Check with the Head Referee about their preferences on calling an Official Time Out for this.

Resources

- [The Rules of Flat Track Roller Derby](#), in particular
 - [Section 1.1, Timing.](#)
 - [Casebook Section 4.2.3, Interfering with the Flow of the Game.](#)
- [WFTDA Officiating Procedures](#)
- [WFTDA Officiating Cues, Codes, and Signals](#)
- [WFTDA Risk Management Guidelines](#)
 - Know the definitions of zones and safety requirements, on pages 6-8. These definitions can assist you in determining when an unsafe situation occurs that would require you to stop gameplay.
- [WFTDA Online Learning: Intro to Score & Clocks Training for Officials](#)
- [JRDA Rules, Casebook, and Code of Conduct](#)
- [Stacktrace's Jam Timer Guide](#)

Penalty Box Manager *PBM*

Excellence in Practice

PBM is easy 95% of the time and **white-knuckled rules edge cases** the other 5%. Make sure you know the rules for those 5% cases. That's your real job.

- All jammer swap scenarios, including double penalties and A-B-A swaps.
- How to run a foul out.
 - Juniors? Who are the chaperones?
- When and how to issue an Illegal Procedure or Misconduct in the box.
- How to handle queues.
- A skater is bleeding in my box. What do I do?

Spend your 95% time **supporting PBTs**, who are sometimes less experienced and may have many penalties to handle.

Scenario Practice

- White Jammer sits.
- Red Jammer sits at 25 seconds. You release the White Jammer.
- White Jammer cuts the track. They return at 15 seconds into Red Jammer's penalty.

What do you do?

Scenario Practice

- White Blocker sits.
- Your PLT signals "seven".
- You confirm with your PBT and advise the skater they have fouled out.
- White Pivot sits.
- White Blocker approaches the box.

What do you do? What do you need to know to decide?

Scenario Practice

- White Blocker sits.
- After 10 seconds, you notice that White Blocker is bleeding profusely from their ankle.

What do you do?

Scenario Practice

- Red Jammer sits.
- Red Jammer removes their mouth guard.
- Red Jammer takes off their helmet to scratch their head.

What do you do?

Scenario Practice

- Blue Blocker enters the Penalty Box at high speed. They lose control and fall over, crashing into the box seats and causing the seats to impact a Penalty Box Timer.

What do you do?

Excellence in Communication

- **Help your PBTs.**
 - Announce incoming skaters as you direct traffic. "Blue blocker coming in... Blue 23 entering as blocker." Your head is up; your PBTs' are not.
 - Be ready to take a skater on one of your clocks if PBTs are overwhelmed.
- Manage communication of 5, 6, 7 penalties so you're 100% sure of foul-outs.
 - Ask PBTs to tell you at 5, 6, 7 for a skater. Be ready to confirm with the PLT.
 - Call an Official Time Out if counts are off.
- Watch for double-penalties coming in from referees.
- Know how to use your whiteboard.
 - Communicate penalties issued in the box.
 - Manage the queue and have skaters report.
 - Record in-progress penalties at halftime.

Resources

- [WFTDA Online Learning Course: Intro to Penalty Box Training for Officials](#)
- [WFTDA Rules Section 4.4 and 4.5](#)
- [WFTDA Casebook Section 4.4 and 4.5](#)
- [WFTDA Officiating Procedures](#) covers whiteboard use.
- [WFTDA Officiating Cues, Codes, and Signals](#) covers cues.
- [Stacktrace's Penalty Box Manager Guide](#)

Penalty Lineup Tracker *PLT*

Excellence in Practice

- **Get the penalties.** You are doing a critical job. If you miss a penalty during a jam, write down as much information as you have in the margin of your paperwork (skater? team? where was the call made?) and ask the referees after the jam.
- You can call an Official Time Out to ensure you got the penalties if needed.
- **Get the lineups.** Jams can be called off quickly, so try to get all of the skaters down during the lineup period.
 - Ineligible skaters? Queued skaters not lined up? You're the one with eyes.
- **Get the jam events.** You need to know penalties, box entry/exit, and star passes.
 - Watch the referees first, not the skaters.

Excellence in Practice

- The PLT sheet is the most complex paperwork. Make sure you know all of the ins and outs:
 - Star passes
 - All of the penalty codes
 - Recording foul-outs
 - Box entry and exit sigils
 - Marking injuries
- There are **two documented options** for how to complete the paperwork. I have never seen anyone use Option 2.
- Understand the difference between recording penalties (right side) and box trips (left side). You may have the "same" event in different jams!

Scenario

Red 99 is assessed a Head Block penalty towards the end of Jam 15. Red 99 sits in the Penalty Box between jams. They remain in the Penalty Box through Jam 16 and are released in Jam 17.

What does the paperwork look like?

Scenario

A jam referee whistles and signals a Back Block penalty for White 848, a blocker. They skate on to follow their jammer. White 848 does not report to the box.

What do you do?

Scenario

Red 5 reports to the box. The Penalty Box Manager stops the jam and calls an Official Time Out because Red 5 is bleeding. Red 81 serves the remainder of Red 5's penalty time in the upcoming jam.

What do you record on your paperwork?

Excellence in Communication

The PLT is in the middle of everything and responsible for a lot of communication.

- **The other PLT** needs to know about jam events. Call out star passes for both teams. Make sure to use the star pass hand cue so that SK can see.
- Penalty Box Manager: Signal 5/6/7 penalties. Ensure that double penalties are caught.
- The Head NSO needs penalty counts at the end of each period for the IGRF.
- Catching penalties from all of the referees.
 - Make sure you know the codes, cues, and signals thoroughly.
 - Echo so the referee knows you caught it.
- Ineligible skaters. Communicate to the referees and the Jam Timer so the jam does not start.

Resources

- [WFTDA Online Learning Course: Intro to Penalty and Lineup Tracking Training for Officials](#)
- [WFTDA Statsbook Manual](#)
- [WFTDA Officiating Cues, Codes, and Signals](#)

Thank you!

- Your feedback is welcomed.
- You'll be sent these slides, including all resource links, via email.
- **Please complete your training by reading through the resources relevant to your positions.**