

## Face Offs – After The Whistle Has Blown

Rule 4-2-5 ... “The official will sound the whistle after readying the ball for play and stating the word “set” ....

**FOGO** – Face Off/Get Off. Typically used to describe the face off middle whose main purpose in a lacrosse game is to win face offs and then leave the field of play for a substitute, most likely an offensive midfielder (dodger).

**Wing Midfielders.** The players retrained at the wing lines that may release upon the sounding of the whistle. Their primary purpose is to assist the FOGO to win the face off by gaining possession of loose balls that exit the scrum area.

**Restrained Players.** The players restrained behind the defensive-area restraining lines. These players may not release until the face off ends.

## FOGO: Go/NoGO

### GO:

- May pinch or clamp the ball with the head of his stick momentarily for the purpose of gaining possession.
  - A smooth, fluid action in which one FOGO beats the other to control of the loose ball at ‘X’
- May pinch or clamp the ball with the head of his stick for an extended moment for the purpose of determining which direction he wants to propel the loose ball in order for a teammate (winger) to gain possession
  - A clamp followed by a quick look right, quick look left followed by a timely dish, shove, redirect of the loose ball
- May use his stick to apply equal pressure (or greater) on the opponent’s stick so long as he is not holding or pinning the opponent’s stick to the ground
  - Both FOGOs stick heads are perpendicular to the ground and pressing upon each other with the ball between.
  - A momentary check with stick on opponent’s stick to break opponent’s momentum or disrupt his mechanics – so long as done in a one-two (boom boom, very quick) manner
- May use his body (shoulder, hip, upper-frame) to physically remove opposing FOGO from advantage to the ball or scrum area so long as both of hands are on the handle/shaft of his own crosse
  - Non-violent, non-excessive physical contact is inherent in lacrosse and allowed by rule when within 5 yards of the loose ball
- May use any part of his body to redirect the loose ball so long as both his hands are on the shaft of his own crosse and his fingers are wrapped tightly about it
  - Team A FOGO ‘punches’ the loose ball towards a teammate with his knuckles

- This is legal so long as both hands are on the shaft and his hands are wrapped around it

**NO GO:**

- A FOGO May NOT pinch or clamp the ball with the head of his for any extended period of time that does not meet the purpose of gaining immediate or timely possession.
  - A deliberate action in which one FOGO beats the other to control of the loose ball at 'X', but then does not make any positive or primary attempt at possessing the ball and putting into play in a purposeful manner.
  - This is Withholding The Ball From Play
- May NOT pinch or clamp the ball with the head of his stick for an extended moment beyond the time it takes to determine which direction he wants to propel the loose ball in order for a teammate (winger) to gain possession
  - A clamp followed by a quick look right, quick look left followed by a continuous clamp on the ball without directing it
  - This is Withholding the ball from play
- May NOT use his stick to apply equal pressure (or greater) on the opponent's stick for the purpose of holding or pinning the opponent's stick to the ground for any period of time beyond a quick plunge check or contact to disrupt opponent's mechanics
  - FOGO A's stick is on top of FOGO B's stick and is pinning it to the ground to prevent ability to play the loose ball.
  - This is Holding
- May NOT use any part of his body to apply equal pressure (or greater) on the opponent's stick – OR HIS OWN STICK - for the purpose of holding or pinning the opponent's stick to the ground or preventing the opponent from playing the loose ball
  - FOGO A & FOGO B are contesting the loose ball at 'X' and FOGO A's elbow and forearm are on his own stick and is pinning FOGO B's stick or is preventing FOGO B's ability to play the loose ball.
  - This is Holding if pinning on top of B's stick
  - This is Withholding The Ball from play if A is pinning his own stick and preventing B from playing ball.
- May NOT use any part of his body to hold or pin the loose ball to prevent his opponent's playing it
  - No diving onto loose ball (jumping on the grenade)
  - No crouching or leap-frogging over ball for any period longer than it takes to gain possession or direct loose ball in a fluid timely manner
- May NOT use his body (shoulder, hip, upper-frame) to physically remove opposing FOGO from advantage to the ball or scrum area if either hand is off the handle/shaft of his own crosse and is used to arm-bar, push, shove, block opposing FOGO from playing the loose ball
  - This is Holding

- May NOT use his head/helmet to physically remove opposing FOGO from advantage to the ball or scrum area.
  - This is Illegal Procedure if the contact is not excessive or violent
  - This is Illegal BC – 2 minutes non-releasable (initiating contact with helmet) if violent or excessive
  - Incidental, non-violent helmet-to-helmet contact in a scrum area should NOT be penalized
- May NOT use his body (shoulder, hip, upper-frame) to physically remove opposing FOGO from advantage to the ball or scrum area if either hand is off the handle/shaft of his own crosse and is used to arm-bar, push, shove, block opposing FOGO from playing the loose ball
  - This is Holding
- May NOT use his extremities (leg, feet, hand or free arm) to physically prevent opposing FOGO from advantage to the ball after it has left the scrum area.
  - Team A FOGO stick out his free arm, clutches B's jersey or body, sticks out leg or foot for purpose of preventing B from gaining possession of loose ball he has pushed forward
  - This is Holding
  - (Butt End checks)
- May not use his hand or unwrapped fingers to touch, grab, hold the loose ball or opponent's stick at ANY TIME during while the ball is at 'X' during a face off
  - Deliberately touching the ball with a free hand or loose finger is unsportsmanlike conduct – 1 minute non-releasable
  - Deliberately touching the head of the opponent's stick with a free hand or loose fingers (pinch) is unsportsmanlike conduct – 1 minute non-releasable

### **Wingers Go/NOGO:**

#### **GO:**

- May release from wing area upon sounding of whistle
- May "get back" behind the wing line prior to whistle
- May be long sticks or short sticks, both or combination thereof
- May freely play the loose ball – bat, redirect, scoop the loose ball
- May hold or pin any opponent's stick outside the scrum area within the normal context of what is allowed by rule in lacrosse play
- May contact (body check) opposing wingers or upright FOGOs for the purpose of man-ball or in an attempt to gain possession of the loose ball, so long as the contact is non-violent, non-excessive, and is within the context of play-of-the-game (within 5 yards of loose ball, above waist, below neck, contact to front or side)
- May enter into the restrained defensive-areas and return to the middle (between the restraining lines) before or after the face off has ended

## **NO GO:**

- May NOT release from wing area prior to the sounding of whistle - IP
- May NOT be touching the line or ground beyond the line at the time the whistle sounds - IP
- May NOT hold or pin any opponent's stick outside the scrum area outside the normal context of what is allowed by rule in lacrosse play - Holding
- May NOT contact (body check) opposing wingers or upright FOGOs in a violent, excessive, deliberate manner that is more than necessary to create a man-ball situation or free passage to the loose ball.
  - More than 5 yards from loose ball (non-excessive, non-violent) is Interference
  - More than 5 yards from loose ball (excessive, violent, and/or deliberate) is Illegal BC
  - ANY excessive, violent, deliberate body check – even within 5 yards of loose ball or not illegal by IBC rule – that is made with the purpose of BLOWING UP or inflicting punishment on an opponent is Unnecessary Roughness
    - Players between the restraining lines in a face off situation have a dual-purpose to the game of lacrosse in these situations:
      1. Gain possession
      2. Prevent opponent possession
    - It is NOT the intent of the rules to allow overt, unnecessary physical play in a situation where the ball is loose and players are in vulnerable defenseless positions by happenstance
- May NOT enter into the restrained defensive-areas for the purpose of 'exchanging' with a restrained player, that releases into the middle (between the restraining lines) before the face off has ended
  - Illegal Procedure

## **Restrained Players Go/NOGO:**

### **GO:**

- May release from defensive-area upon ending of the face off
  - Possession Gained
  - Out of Bounds
  - Crosses either restraining line
  - Time-serving Foul
- May "get back" behind the restraining prior to whistle (rare occurrence, if ever happens at all)
- May be long sticks or short sticks, both or combination thereof as long as no more than 4 long poles on the field
- May freely play the loose ball – bat, redirect, scoop the loose ball that is beyond the restraining line prior to face off ending so long as no part of player's body is touching the restraining line or ground beyond it

- May hold or pin any opponent's stick within the normal context of what is allowed by rule in lacrosse play (loose ball within 5 yards)
- May contact (body check) opposing players for the purpose of man-ball or in an attempt to gain possession of the loose ball, so long as the contact is non-violent, non-excessive, and is within the context of play-of-the-game (within 5 yards of loose ball, above waist, below neck, contact to front or side, and no line violation occurs)
- May enter into the middle portion of the field ONLY after face off has ended

#### **NO GO:**

- May NOT release from defensive-area prior to the ending of the face off - IP
  - Possession Gained
  - Out of Bounds
  - Crosses either restraining line
  - Time-serving Foul
- May NOT be on or beyond the restraining line at the sounding of the whistle - IP
- May NOT play the loose ball – bat, redirect, scoop the loose ball that is beyond the restraining line prior to face off ending if any part of player's body is touching the restraining line or ground beyond it - IP
- May NOT hold or pin any opponent's stick beyond what is allowed by rule in lacrosse play (loose ball more than 5 yards, any other illegal hold) – holding or interference
- May NOT contact (body check) opposing players in a violent, excessive, deliberate manner that is more than necessary to create a man-ball situation or free passage to the loose ball.
  - More than 5 yards from loose ball (non-excessive, non-violent) is Interference
  - More than 5 yards from loose ball (excessive, violent, and/or deliberate) is Illegal BC
  - ANY excessive, violent, deliberate body check – even within 5 yards of loose ball or not illegal by IBC rule – that is made with the purpose of BLOWING UP or inflicting punishment on an opponent is Unnecessary Roughness

**S** = Keep players safe by keeping face off play within the intent of play-of-the-game

- Intent of face offs is to win possession
- It is never the intent of face off play - or lacrosse play in general - for vulnerable, defenseless players to be physically assaulted in an unnecessary manner even if certain rules criteria were met
- Slashes – Butt-end check attempts by FOGO, lumberjack or heavy swing action by wingers
- Unnecessary Roughness – Avoidable, Violent, Deliberate actions that serve a greater purpose of intimidation or physical harm must be enforced and removed as an option for either team during face off play
- Do NOT release previously-restrained players prematurely – make sure possession is possession
  - Early release while ball is still loose creates a greater chance of a non-safe environment and is far more difficult to officiate when 12 players are vying for possession vs. only 6.

**A** = Do not allow unfair Advantages to either team

- FOGOs are intended to be skill players
  - let legal skill rule the day
  - eliminate improper or illegal skill (cheating)
- Use preventive measures (communication) to set expectations before & during the game
- Be certain the unfair advantages are truly advantages = 50/50 infractions by either or both FOGOs may be cause for preventive officiating if trend is developing
  - If it “feels” dirty, it just ‘may’ be
  - Know the Gos & No Gos (Dos & Don’ts) of FOGO play to ensure the play is in fact “dirty”
- No illegal head starts or illegal positioning by wingers
  - Running starts by wingers behind wing line are OK so long as no part of body is ouching wing line or ground beyond at whistle
  - Players must be behind and WITHIN wing lines at time of whistle
  - A player that steps on or over line, but gets back prior to whistle is OK – no violation
- No exchanges for non-restrained & restrained players prior to face off ending

**O** = If it’s clear to all that a violation has occurred SOMEBODY better have a call or an explanation (if uncalled)

- FOGOS:
  - Goes early
  - Pins opponent’s or own stick
  - Kicks through stick
  - Uses hand (fingers) to direct loose ball
  - Ball stuck in back of stick
  - Holds, Trips, opposing FOGO after ball exits ‘X’
  - Jumps or dives on ball
- Wingers:
  - Goes Early
  - Holds or Interferes opposing winger on way to scrum area
  - Takes a run at opponent for purpose of blowing him up
  - Unduly hacks or smacks during scrum at ‘X’ or outside ‘X’ and contacts opponent
- Restrained Players:
  - Goes Early
  - Steps on or over line
  - Exchanges with midfielder
  - Blows up opposing player fielding loose ball near restraining line