

# NSO Manual - January 2019 Ruleset

Pretty Miffed

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## Foreword

This document was written based on the rule set established by the WFTDA Rules Committee for the 2019 season. It contains the policies and procedures used by the Rainy City Roller Derby Officiating Crew, and is not endorsed by the Women's Flat Track Derby Association

## 1 Jam Timer

### 1.1 General Description

Jam Timers start jams with a single whistle, and end the jams if they reach their natural conclusion of 2 minutes with four short whistles. Timers also use hand signals to communicate with the Scoreboard Operator when there is a timeout. Whistles are important and the Jam Timer should know the appropriate technique as well as when and how many. Timers are strongly encouraged to use FOX 40 Classic brand whistles.

### 1.2 Equipment Needed

2 Stopwatches, Whistle (FOX 40 Classic)

### 1.3 Procedures

Prior to the start of any jam, Timers will shout a 5 second warning and raise their open hand over their head. When it is time for the jam to begin, sound a short, loud whistle and start the jam stopwatch while chopping the air with the raised hand at the same time. Start the period stopwatch at the same time for the first jam. Continue to point at the area in front of the foremost skater until all skaters appear to be aware that the jam has started.

Check the jam stopwatch regularly and be prepared to stop the jam when the time reaches 2:00 minutes.

If the Jammer calls off the jam, immediately restart the jam stopwatch for the lineup. If the jam runs to its natural conclusion of 2 minutes, simultaneously blow 4 short whistles and start the lineup at the same time. Use the appropriate hand signal while calling off the jam.

The Jam Timer may also need to call off the jam for the following reasons (these may also be called off by Referees):

- Skating Officials call an Official Timeout
- Serious injury or an injury that could endanger another participant
- Technical difficulty or mechanical malfunctions (including equipment and skate malfunctions)
- Interference by spectators
- Emergency situation
- Hazardous skating surface (debris or spills)

The Jam Timer must call off the jam for these reasons (these may also be called off by Referees):

- End of two-minute Jam clock
- An injury that is a safety hazard to continued gameplay
- Fighting

There are 30 seconds between each jam. As the lineup time reaches 0:25, shout a 5 second warning. At 30 seconds, begin the next jam.

If a Timeout is called:

- Simultaneously blow another 4 whistles, stop the period stopwatch and start the jam stopwatch (it is now the timeout stopwatch).
- Verbally announce the timeout while also using the appropriate hand signal. If a team calls for a Team Timeout but do not have any remaining, but do have an Official Review for that period, it will be assumed that they are using the Review as a timeout
- Jam Timers should stand on the Pivot line and alternate between the appropriate hand signal and point to the team bench if they have called a Team Timeout or Official Review
- Official Timeouts last as long as needed, if this is so, reset the jam stopwatch

- Official Reviews last as long as needed, unless used as a Timeout which will last 1 minute. If not being used as a Timeout, reset the stopwatch
- Otherwise, Team Timeouts last 1 minute
- After 1 minute blow one, long, rolling whistle and start the lineup
- Teams now have up to 30 seconds to position themselves on the track. The Head Referee may shorten this if they consider both teams to be ready, and will signal this
- Provide a 5 second warning and start the next jam. At the start of the next jam restart the period stopwatch.
  - If an Official Timeout is taken with fewer than 30 seconds remaining on the period clock:
    - \* If another jam should have occurred if no Timeout had been taken, or the Officials determine another Jam should occur, there should be another jam. End the Timeout as normal.
    - \* If another jam should not have occurred, unless a Team Timeout or Official Review was taken, the teams will be given a chance to call either once the Official Timeout is completed; otherwise the period will end.

Communication between the Jam Timer, the Scoreboard Operator and the Referees is very important. It is a good idea to watch the clock on the Scoreboard and communicate visually any changes to the Scoreboard Operator. Discuss how to show this before the start of the game, and make sure that the Head Officials are aware of any changes.

If the Jam time is off by more than 3 seconds, the Jam clock may be adjusted during the first 15 seconds of gameplay. If 15 seconds of gameplay have elapsed, do not modify the Jam clock. The period clock may only be adjusted during timeouts. Do not adjust the lineup and timeout clocks.

It is very important for the Jam Timer to position themselves where they can see and hear the Head Referee at all times, especially after a timeout. The Head Referee can call an Official Timeout at any time. If the teams are lining up on the Jammer Line it may be best to stand nearer to them than the Pivot Line, especially in noisy venues, making sure that all skaters are able to see the five second warning.

If the Head Referee is discussing something with a bench coach or other Referees, warn them when 20 seconds of the lineup has passed so that they can decide if an Official Timeout is required. If the 30 seconds are about to

expire without the Officials in position, the Jam Timer is empowered to call an Official Timeout.

If an Official has requested an Official Timeout, or there is another reason why the next jam may not be able to start (e.g. injured skater on track), wait until the Lineup clock has reached 25 seconds before calling the timeout, as the issue may resolve itself in time for the jam.

Check the Penalty Box during the lineup to see if a skater is in queue. If that skater is not on the track at the 29.9 second mark, call an Official Time Out. Make the penalty call with the proper verbal cue and hand signal.

If the Jammer for either (or both) team is not on the track at the 29.9 second mark, call an Official Timeout. Make the penalty call with the proper verbal cue and hand signal.

If there are fewer than 30 seconds remaining on the period clock at the end of a jam there will not be another jam unless a team calls a Team Timeout. Pay particular attention to the team benches during this time as Timeouts at this point are common.

#### 1.4 Overtime Jam

A game may never end in a tie score. If the score is tied at the end of a game, an overtime jam will determine the winner.

Overtime jams last the full two minutes, and there is no Lead Jammer. The lineup for an overtime jam is increased to one minute.

If the score remains tied, additional overtime jams will be played until the tie is broken.

#### 1.5 Penalties

- Misconduct
  - Scenario C4.3.F: Profane, abusive, and obscene language is unsporting and degrading to the sport, but should not always be penalized. If said language was audible to the audience or via broadcast, [the skater] is penalized. If [the skater]'s profanity was directed at an Official, [the skater] is penalized. Otherwise, a few choice words directed at a teammate or opponent should result in a warning and be penalized if the behavior continues.
- Interference

- Scenario C4.2.3.A: Failure to be on track for a jam when in the queue for the Penalty Box. Penalty will be assessed to the offending skater
- Scenario C4.2.3.B: Failure to field any Blockers for a jam, preventing a jam from beginning. Penalty will be assessed to the Captain
- Scenario C4.2.3.C: Failure to field any Blockers between the Pivot and Jammer Lines, preventing a pack from forming between the Pivot and Jammer Lines at the first legal opportunity. Penalty will be assessed to the Captain. If both teams fail to field any Blockers in this way, one penalty will be issued to each Captain
- Scenario C4.2.3.D: Failure to field a Jammer for a jam, preventing a jam from beginning. Penalty will be assessed to the Captain

The Jam Timer will be able to issue these penalties themselves unless the Head Referee says otherwise, this will be clarified before the start of the game. If the penalty should be issued to the Captain, this should be reported to the Head Referee who will issue this.

Issuing penalties must be done in accordance with Officiating Discretion — see Section 2.4. The correct verbal cue and hand signal must be used, these can be found in WFTDA Officiating Cues, Codes And Signals — see Section 3.3.

## **2 Additional Information**

### **2.1 Professionalism And Impartiality**

Even as volunteers, NSOs are expected to learn their assigned jobs, focus on their duties, and strive to improve their abilities and knowledge. They do not do their jobs for glory or attention. They are there with a knowledge of self-satisfaction. Attend and be prepared at all practices and scrimmages.

NSOs may work closely and socialise with one or more leagues. But, they must maintain impartiality at all times.

- Do not cheer or applaud during introductions, big hits, or high-scoring jams.
- Do not speak negatively of any skater or team.
- Do not express any opinions on social media.
- When attending after-parties, change out of ‘uniform’ if applicable.

NSOs have signed a Code of Conduct. Anyone failing to maintain the set standards may be dismissed and told to not return.

When visiting other leagues, be sure to talk to their HNSO and review the assigned position. They may have different procedures than at home.

## 2.2 Uniforms

There is an established dress code for all WFTDA-sponsored tournaments.

The general guidelines are:

- NSOs must wear a top differentiating themselves from Referees (Example: the official WFTDA NSO top). The colour of the top must be dictated by the Head NSO prior to the day of the game.
  - Tops must be long enough to cover the midsection while at rest.
  - Tops must have sleeves (cap sleeves are acceptable).
  - Officials may add only these patches to their top:
    - \* the WFTDA patch, worn on the upper left chest,
    - \* certification patches, worn on the right sleeve,
    - \* the official patch of their country/region of residence or origin, worn on their left arm.
  - All patches and name plates must be sewn or otherwise permanently affixed to the uniform. Safety pins or other means of temporary attachment are not allowed. Velcro sewn to both the jersey and patch is acceptable.
- The word ‘OFFICIAL’ must be printed on the back of the top between the shoulders in high-contrast letters.
- If an NSO puts a name on their shirt, it must be in the upper right chest area. Names must be approximately the same size or smaller than the WFTDA member patch.
- If not wearing a dress, an Official must wear predominantly black pants or shorts (made of any material), black skirt, or black kilt.
  - Bottoms must at least mid-thigh in length and opaque. If skirt or shorts are shorter than mid-thigh, opaque black shorts or leggings must be worn underneath to meet this length requirement.
- If worn, belts and socks must be black or white.
- Shoes must have closed toes.

- NSOs may wear hats, bandanas, headbands, or other head coverings, provided that they are professional.

Exceptions for these guidelines are made for special events (i.e. Halloween) and is at the discretion of the Head NSO. (Note: when visiting other teams, they may/may not have their own dress code. Be sure to check with them in advance).

### 2.3 Whistles

The FOX 40 Classic is the standard whistle used by most officials in roller derby. Using the whistle properly is an easy skill to learn. But, new NSOs should practice and never underestimate its importance. Improper technique can make a big difference between a good game and constant complaints from teams and other officials.

Hold the whistle between the teeth, with lips closed, and tongue blocking the opening. Build up pressure, then move the tongue off-and-on the opening quickly, allowing the whistle to tweet.

- Jam-Starting Whistle: One short whistle
- Timeout (Team or Official) Called: Four rapid whistles
- Timeout Ended: Long rolling whistle
- Jam Called Off/Ended: Four rapid whistles
- Period/Game Ended: Long rolling whistle

When ending a jam after time having lapsed, blow 3 sets of 4 whistles with a brief pause between each set. If a Referee calls-off a jam (Jammer, injury, other) with 4 whistles, echo 2 more sets of 4 whistles along with them. This is to ensure everyone knows the jam has ended.

### 2.4 Officiating Discretion

Officiating Discretion is explained in Section 5.4 of the rules, and must be adhered to at all times, especially if the Head Referee has granted an NSO to issue penalties.

The important things to note as an NSO are:

- Officiating discretion is intended only to allow Officials to keep the game safe, fair, and consistent in the event that an unexpected situation arises. Discretion does not allow Officials to change rules

- If an Official is in doubt on a call, a penalty must not be called
- If an Official is in a position where intent must be inferred but is not clear, legal intent must be presumed
- When an Official provides erroneous information to a Skater, the Skater will not be penalised for actions taken based on that information

## 2.5 Officials Meetings

During games, there will be an Officials Meeting prior to the start of the game that NSOs are required to attend. Be aware of the time and listen for announcements. Do not wander off.

## 2.6 Computers / Scoreboard

RCRD utilises a computer running the ‘Carolina Scoreboard’ software, and video projector for its Scoreboard.

## 2.7 Phone Apps

There are apps that can be downloaded to a smart phone to help with Penalty Box Timer and Jam Timer. However, it is strongly encouraged that all NSOs have experience and know how to use stopwatches in case of unforeseen situations (phone is dropped, goes to sleep, freezes, etc.) and do not become too reliant on these apps. Also, be aware of how the app works and how well it performs before attempting to use it. RCRD do not recommend the use of phone apps in games.

# 3 References

## 3.1 Rules of Flat Track Roller Derby

- <https://rules.wftda.com>

## 3.2 WFTDA Officiating Procedures

- <https://static.wftda.com/officiating/wftda-officiating-procedures.pdf>

## 3.3 WFTDA Officiating Cues, Codes And Signals

- <https://static.wftda.com/officiating/wftda-officiating-cues-codes-and-signals.pdf>



### 3.4 WFTDA Game Statistics Package

- <https://resources.wftda.org/competition/game-resources/statsbook/>

### 3.5 WFTDA Statsbook Manual

- <https://resources.wftda.org/competition/game-resources/statsbook/>

### 3.6 WFTDA Officiating Uniform Policy

- <https://static.wftda.com/officiating/officiating-uniform-policy.pdf>
- <https://static.wftda.com/officiating/nso-printing-instructions.pdf>

### 3.7 WFTDA Sanctioning Policy

- <https://static.wftda.com/sanctioning/wftda-sanctioning-policy.pdf>

### 3.8 Carolina Roller Derby Scoreboard

- <https://github.com/rollerderby/scoreboard/releases/>

### 3.9 Nine Inch Wheels - Dot System

- [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B04PJEx\\_pRAzU3BONThDTUtEX3M?fbclid=IwAR247Th5FQdJopZO\\_MZ1tcQVN0JOAP4kQhdiUc0SZ6hs0VG6wV8Y\\_bvi6fk/](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B04PJEx_pRAzU3BONThDTUtEX3M?fbclid=IwAR247Th5FQdJopZO_MZ1tcQVN0JOAP4kQhdiUc0SZ6hs0VG6wV8Y_bvi6fk/)

### 3.10 WFTDA Certification

- <https://resources.wftda.org/officiating/roller-derby-certification-program-for-officials/>

### 3.11 DC Roller Girls, ‘How to NSO Like a Pro’

- Written by: Justin ‘KGusedtoB’ McGovern
- Additional credits to:
  - Gravity Kills (Roc City Roller Derby)
  - Grand Poobah (Roc City Roller Derby)
  - Grief Eriksson (Roc City Roller Derby)

**3.12 Diamond State Roller Girls, ‘Non-Skating Official Training Manual v 1.3’**

- Written by: Richard ‘Tweedle Damn’ Pethel
- Additional credits to:
  - Kelly ‘Smacktavish’ Schmidt (Brandywine Roller Girls)
  - Paul ‘Paulie Walnutz’ Hunter (Diamond State Roller Girls)