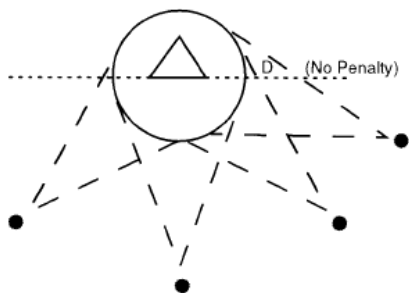


Free Space to Goal a.k.a. "Shooting Space"



FREE SPACE TO GOAL (a.k.a. "Shooting Space") is a path to goal within the critical scoring area as defined by two lines extending from the ball to the outside of the goal circle. No defense player will be penalized if positioned below the extension of the goal line.



Obstruction Of The Free Space To Goal (FSG)

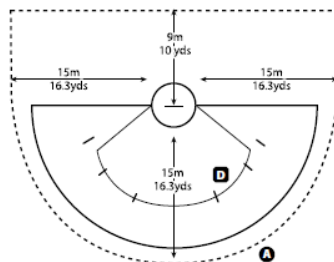
Free Space to Goal (FSG) is a path defined by two imaginary lines extending from the ball to the outside edges of the goal circle. (See illustration and definition in USL Official Rules) A defense player obstructing the free space to goal with any part of her body denies the attack the opportunity to shoot safely and encourages shooting at an unprotected player.

Consider the following points before calling obstruction of the free space to goal:

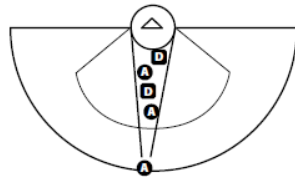
- The ball carrier must be within the critical scoring area (within 15m of goal) and must be looking to shoot and must have the opportunity to shoot. The call is not made if the ball carrier is being so tightly marked that she cannot execute the shot or if she is below the level of the goal line extended.
- A defender marking within a stick's length of the ball carrier is not obstructing the free space to goal.
- Defenders who are being drawn into and through the free space to goal by cutting attack players they are marking are not obstructing the free space to goal. Defenders can also move through the free space to mark a player behind the goal, but they can not stop in the free space.

"Obstruction of Free Space" is a major foul and results in an 8m Free Position shot by the attacking team.

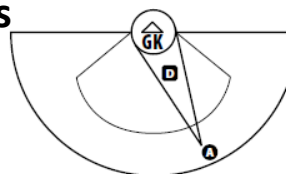
"Obstruction of Free Space" Scenarios



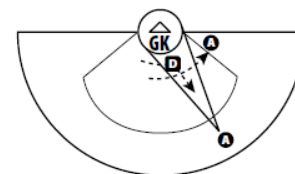
1 No Call. Ball carrier is too far out. Ball not in Critical Scoring Area.



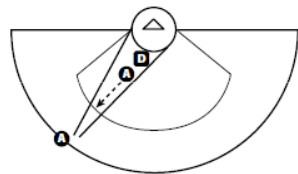
2 No Call. Defenders are marking the attack within a stick's length.



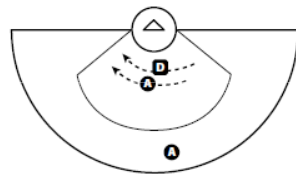
7 Call. The Defender is just standing in the free space to goal.



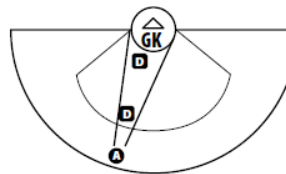
8 Call. The attack has cut away, and her defender turns to play ball carrier.



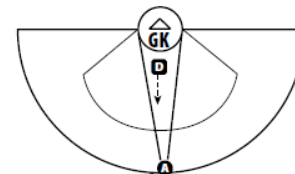
3 No Call. The attack player is cutting toward her teammate, bringing her marking defender with her.



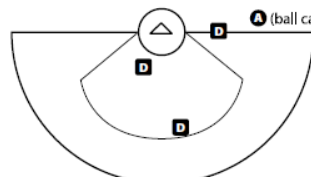
4 No Call. Defender is marking her opponent as she cuts across the goal.



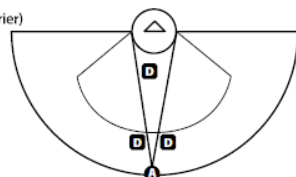
9 Call. Ball carrier is marked but has a shot. Low defender is obstructing the free space to goal.



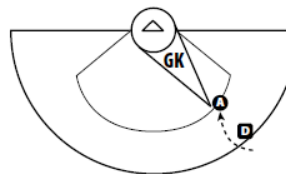
10 Call. Ball carrier dodges first defender and the second defender is moving directly toward the ball carrier without getting her body out of the free space to goal.



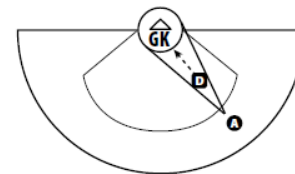
5 No Call. Ball carrier is behind the goal line extended, and therefore, has no shot.



6 No Call. Ball carrier is being marked by a legal double team and does not have a shot.

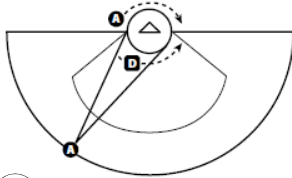


11 Call. Ball carrier dodges defender. Goalkeeper who is well outside the goal circle makes no attempt to move up to mark the ball carrier. Goalkeeper assumes responsibilities of field player when she leaves the goal circle.



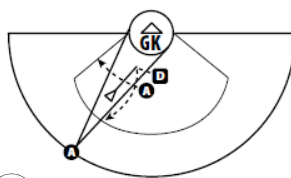
12 Call. Instead of stepping up to mark the ball carrier, the defender stands or "back pedals" as the attack attempts a shot on goal.

More "Obstruction of Free Space" Scenarios

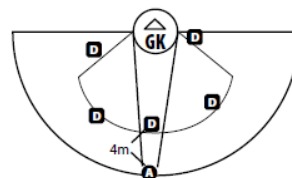


13 No Call. Defense is being drawn through the free space to goal by attack behind the goal. Defense must mirror movement of attack, move through quickly, and not hesitate.

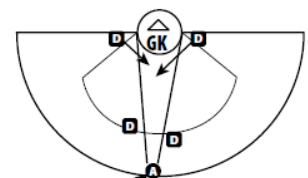
Note: If the defender hesitates at all, she will be penalized for obstructing the free space to goal.



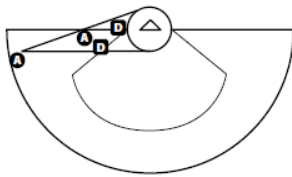
14 No Call. Defender decides to leave attack cutter to pick up ball carrier. Defender does so in such a way that she leads with her cross-stick keeping her body out of the free space to goal.



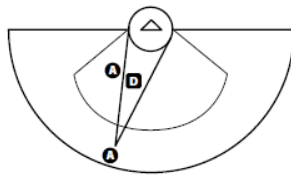
15 Call. Ball carrier looking to shoot as she enters the 12m fan. Defender stands on 8m arc making no attempt to step sideways out of the free space to goal or to step up and play the attack ball carrier.



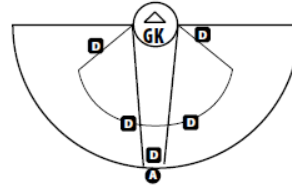
16 Call. Ball carrier dodges defender marking her. Two low defenders move into free space to goal. Both players are penalized by going 4m behind.



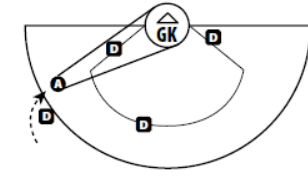
17 No Call. One defender is below the goal line and the other is marking an opponent with a stick's length.



18 No Call. Defender may look as though she is the free space to goal, but if the defender is within a stick's length of the attack player she is marking, the defender is legal.



19 No Call. The front defender is legally marking the ball carrier, all other defenders are outside the free space to goal.



20 Call. Ball carrier dodges defender and is looking for a shot. Low defender is obstructing the free space to goal.

Note: Even though the low defender is outside the arc, she is still in the free space to goal.