



Understanding the Transitional Checking Rule for 14U Girls

Beginning with the 2019 playing season, USA Lacrosse introduced a new checking category for 14U and 13U players. Called transitional checking, this rule is intended to provide a middle ground between full checking at the high school level and modified checking for 12U.

Transitional checking will help promote safe stick checks above the shoulders and provides an incremental rule structure for the development to full checking at the high school level.

There are two specific criteria for the transitional check: one is a 12-inch sphere around the ball carrier's head; the second is that checks cannot be across the body (both shoulders) of the ball carrier. The new 12" sphere at the youth level was adopted for safety reasons to protect players' heads from stick contact and to emphasize for the women's game community the importance of the sphere to the integrity of the game. This definition would prohibit defensive players from checking a crosse when a cradle is within 12 inches of a player's head.

There will be no "3 seconds good defense" calls at this level, since checking is allowed above the shoulder. While the 12-inch sphere is applicable to all youth play, an illegal cradle will still be based on the 7-inch sphere. The holding of the head of the crosse within a 7-inch sphere or close to her or a teammates body will be called as it has been in prior years. The definition of an illegal cradle is consistent with the illegal cradle rule in the past and consistent with the illegal cradle rule for high school play.

If a player is cradling between 7 and 12 inches can she be checked?

No. She cannot be checked.

If a player is cradling between 7 and 12 inches can she be called for an illegal cradle?

No. This may foster some incidental short-term advantage for the ball carrier, but safety and developmental concerns were the priority in the development of this rule.

If a player is running beside the ball carrier and her feet are ahead of the ball carrier may she reach across outside of the 12-inch sphere to check?

No. At no time under transitional checking can a player reach across the body or both shoulders of the ball carrier to attempt to check the stick.

Does modified checking still exist?

Yes. Modified checking is for 12U and 11U players which permits a player to use her stick to make controlled contact to the ball carrier's stick if the contact (and checking motion) is below the shoulder and away from the body.