

Playing Rules Changes Impacting The WRL



The IKF has released a number of changes to the official Playing Rules of Korfball. These changes apply to all countries, and thus have been adopted by the EKA and will apply to WRL matches from the start of the 2024-2025 season.

Free Passes

“After making the signal for the free pass (see referee signals), the referee allows the attackers to take their position. At the moment the taker of the free pass has, or can take the ball, in his hands, and the other attackers are positioned, the referee gives the 4-second signal (see referee signals). This begins the preparation period which gives the defenders a maximum of four (4) seconds to position themselves.”

What does this mean?

The rest of the free pass procedure is the same as before. The core change is that attackers now take a position first prior to the free pass, followed by the defenders, followed by the start of the free-pass.

Commonly asked questions regarding free passes:

Q: *If a defender is already by the free pass circle when the foul is blown, do they need to move for the attacker?*

A: Yes. Defenders must move away from the free pass circle to allow attackers to take a position first as signalled by the referee. Then, when the referee allows them, they may take their position.

Q: *Does an attackers position have to be stationary?*

A: During the “setup” phase, yes. An attacker takes a stationary position. Once both teams have taken positions and the referee blows for the free pass to start players from both teams may then move, although normal free pass rules apply in that you may not push another player from their position, or stand underneath/across them.

Q: *If an attacker takes a position during the setup, then moves away once the free pass itself begins, can I take their position as the defender?*

A: Yes. If the attacker moves away after the setup for both teams is done and the free pass start whistle has been blown the defender may then take the vacated position.

Q: *Can an attacker take both sides of the post?*

A: No. An attacker cannot take both sides of the post, they must take one.

Yellow Card Sin Bins

“The referee can consider any unsporting action from a player, coach, substitute player or any other person attached to a team, as misbehaviour, e.g. inadmissible forms of appeal, any kind of discriminatory comments or actions or demonstrative gestures against the referee or any other participant in the match (see 4.1 to 4.11) and spectators.

In the case of misbehaviour, the referee can...formally warn the person by showing him a yellow card. A person who has been given a yellow card:

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- *If a player is currently playing, he must be substituted and sit on the bench for 6 minutes of real playing time. He may leave the bench to warm up or to be substituted only after that period;*
- *If a player is a substitute, he may only be available to take part in the match after 6 minutes of real playing time;*
- *If they are any other persons attached to the team, the card will be attributed to the coach with the consequences described below;*
- *If they are the coach or assistant coach, both must sit on the bench for 6 minutes of real playing time. For that period, they lose the right to leave their place on the bench for any reason, including:*
 - *to give instructions to the team's players;*
 - *to request and/or use a time-out (see 5.8);*
 - *to request and execute a substitution (see 5.9).*
- *A person shown a red card must leave the playing area (see 1.1) and sit in the area reserved for spectators or leave the hall altogether, whatever he chooses and:*
 - *If they are a player, he must be replaced by a substitute;*
 - *If they are any other persons attached to the team, the card will be attributed to the coach, and both must abandon the field of play and the assistant coach loses all coaching rights and must sit on the bench for the rest of the match. After a period of 4 minutes (6 in the WRL), the captain can replace the coach in requesting a time-out and requesting and executing substitutions.”*

What does this mean?

Yellow cards now come with an attached sin bin rule. For league matches in EKA competitions that are 60 minutes in length this sin bin time is 6 minutes (10% of the total match time). If a player is yellow carded they must be substituted and cannot be subbed back on for the 6 minute duration. If a coach is yellow carded they must remain on the bench for the duration of the sin bin and cannot call timeouts, make substitutions, give instructions to their players, or coach in any way.

Commonly asked questions regarding sin bins:

Q: *If play stops during the sin bin, does the sin bin timer continue?*

A: No. If play stops (for example due to injury) then the referee pauses the match time. Sin bins are 6 minutes of playing time, so the sin bin timer is also paused during this period.

Q: *Does bringing the sin binned player back on mean using up two of the eight allowed substitutions?*

A: Yes. It is one substitution, forced by the yellow card, to take the player off. When the sin bin timer is over the player can then be substituted back on, but this will act as a normal substitution and use a second sub allocation.

Q: *Who is responsible for timing the sin bin?*

A: The referee is responsible for timing the sin bin. It is their responsibility to let the team know the time has elapsed and the player can return to the court via a sub, or the coach can resume coaching duties.

Q: *If 8 substitutions have already been made, does that mean teams have to play with 7?*

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A: No. If all substitutions have been exercised and a player receives a yellow card then the same process is followed as if a red card is issued in this scenario - The player is forced substituted with an extra "9th" sub permitted by the referee. However, as all the substitutions have been used up by the team when that player's sin bin is over they will not be able to enter the court again (as there's no available sub left to bring them back on).

Q: *If a coach or spectator is yellow carded, and then a player is yellow carded during the sin bin duration of the first card, and there is no-one with the authority to request or execute the substitution for the 2nd card, what happens then?*

A: If a coach is carded and there is no sideline person available to organise the replacement substitute (like an assistant coach) then the duties fall to the captain for the allotted 6 minutes. If the captain themselves receives a yellow/red card during the coaches sin bin timer, or visa versa, then the team must designate a different player to act as captain during the captain's sin bin timer (in the same way you would designate a captain if yours was red carded) and they will have the responsibility of managing time-outs, substitutions, etc.

Q: *What happens if we have no substitutes to replace the yellow carded player?*

A: If this happens the player is still sin binned for the 6 minute duration. During this time the team must play with 7 players on the court. As per WRL rules, the non-offending team must designate a non-shooter in the division that is against only 3 opponents.

More information on the core playing rule changes impacting WRL games can be found on the EKA's Facebook page as well as on the IKF website.

EKA's Guidance:

<https://www.facebook.com/EnglandKorfball/posts/pfbid02918kKaX1xnwVAjmvSPbWqpH4BoVtkmTPJ7aZoK1iB5L7gR9EzYmGbtF28neL6DnLl>

IKF Playing Rules Changes:

<https://korfball.sport/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/The-Rules-of-Korfball-2024-Changes-and-Explanation.pdf>

IKF Playing Rules (Full):

<https://korfball.sport/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/The-Rules-of-Korfball-2024.pdf>