

## Denying an Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity



Let's take a look at the following 3A Girls clip between Shakopee and Lakeville North

<https://youtu.be/7LjveapbRcM>



This is a DOGSO challenge

### NFHS Rule 12-9-2-d-3 and 12-9-4

For unknown reasons, NFHS classifies DOGSO as serious foul play despite its own unique nature. In any event, the *relevant* rule to *this* clip is:

12-9-2:<sup>1</sup> A player, coach or bench personnel shall be disqualified (red card) for: . . . d. committing serious foul play: . . . 3. a player commits a foul outside the penalty area when attempting to deny an obvious goal-scoring opportunity (DOGSO), and the goal is not scored (12-9-4);

12-9-4:<sup>2</sup> Denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity (DOGSO): . . .

a. When determining if an offense denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity the following must be considered and present for a DOGSO offense:

1. distance between the offense and the goal;
2. general direction of the play;
3. likelihood of keeping or gaining control of the ball;
4. location and number of defenders:

(Remember: a non-handling DOGSO in the penalty area that involves a challenge for the ball (e.g. not e.g. holding, pulling, pushing, no possibility to play the ball, etc.) results in a penalty kick and a caution.)

### The Rule Restated:

A player must be disqualified (sent off, red-carded) when the (1) player who (2) commits a foul (3) outside the penalty area (4) when attempting to deny an obvious goal scoring opportunity and (5) the goal is not scored.

<sup>1</sup> The language differs from [IFAB Law 12](#), but the end result is the same. Denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity (DOGSO)

<sup>2</sup> The four considerations in 12-9-4 are verbatim from [IFAB Law 12](#).

## **Considerations**

### *Four Primary Considerations (the Four D's)*

As with IFAB considerations, we consider “the Four D’s” in Rule 12-9-4 (which have been rewritten, but the Four D’s are a good way to remember:

- What is the distance between the foul and the goal? (Distance to Goal)
- What is the direction of play? (Direction of Play)
- Does the player have/can the player gain control of the ball? (Control of Ball (previously Distance to ball))
- Number and location of Defenders (Number of Defenders)

### *Additional Considerations:*

- Does the offence lead to a direct free kick or an indirect free kick?
- If no offence were to occur, would the player have an obvious opportunity to score a goal?

In analyzing DOGSO, we use the considerations which are posted on the [TCSRO Education Page](#).

## **Evaluating SFP in our Video Clip using Considerations**

In our video, two high school teams are playing. White has gotten a sudden attack. The ball bounces and White touches the ball forward and toward Red’s goal about 15 yards into Red’s half and in/near the center of the field. The White attacker is in a one-on-one drive at the goal with a Red defender. Three other Red defenders are chasing, but they remain behind the play. Red decides to challenge and then runs into and grabs/holds White about 15 yards outside the penalty area.

## **From our video, what considerations support DOGSO?**



A (1) Red player (2) committed a foul (3) outside the penalty area (4) when White had an obvious goal scoring opportunity and (5) no goal was scored.



### *Distance to the Goal.*

The attacker is about 30 yards from the goal (but with time to control the ball and have a clean shot on the goal)



### *Direction of Play*

The White attacker is driving at the goal in the center of the field. The direction of play is at the goal.



### *Control of Ball (previously distance to the ball)*

White makes a touch on the ball and is running on. But for Red's decision to challenge red (and then foul her), she will be able to gain possession of the ball



### *Number and Location of Defenders*

Besides the Red player committing the foul, there are three other Red defenders chasing the White attacker. The Red defenders are not in a position to stop White from having a clean opportunity to get a scoring opportunity on frame.



**Correct Result:**

**Direct Free Kick for White**

**Red Card for DOGSO to Red.**

## **Bigger Picture Analysis**

### ***Positioning (and, uh-oh, this is a Two-Man Crew!)***

Once again in 2023, we have found a Class 3A match-up being officiated using a two-official system. Fortunately, the referee (a TCSRO member!) is able to see the big picture and get the call correct.

### ***Could this be Stopping a Promising Attack? Can the referee explain the difference?***

If it meets the Four D's, then it's DOGSO and they are considered together. The room for argument here is probably on two of the four: distance to the goal and control of the ball. Obviously, this is not an imminent shot; however, White is rapidly advancing with only the keeper to beat if she does not get fouled. Distance alone should not be enough to rule out DOGSO.

White had the last touch which pushes the ball toward goal and *but for* Red's foul, White would have had ample opportunity to continue her drive and get an obvious scoring opportunity from within 20 yards straight on frame.

As White is moving into challenge with nothing but space between her and Red's net, the referee (and assistant referees) needs to be thinking: "there's a potential for DOGSO here." (Also, the referee should try to note the number of the defender coming into challenge). White is moving in with all four D's present. As such, in reviewing this: is there enough here to *downgrade* this from DOGSO to SPA?

Regardless, the referee needs to be able to defend the decision either to Red as to why a DOGSO-red was given or to White as to why only a SPA-yellow was given. By being able to articulate the considerations for DOGSO or SPA, the referee maintains credibility on the field. While the players may not like the decision, they will at least think: "oh, the referee made a decision and can say why."

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