

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



NEWS RELEASE

Ten Rules Changes Approved in High School Field Hockey

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Elliot Hopkins

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (February 26, 2015) — With appropriate open space and no players approaching, high school field hockey players will be permitted to raise their sticks above the shoulders to stop, receive and deflect or play the ball.

This revision of Rule 3-2-11 was one of 10 rules changes recommended by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Field Hockey Rules Committee at its January 14-16 meeting in Indianapolis. The rules changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

The new skill allowance seeks to improve the flow of the game and maintains players are capable of determining when it is acceptable to utilize this skill. However, sticks raised high in the front or back when players are approaching or within playing distance is deemed dangerous and/or intimidating, and will still be disallowed.

“It’s part of the evolution of the game,” said Elliot Hopkins, director of sports, sanctioning and student services and liaison to the Field Hockey Rules Committee. “Coaches are teaching their players to have more spatial awareness. If players can play the ball in a wide open space, why shouldn’t they be allowed to do this? If a pass is high, and they’re all alone, they should be able to just reach up and knock it down.”

Rules 1-5-6, 1-6-11 and 1-7-7 were also updated to alter the penalty system following the removal of a player for an illegal uniform or illegal/insufficient equipment. Coaches will now

be assessed misconduct penalties as opposed to the player, and the player will be substituted out under normal substitution patterns. Before, the offending player's team was also required to relinquish possession to its opponent.

"The committee thinks this is the responsibility of the coaches," Hopkins said. "They're the ones verifying to the umpire that their team is compliant, so let's not penalize the kids or change the possession. A change of possession, in a low-scoring game, changes the entire dynamic of the game."

Rule 1-6-5, which already required all field players to wear eye protection that meets the current ASTM standard for field hockey, will now include a note stating that, effective January 1, 2019, all eye protection shall be permanently labeled with the current ASTM 2713 standard for field hockey.

Rule 2-2-4 was altered to require a visible clock to be the official clock if available. If no visible clock is available, time will be kept at the officials' table. Either way, the umpire's whistle will signal the official end of each half. This was done to ensure that teams, officials and fans all have access to the same information.

Rules 5-2-1#5Exception and 10-3-2g were both changed in regard to protocol surrounding an injury on a penalty corner at the end of a prolonged first or second half. If play is stopped for injury or otherwise during said penalty corner – and a bully would be otherwise awarded – the penalty must be taken again. The rule was added to prevent teams from using a fake injury to end the penalty corner at the end of time.

A complete listing of all rules changes is available on the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org. Click on "Activities & Sports" at the top of the home page, and select "Field Hockey."

According to the 2013-14 NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey, field hockey is played by 61,471 girls in 1,795 programs nationwide.

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This press release was written by Ben Sieck, a spring semester intern in the NFHS Publications and Communications Department and a junior at Butler University.

About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 16 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.7 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Bruce Howard, 317-972-6900
Director of Publications and Communications
National Federation of State High School Associations
bhoward@nfhs.org

Chris Boone, 317-972-6900
Assistant Director of Publications and Communications
National Federation of State High School Associations
cboone@nfhs.org