

CIF SOUTHERN SECTION

FIELD HOCKEY

2026-2027



SEASON
PREVIEW





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FIELD HOCKEY SEASON PREVIEW

DATE: June, 2026
TO: CIF-SS FIELD HOCKEY COACHES
FROM: MIKE MIDDLEBROOK, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER
RE: **2026-2027 FIELD HOCKEY SEASON!**

WELCOME TO THE 2026-2027 FIELD HOCKEY SEASON!

The Field Hockey Packet has been prepared to assist you in organizing your school's Field Hockey program. The enclosed information is important for the preparation of the upcoming season. Please share this information with your assistant coaches.

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2026-2027 FIELD HOCKEY PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Bonita	Great Oak
Chaparral	Huntington Beach
Edison	Marina
Fountain Valley	Newport Harbor
Glendora	Temecula Valley
	Thousand Oaks

Field Hockey Assignor: Jeff Chandler - jdchandler@att.net - (949) 677-4981

CALENDAR DATES

ACCLIMATIZATION PERIOD BEGINS: TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2026

The period between August 11 through August 15 will serve as a five-day acclimatization period (Bylaw 503.K(1)) for prospective members of a high school team (see page 5 for more information regarding the new Acclimatization policy).

FIRST CONTEST: MONDAY, AUGUST 17, 2026

The initial date on which a school may schedule and conduct an interscholastic contest, including an official scrimmage, is August 17.

SCRIMMAGES

Maximum 1 scrimmage allowed.

Must be played on or after August 17, 2026, and before the first contest.

SIT OUT PERIOD (SOP) DATE: SEPTEMBER 23, 2026

LAST CONTEST

All league competition must end on or before (see Bylaw 2006 for end of competition guidelines):

Saturday, October 31, 2026

The last allowable contest date is:

Saturday, October 31, 2026

MAXIMUM CONTESTS

The # of allowable contests is: **20**

CIF Fall Outdoor Sports Acclimatization Policy

Given the extreme heat issues typically experienced at the start of the Fall sports season, heat acclimatization is crucial for high school athletes to help them adapt to hot weather conditions and reduce the risk of heat-related illnesses. The following is a four-step plan for heat acclimatization in outdoor high school sports:

1. Gradual Increase in Activity:

- Start with light workouts in cooler conditions to prepare athletes for increased heat exposure.
- Gradually increase the intensity and duration of practice sessions over 10-14 days.

2. Hydration Education:

- Teach athletes the importance of staying hydrated and recognizing signs of dehydration.
- Encourage regular water breaks during practice and games, and always provide access to water.

3. Modify Practice Schedules:

- Schedule outdoor practices during cooler times, like early morning or late evening.
- Allow frequent breaks and shade to help athletes cool down and recover.

4. Monitor Athlete Health:

- Educate coaches, trainers, and athletes on the signs of heat-related illnesses (heat exhaustion and heat stroke).
- The school will have available a method to institute whole-body cooling to treat a student-athlete with exertional heat illness, especially heat stroke (e.g., ice tub, "taco tarp", ice towels), which is easily accessible at all practice and contest venues.

Safety should always be the top priority when acclimating high school athletes to hot weather conditions. This plan helps athletes adapt while minimizing the risk of heat-related issues.

The five-day acclimatization period shall be conducted as follows:

- Participants shall not engage in more than one on-field practice per day during the five-day acclimatization period. On-field practices shall last no longer than two hours.



NEWS RELEASE

Standard Procedure Added for Penalty Corners in High School Field Hockey

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Julie Cochran

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (June 24, 2026) – A change in high school field hockey rules for 2024 establishes a standardized procedure for the starting of penalty corners.

This revision, which affects two rules in the NFHS Field Hockey Rules Book, is one of five changes recommended by the NFHS Field Hockey Rules Committee at its January 8-10 meeting in Indianapolis. All changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

“The introduction of the new whistle start in penalty corners should ensure that all players are set and ready before the ball is inserted,” said Julie Cochran, NFHS director of sports and liaison to the NFHS Field Hockey Rules Committee.

Rule 10-2-1 was added to achieve one of the committee’s fundamental tasks of setting guidelines and procedures for the flow of the game. According to the new guidelines, the official administering the penalty corner shall use the whistle to indicate to the inserter that play may be started. The change also affects Rule 2-1-5, which now will state that either official may sound the whistle to start a penalty corner.

Another change allows flexibility for officials to make decisions after time expires. New language in Rule 2-1-7 states that “If time expires just before an official would otherwise have made a decision (for example holding for advantage), officials are permitted to make that decision immediately after that quarter.” Similar language will appear in Rules 10-3-3 and 11-2-7.

In Rule 1-8, language for uniforms was added to the goalkeeper equipment section to provide guidance on how an official should handle illegal uniforms versus illegal or improper equipment.

Cochran said that some teams were forfeiting games because of improper uniform tops of goalkeepers. The committee determined that games should not be forfeited for field player or goalkeeper illegal uniforms and approved the following note:

“When an illegally uniformed goalkeeper is unable to correct the uniform top or cannot verify state association approval of the uniform, the game shall be played. The official shall notify the state association following the game.”

A new penalty was approved in Rule 4-2 regarding when coaches request a second time-out. According to the new guidelines, “If a team requests a second time-out and the official stops play, the time-out shall not be granted, and the coach of the requesting team shall be awarded a yellow card. The coach shall also remove one field player for five minutes of elapsed playing time. The designated field player may properly substitute with another field player provided the team plays short.”

Finally, in Rule 3-4-5, stick interference is now defined as when a player hits, holds, hooks, slashes or strikes an opponent’s stick.

A complete listing of the field hockey rules changes will be available on the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org. Click on “Activities & Sports” at the top of the home page and select “Field Hockey.”

Sixteen NFHS member state associations conduct state championships in field hockey, a sport that includes 52,962 girls participants in 1,726 schools nationwide according to the 2022-23 NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey.

BLUE BOOK RULES 2026-2027 – GENERAL

The following are key points coaches should review with their assistants and participants in reference to CIF-SS rules and regulations as set down in the 2024-2025 Blue Book. This list is NOT all-inclusive and only highlights some of the key areas.

201. STANDARDS OF ELIGIBILITY

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=55>

210. PHYSICAL ASSAULT

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=86>

212. AMATEUR STATUS

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=88>

220. BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=92>

500. AUTHORIZED PARTICIPATION

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=98>

503.G ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT / PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=103>

503.H ADMINISTRATIVE OVERSIGHT / CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=103>

506. PRACTICE ALLOWANCE

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=110>

600. COMPETITION ON AN OUTSIDE TEAM

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=120>

1223. SUMMERTIME RULES / SUMMER DEAD PERIOD / SPORTS CAMPS

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=146>

1227. SUNDAY RESTRICTION

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=148>

1228. NOISEMAKERS PROHIBITED

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=148>

BLUE BOOK RULES 2026-2027 – FIELD HOCKEY

The following are key points coaches should review with their assistants and participants in reference to CIF-SS rules and regulations as set down in the 2024-2025 Blue Book. This list is NOT all-inclusive and only highlights some of the key areas.

2000. OFFICIAL NATIONAL FEDERATION AUTHENTICATION MARK

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=167>

2001. RULES

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=167>

2003. TOURNAMENTS

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=167>

2005. MAXIMUM TEAM CONTESTS

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=167>

2009. CHINGFORD COMPOSITION BALL

<https://cifss.org/resources/blue-book/?gotopage=168>

HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is the expectation of the CIF Southern Section that your Athletic Coaches and Administration will take every measure to ensure the health and safety of your student athletes.

The following are key points of emphasis coaches should review with their staff and players in reference to CIF Southern Section rules and regulations in the 2024-2025 CIF Southern Section Blue Book. This list is not all-inclusive but only highlights key areas. For necessary forms and additional information regarding Heat Safety, Hydration, and other Sports Medicine resources, please go to www.cifss.org and click on the “Sports Medicine” tab on the blue toolbar.

Additional resources can be found at www.cifstate.org under the “Sports Medicine” tab on the white toolbar

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

An annual physical examination, or a statement by a medical practitioner, is required for a student to take part in any authorized school practice session and/or pre-season conditioning period. This physical examination will be valid for a period of one year from the date of the examination. A student will be excused from this physical examination only if there is compliance with the Education Code (parents' refusal to consent). CIF Health and Safety Committee strongly recommends schools use the Pre-Participation Examination form that is endorsed by five major medical societies: American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Medical Society for Sports Medicine, American Orthopedic Society for Sports Medicine, and the American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine. All CIF schools must have school board-approved forms.

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

A student athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from competition at the time for the remainder of the day. A student-athlete who has been removed from play may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in the education and management of concussion and receives written clearance to return to play from that health care provider. If a licensed health care provider, trained in education and management of concussion, determines that the athlete sustained a concussion or a head injury, the athlete is required to complete a graduated return to play protocol of no less than seven (7) full days from the time of diagnosis under the supervision of a licensed health care provider. On a yearly basis, a concussion and head injury information sheet shall be signed and returned by all athletes and the athlete's parent/guardian/caregiver before the athlete's initial practice or competition. (Approved May 2010 Federated Council/Revised January 2015 Federated Council)

Question: What is meant by “licensed health care provider?”

Answer: The “scope of practice” for licensed health care providers and medical professionals is defined by California state statutes. This scope of practice will limit the evaluation to a medical doctor (MD) or a doctor of osteopathic medicine (DO).

STEROID PROHIBITION

All schools shall adopt policies prohibiting the use and abuse of androgenic/anabolic steroids. All member schools shall have participating students and their parent(s)/guardian(s)/caregiver agree that the athlete will not use steroids without the written prescription of a fully licensed physician (as recognized by the AMA) to treat a medical condition.

NOTE: Article 1-12.N. (Revised May 2005 Federated Council)

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST PROTOCOL

A student-athlete who passes out or faints while participating in, or immediately following, an athletic activity or who is known to have passed out or fainted while participating in or immediately following an athletic activity must be removed immediately from participating in a practice or game for the remainder of the day. A student-athlete who has been removed from play after displaying signs and symptoms associated with sudden cardiac arrest may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider and receives written clearance to return to play from that health care provider. Annually, a Sudden Cardiac Arrest information sheet shall be signed and returned by all athletes and their parent/guardian/caregiver before the athlete's initial practice or competition.

Question: What is meant by “licensed health care provider?”

Answer: The “scope of practice” for licensed health care providers and medical professionals is defined by California state statutes. This scope of practice will limit the evaluation to a medical doctor (MD) or a doctor of osteopathic medicine (DO).

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