



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

## NEWS RELEASE

### **Loose Equipment in Field of Play Ruled as Foul in High School Field Hockey Rules**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Julie Cochran

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (February 6, 2023) – A change in high school field hockey rules for 2023 defines loose equipment in the field of play as a foul when the loose equipment affects play.

This revision, which affects four rules in the NFHS Field Hockey Rules Book, is one of six revisions recommended by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Field Hockey Committee at its January 9-11 meeting in Indianapolis. All changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

"The committee took an important step in defining loose equipment in the field of play as a foul and clarified that the throwing of equipment is a misconduct penalty," said Julie Cochran, NFHS director of sports and liaison to the NFHS Field Hockey Rules Committee. "This change gives clarification for officials on how to handle these different situations during play."

As an example, in Rule 8-2-1k, throwing any object or piece of equipment at the ball or at another player, umpire or person will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct. A penalty corner shall be awarded when the ball hits any loose defensive player equipment in the circle, and a penalty stroke shall be awarded when the official deems that loose defensive player equipment in the circle stops the ball from entering the goal.

Two new penalties were approved in Rule 8-2-1 regarding suspended and disqualified players. According to the new guidelines, a suspended player who remains in or re-enters the game before serving the full suspension time shall be removed from the game to serve the remaining time. In addition, a disqualified player who remains in or re-enters the game shall be removed from the game, and the team will play short-handed.

An adjustment to Rule 4-1-3 affects time-outs and the length of the playing period.

“We’re allowing a playing captain to request a time-out from a nearby official in addition to the coach, who already had that opportunity,” said Anna Saccoccio, chair of the NFHS Field Hockey Rules Committee. “If no playing captain is on the field of play, then only the coach may call a time-out.”

In other changes in Rule 1 (The Game, Field, Players, Coach and Equipment), a note was added to Rule 1-8-1h as follows: “Shoes worn under the kickers shall be rubber-soled shoes. Plastic, leather or rubber cleats may be worn.”

Regarding goalkeeper equipment, a note was approved for Rule 1-8-1a which will bring uniform requirements for goalkeepers in line with the player’s uniform number.

Finally, in Rule 1-5-5, players will now be allowed to wear jewelry with their uniform. According to the committee, permitting jewelry aligns with current trends in other rules codes for consistency of officiating and coaching.

A complete listing of the field hockey rules changes will be available on the NFHS website at [www.nfhs.org](http://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 55,829 girls participants in 1,767 schools nationwide according to the 2021-22 NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey.

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#### **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 17 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

19,500 high schools and 12 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.6 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](http://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](mailto:bhoward@nfhs.org)

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

Nate Perry, 317-972-6900  
Manager of Media Relations  
National Federation of State High School Associations  
[nperry@nfhs.org](mailto:nperry@nfhs.org)

Olivia Jennings, 317-972-6900  
Coordinator of Social Media and Communications  
National Federation of State High School Associations  
[ojennings@nfhs.org](mailto:ojennings@nfhs.org)