



## NEWS RELEASE

### **Standard Procedure Added for Penalty Corners in High School Field Hockey**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Julie Cochran

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (February 28, 2024) – 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](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 52,962 girls participants in 1,726 schools nationwide according to the 2022-23 NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey.

*This press release was written by Cameron Baker, an intern in the NFHS Publications and Communications Department and a senior sports management major at Franklin (Indiana) College.*

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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 19,800 high schools and 12 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.8 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).

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