

2025 FIELD HOCKEY COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, November 25, 2025, 9:30 a.m. – East Lansing

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mike Bakker, Fenton
Eve Claar, Ann Arbor
Leslie Fry, Chelsea
JT Hogan, Spring Lake
Lisa Hogan, Ann Arbor (MIAAA)
Amy Kilgore, Novi
Martha Munsell, Fowlerville (MATS)
Eric Pierce, West Bloomfield

Meg Seng, Ann Arbor
Keely Tamer, Dexter

MHSAA STAFF

Andy Frushour
Maddie Maloney
Paige Winne (Recorder)

The 2025-26 MHSAA Field Hockey Committee met in the John E. “Jack” Roberts MHSAA building to review topics involving field hockey, the tournament structure, and MHSAA rules and regulations. The meeting began with a review of the MHSAA decision-making process and the charge of the Field Hockey Committee. Agenda items were compiled from correspondence, staff, and the field hockey coaches association.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

COACHES ASSOCIATION REPORT

The Field Hockey Coaches Association provided a report and expressed appreciation to the MHSAA, and all involved, in making the first season not only a success, but also one that felt legitimate and special.

Primary discussion centered around out-of-season coaching limitations, specifically how the four-player rule affects sport growth and development opportunities at the middle school (grades 7-8) and youth levels. The committee discussed participation numbers and access to coaching as key barriers to the growth of the sport. The committee recommended opportunities for high school and middle school field hockey coaches to work with more than four players in grades 7-8. This would support growth and skill development, and to allow students to have the opportunity to learn the sport prior to entering high school. The adjusted out-of-season flexibility could assist program building.

The committee discussed concerns brought forth from the coaches association regarding the timing of the dead week, when it overlaps with the USA Field Hockey National tournament during the Fourth of July week, potentially preventing coach involvement. The committee noted that most coaches may not be impacted, and that affected programs could apply for a waiver through the Executive Committee, to be handled on a case-by-case basis.

OFFICIALS

The committee discussed the protocols when starting a contest with one official. MHSAA staff clarified that a game may begin with one official as long as both coaches and official agree; there is no rule against it, and there would be no liability issues.

MHSAA staff discussed expanding officials' training opportunities statewide and offering additional dates with the help and coordination with assigners. Once finalized, training dates will be shared with athletic directors and coaches.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The 2024-25 NFHS RIO Injury Surveillance Study was provided to the committee. The committee noted that the new rule allowing the wire metal face cage masks for penalty corners was not widely used in Michigan.

The committee discussed ways to strengthen coaching and officiating education specifically to improve rules knowledge and safety. This includes adding video and situational/rules-based questions to the required preseason rules meeting content for both coaches and officials.

PARTICIPATION AND GROWTH

The committee reviewed season participation information, including the number of teams and co-operative programs, and discussed continued strategies to support growth.

FIFTH QUARTER RULE

The committee discussed use of the fifth quarter rule in field hockey and indicated there was no noted abuse. It is being used appropriately by helping some schools field subvarsity teams while offering playing opportunities for more players, aligning with the intended purpose of the rule.

MHSAA OVERTIME PROCEDURE – REGULAR SEASON

The committee reviewed data regarding ties and overtime/shootout usage and discussed whether regular season contests should permit the reduced player overtime. This allowance would better mirror postseason procedures and allow teams and officials to practice the format. The committee agreed that, since the reduced-player overtime format is different than any game situation currently practiced during a regular season contest, it would be beneficial to allow a 10-minute reduced-player overtime period for all regular season varsity contests. After the overtime procedure, if the game remains tied, it will end in a tie unless it was a regular season bracketed tournament game.

ROSTER LIMITS

The committee discussed tournament roster sizes and consistency with other MHSAA sports. The committee agreed to establish a 25-player roster limit for the MHSAA tournament; an exception can be made for teams that have carried more than 25 for the entire season. Tournament rosters may change from game to game but students must be on the master eligibility list.

INCLEMENT WEATHER – MHSAA TOURNAMENT

The committee discussed whether field hockey should adopt an MHSAA-specific tournament game-ending protocol for inclement weather situations. The current NFHS rules book language is open-ended and other MHSAA sports have established rules. The committee recommended when there is inclement weather and the tournament game is unable to resume that day, the game be considered complete when there is a three or more goal differential at any time after the completion of the second quarter.

TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE

The committee discussed potential adjustments for seeding play-in games and related bracket considerations based upon a request from the coaches association. The committee ultimately decided it was best to keep the tournament structure as is, and to revisit seeding options in the future as the sport continues to grow.

The committee also discussed the bracket/MPR seeding date and agreed that the Friday date remained the best option. The committee will revisit this topic next fall after evaluating a regular-length season versus the shortened season used this fall.

MHSAA REGULATIONS

MHSAA staff clarified that indoor field hockey and indoor hockey are considered the same as field hockey as it pertains to interpretation 153(b) and 157(b) of the *MHSAA Handbook*.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MHSAA STAFF

1. Collaborate with the coaches association to incorporate additional video training and safety/rules situations into the required online rules meeting for coaches and officials.
2. Implement a 25-player roster limit for the MHSAA Tournament and include new language in the Participating Schools Tournament Information and Tournament Manager Materials moving forward.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. Request a modification/exception to the four-player rule for field hockey to support growth and development at the middle school level, allowing coaches to work with more than four students in grades 7-8 of the school district on five separate dates outside the season but during the school year, without competition. (7-2)
2. Adopt the 10-minute reduced player overtime procedures for all regular season varsity contests to align with postseason reduced-player procedures. This would provide teams and officials the opportunity to practice this procedure. Unless it is a regular season bracketed tournament, games still tied at the end of the 10-minute overtime would then end in a tie. (9-0)
3. Adopt a field hockey-specific tournament rule for inclement weather situations where a game cannot be resumed after delays. A game with a three or more goal differential at any time following completion of the second quarter would be considered a complete game. This applies only to MHSAA Tournament contests when there is inclement weather, and the game cannot be resumed after delay. (9-0)