



## 2025 FIELD HOCKEY RULES SUPPLEMENT

### MHSAA PLAYING RULE ADOPTIONS

#### I. Goal-Differential Rule

- a. The 8-goal differential rule is in effect for the MHSAA Tournament and regular-season varsity play. It is optional for leagues and schools to adopt for subvarsity regular-season competition. A game shall be terminated when a team is ahead by 8 goals or more any time after the second quarter is completed. (Note: officials must be aware of this adoption by schools or leagues before the contest begins). This game counts toward one of the 18 allowed contests.
- b. When there is a six-goal differential:
  - i. The clock becomes a running clock at a six-goal differential (only stopping on injury or time out).
  - ii. The game clock will revert to normal timekeeping if the goal differential becomes five.

#### II. Overtime Procedures

##### a. MHSAA Tournament Overtime Procedures

The required MHSAA tournament procedures are:

- i. Play a 10-minute sudden victory overtime period with a team of six field players and one goalkeeper. Teams do NOT change goals at the end of the regulation game. The winner of the coin toss shall choose to be on offense or defense to begin the overtime period. On a penalty corner, there shall be 3 defensive players and a goalkeeper behind the end line.
- ii. If the game remains tied after the 10-minute period is played, then it will go to the one-on-one overtime procedure. A series of five shots on goal shall be taken by individual players in a one-on-one situation (attacker vs. goalkeeper). To begin this procedure, the attacker stands on the 25-yard line and the goalkeeper stands on the goal line. Play continues for 8 seconds (10 seconds on a grass field) with follow-up shots permitted.

NOTE: A foul or violation by the attacker ends the procedure. For an unintentional foul by the goalkeeper, the one-on-one shall be retaken. For an intentional foul by the goalkeeper, a penalty stroke shall be awarded. Any player on the approved roster may take the penalty stroke. The procedure also ends when: (1) the 8 (or 10) seconds has elapsed; (2) a goal is scored; (3) the ball goes out of play over the end line, sideline.

##### b. Regular-Season Overtime Procedures

There will be no overtime of any sort in the regular season. Leagues and conferences may have an overtime option for end-of-season bracketed tournaments (see above overtime procedures).

Overtime is considered an extension of the fourth quarter insofar as this section is concerned.

### MHSAA TOURNAMENT

The MHSAA Field Hockey Tournament will consist of a single division, using a four-Regional format with statewide seeding. Please refer to the [Tournament Structure document](#) for a detailed outline including dates.

## 2025 NFHS PLAYING RULE CHANGES

**1-5-1b:** Switches the required home and away team uniform colors to allow the home team to wear a dark-colored uniform top that showcases the primary school colors.

**Rationale:** Allowing the home team to wear dark colors gives them the ability to showcase their primary team colors at their home location. Consistent with other NFHS rule books and national governing bodies.

**CORRECTION Pg 10, 1-5-1f:** *The home team shall wear solid knee-length ~~white~~ contrasting dark-colored socks/sock guards (not rolled down) and the visiting team shall wear solid knee-length ~~contrasting dark-colored~~ white socks/sock guards (not rolled down).*

**Rationale:** This color change aligns with the uniform up change, providing a uniform look. Consistent with other NFHS rule books and national governing bodies.

**1-6-5:** Allows a wire-caged style penalty corner face mask to be worn when defending a penalty corner.

**Rationale:** Allows the option of wearing a wire-caged penalty corner face mask during a penalty corner. Failure to remove the wire-caged mask beyond the 25-yard area results in a player misconduct and the official shall **stop play immediately**, issue the misconduct penalty and award a free hit to the opponent at the 25-yard line. Rule 1-6 PENALTIES, Rule 8-2-1j PENALTIES.

**4-4-3:** Adjusts when a substitution is allowed during a penalty corner.

**CORRECTION Pg 47, 10-2-11:** Substitutions may occur ~~immediately following the insertion from the end line at the completion of the penalty corner~~. A suspended player returning to the game when a penalty corner has been awarded ~~must follow the substitution rules may only do so after the ball has been put into play by the inserter~~.

**Rationale:** Clarifies when a substitution is allowed on a penalty corner, including in a retaken corner situation.

**8-2-1 PENALTIES 2 (NEW):** Establishes a misconduct penalty for a goalkeeper uniform violation.

**Rationale:** Aligns with the 2024 rules change to the goalkeeper uniform penalty, clarifying how to assess a misconduct penalty for a goalkeeper uniform violation.

**11-2-7:** Aligns penalty stroke end of game procedures with penalty corner procedures and clarifies when the stroke should be awarded.

**Rationale:** Brings language for penalty stroke end of game procedures in line with penalty corner procedures.

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## 2025 NFHS POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Penalty Corners
  - a. Substitutions
  - b. Completion of Penalty Corner
2. Intentionally Delaying the Game on a Penalty Corner
3. Defining Obstruction

## 2025 NFHS Rules Clarification

### Rule 1-6-5(c) and PENALTIES 1 Clarification: (page 12-13)

- Players may wear a smooth, rounded wire-caged face mask while defending a penalty corner.
- Players are expected to remove the wire-caged mask at the completion of the penalty corner.
- If no suitable opportunity arises to remove the mask, the player may continue to wear it within the 25-yard area.
- **Violation:** Should a player cross the 25-yard line while still wearing the wire-caged mask, the umpire shall **stop play immediately and award a free hit to the opponent at the 25-yard line.**
- All standard parameters for a free hit within the 25-yard area apply in this situation.

### Important Note:

To prioritize player safety and risk minimization, **officials should stop play immediately if a player violates this rule, rather than waiting for the first stoppage of play.** Therefore, Rule 1-6-5 Penalty 1 (page 13), which references assessing a penalty at the first stoppage of play, does not apply in the case of a player crossing the 25-yard line while wearing a wire-caged face mask. *The player shall still be assessed a misconduct when the official stops play.*

## 2025 NFHS RULE INTERPRETATIONS

**SITUATION 1:** A player continues to wear a wire-caged penalty corner mask after play has transitioned beyond the 25-yard line. The official stops play and assesses a player misconduct penalty. **RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** While wire-caged masks are permitted during penalty corners, players must remove them once play exits the 25-yard area. Failure to do so constitutes improper equipment use and is penalized accordingly. (1-5 PENALTY see clarification above, 2-1-6)

**SITUATION 2:** During a penalty corner, the attacking team commits a foul inside the circle, and a free hit is awarded to the defense. The defender continues to wear a wire-caged mask during the restart. **RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** The updated rule allows wire-caged masks to be worn anytime play is occurring within the 25-yard area, regardless of restart type. However, during the pregame captain's meeting, officials are encouraged to inform teams that in the event of a stoppage prior to the conclusion of the penalty corner sequence, players may be asked to remove the mask for safety and game flow purposes. (1-6-5c)

**SITUATION 3:** The inserter is issued a green card for an extended delay in putting the ball in play prior to a penalty corner. The penalty corner is not canceled or reset. Play resumes with the awarded penalty corner after addressing the misconduct. **RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** Carding the offending player for delay does not negate the penalty corner. Officials may use this action to reinforce time management without altering the restart decision. (8-1v)

**SITUATION 4:** During live play, the official notices that Team B's goalkeeper is not wearing the required throat protector. The official stops the game and informs the coach that the goalkeeper must be properly equipped to continue. The coach does not have a throat protector readily available and is unable to correct the issue immediately. The official stops the game and allows the team to either properly equip the goalkeeper or substitute with a fully equipped alternate goalkeeper. **RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** All goalkeepers must wear the required protective equipment, including a throat protector, at all times. If the team cannot provide a properly equipped goalkeeper, the game shall be forfeited. Player

safety is paramount. Officials are encouraged to check goalkeeper equipment during pregame to help avoid this situation. (1-8 PENALTY)

**SITUATION 5:** Before the start of the game the official notices that the goalkeeper for Team A is wearing a uniform without a number. The official asks the coach if numbers can be added or if the team has a goalkeeper uniform top that meets the rules. If not, the officials allow the game to be played and notify the state association. **RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** If a goalkeeper is suspended for a uniform violation, the coach must substitute by removing one field player; however, the non-compliant goalkeeper may remain in the game. (1-8-1, 8 2 1 PENALTY 2)

**SITUATION 6:** The visiting team arrives at the game wearing white uniforms and the home team is wearing dark uniforms. The official proceeds with the game as normal. **RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** The home team now wears single solid dark-colored uniform tops, and the visiting team wears white. Any undershirts must match these color assignments. (1-5-1b)

**SITUATION 7:** A penalty stroke is awarded to the home team as time expires in the game and the visiting team is ahead by three goals. The official blows the whistle and signals the game as complete.

**RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** The game continues to allow completion of the penalty stroke unless the outcome (e.g., the goal) cannot affect the game. (11-2-7)

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

- I. On threatening days, game management should consult with contest officials about steps to be followed if conditions worsen.
- II. When suspending an outdoor contest, officials and game management shall follow these policies.
  - A. When lightning is observed or thunder is heard, the contest must be suspended. The occurrence of lightning or thunder is not subject to Interpretation or discussion — lightning is lightning; thunder is thunder.
  - B. Severe weather in the form of rain or snow may make the field unplayable.
- III. When a contest is suspended, the home school administration shall attempt to arrange for the security of all participants.
  - A. Contestants and support personnel shall be moved to appropriate indoor facilities.
  - B. When lightning is observed or thunder is heard and the contest is suspended, contestants shall not return to the playing field until lightning has been absent from the local sky and thunder has not been heard for 30 minutes.
  - C. Spectators shall be advised of the action being taken to seek shelter. (Some hosts may be able to offer shelter to spectators but are not required to do so.)
- IV. In considering resumption of competition, the following steps shall be followed.
  - A. Delays for contests scheduled prior to 3 p.m. must not exceed three hours. Delays for contests scheduled for 3 p.m. or later must not exceed one and one half hour. Delays on nights not followed by school for all the competing teams may be longer by mutual agreement of participating schools. A postponed contest shall be rescheduled on a date/time mutually agreed to by the schools involved.
  - B. A decision to resume the contest within the time frame must be made by the officials who shall consult the home team administration and visiting school administration present at the contest.
  - C. The home school is responsible for facilities and will be given priority consideration in the final decision if there is not consensus among the three parties.
  - D. The final decision shall consider liability and conditions of facilities as well as future schedules, need to play the contest and finally the quality of all other options.

**Note:** MHSAA tournament policies for MHSAA tournament contests, or more restrictive local policies for regular season contests would supersede these policies and should be shared with the opponents and officials prior to the contest, preferably in writing. Otherwise, and to the extent allowed by the playing rules code, the official(s) shall make the final decision regarding game suspension once the game begins.

### **REGULAR-SEASON CONTEST DELAYS**

When a league or conference does not have a written policy regarding late contest start time, the following MHSAA policy shall apply:

1. If a team fails to arrive for a regular-season contest at the time stated on the contract, it shall be necessary for the host administration to delay the contest, declare the game forfeited, reschedule the contest, or declare the event “no contest.”
2. If the host management has been notified of the reason for the delay and projected arrival, the officials must stand by for 60 minutes beyond the scheduled starting time. When the team arrives, a reasonable amount of time must be provided for the visiting team to conduct a pregame warm-up. In any case, warm-up shall not be less than 15 minutes.
3. If the host management has not been notified that there is a delay and the reason for it, the officials have permission to leave the site, without obligation, 30 minutes after the contracted start time has passed.

(In MHSAA tournament play, the Participating School Tournament Information for each sport will prescribe the specific action to be taken. For regular season play, league and conference policy supersedes the policy above, so coaches and officials should inquire with their league to see if any policy exists.)