



August 19, 2026

NFHS Field Hockey Weekly Rule Interpretations

Rule References: 10-3-1, 10-3-3, 10-2-11, 10-3 PENALTIES

Purpose

The purpose of this interpretation is to help officials, coaches and players understand the difference between a penalty corner that is **retaken** and a penalty corner that is a **subsequent penalty corner**. These two situations can look similar during live play, but they are not the same. The difference matters because it affects who may participate in the next penalty corner and whether the defending team must continue to play short. In simple terms, a retaken penalty corner is a “do it over” situation because something went wrong before the penalty corner was complete. A subsequent penalty corner is a “new” penalty corner that is awarded after the original penalty corner has been completed and a new defensive foul occurs. Officials must recognize when the first penalty corner ends because that moment determines whether the next penalty corner is a retake or a new, subsequent penalty corner.

Rule 10-3

When a penalty corner is awarded, the penalty corner continues until it has been completed under the rules. If a foul occurs during the penalty corner before completion and the result is another penalty corner, the original penalty corner is retaken. If the penalty corner has been completed and the defending team then commits a new foul that results in another penalty corner, the next penalty corner is a subsequent penalty corner. On a subsequent penalty corner, the defending team may defend with up to five players.

Interpretation

Officials should think of this in two steps. First, ask: “Was the original penalty corner completed?” If the answer is no, the next penalty corner is a retake. Second, if the answer is yes, ask: “Did a new foul occur after the penalty corner was completed?” If the answer is yes, the next penalty corner is a subsequent penalty corner. This distinction is especially important when players have been sent beyond the center line because of an early-entry violation or other penalty-corner infraction. If the penalty corner is retaken, those players remain beyond the center line and may not be replaced. If a subsequent penalty corner is awarded after completion, the defending team may again use up to five defenders.

Game Scenario

SITUATION 1: A penalty corner is awarded to Team A. Before the penalty corner is completed, a defender commits a foul that causes the official to award another penalty corner. **RULING:** This is a retaken penalty corner. Any defender who was required to go beyond the center line because of an earlier penalty-corner infraction remains there and may not be replaced.

COMMENT: The penalty corner had not yet ended, so the teams are still dealing with the same penalty corner. The next penalty corner is not considered a new penalty corner.

SITUATION 2: Team A takes a penalty corner. The ball travels more than five yards from the circle, and the penalty corner is completed. A defender then commits a new foul that results in another penalty corner. **RULING:** This is a subsequent penalty corner. **COMMENT:** The original penalty corner was completed before the new foul occurred. Therefore, the next penalty corner is treated as a new penalty corner, and the defending team may have up to five defenders.

Points of Emphasis for Officials and Coaches

Officials should clearly identify when the penalty corner has been completed. Coaches should understand that not every penalty corner awarded after another penalty corner is automatically a retake. The key question is whether the first penalty corner was finished before the new foul occurred. Officials should communicate calmly and clearly when players must remain beyond the center line and when the defending team is allowed to reset with up to five defenders. Coaches should teach players that a retaken penalty corner means the original penalty corner is being repeated, while a subsequent penalty corner means a new penalty corner has been awarded after the earlier one ended.