

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE  
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS**



**NEWS RELEASE**

**Field Hockey Rules Changes**

**Focus on Clock Management and Risk Minimization**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Elliot Hopkins

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (February 6, 2014) —Rules changes approved by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Field Hockey Rules Committee during its January 15-17 meeting in Indianapolis centered around the official game clock and location of where play resumes after stoppage. The recommended rules changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

“More and more [field hockey] games are being played on football fields with pristine field conditions, larger press boxes and large scoreboards – in some cases, even Jumbotron display screens that allow replays to be replayed on the screen,” said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS director of sports and educational services and liaison to the Field Hockey Rules Committee.

However, Hopkins said people assume the clock on the scoreboard is the official game clock and when it reaches 00:00, the half or the game is over.

“Time doesn’t end until the official’s whistle blows,” Hopkins said. “Penalties and other delays have to be awarded and sometimes that allows play after the 00:00 is displayed on a scoreboard clock.”

Rule 2-2-4 was changed to address the official game clock and visible clock on the scoreboard. The rule now states, “When a visible scoreboard is used as the game clock, it shall be the official clock and shall remain on until the clock runs down to zero. If the visible clock is not the official clock, it may be stopped prior to the end of the half/game.”

An addition to Rule 2-1-1 now states that “both officials are responsible for assuring that the official game clock is correct.” Previously, there was no rule coverage for the official related to game time management.

Along similar lines, “a watch suitable for timing the game” was added as a part of the official’s uniform in Rule 2-1-2.

“The emphasis is so the officials maintain control of what clock is the official clock – either scoreboard or field – and to have that be decided prior to the contest,” Hopkins said.

Rule 8-1-1h was added to minimize risk. It states: “Players must not intentionally raise the ball from a hit except for a shot on goal.” Previously, there was nothing in the rules book that prohibited a player from “chipping” the ball into the air during play or from a free hit.

Another significant rules change was made to the bully, or the restarting play after any stoppage (injury, foul, etc.). Rule 5-2-1b1 now states, “The bully shall take place at or near where play on the ball ended at least 16 yards from the end line, 5 yards from the sideline and 5 yards from the circle.”

Hopkins said this rule was restructured so that no team gains an unfair advantage.

Other rules changes include the following:

- Rule 1-7-4 now restricts goalkeepers from making a play outside the 25-yard area, except when taking a penalty stroke.
- Rule 5-2-1b5 further clarified that a bully should be taken 5 yards outside the circle.
- Rule 9-1-3 was deleted and combined with 9-1-2, which now states that “if the defense is awarded a free hit within 16 yards of the end line or in the circle, the hit may be taken anywhere in line with the violation up to 16 yards from the inner edge of the end line. Opposing players must be at least 5 yards away from the spot where taken.
- Rule 11-2-10 now clarifies that continued delays during a penalty stroke by the attacking team will result in no goal allowed and the end of the penalty stroke. If the defending team delays, the use of the card progression would be appropriate to enforce.
- The visiting team shall always call any coin toss during tie-breaking procedures.

A complete listing of all the rules changes is available on the NFHS Web site at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org). Click on “Athletic Activities” in the sidebar menu on the home page, and select “Field Hockey.”

According to the 2012-13 NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey, 62,171 students participated in field hockey nationwide.

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*This press release was written by Megan Filipowski, an intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department and a graduate student at Indiana University Purdue University - Indianapolis.*

### **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 16 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 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.7 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 Web site at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

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