2026 USA FIELD HOCKEY RULES & REGULATIONS

Unless otherwise noted, USA Field Hockey events will follow the 2026 Rules of Hockey published by the International Hockey Federation (effective 1 November 2026) and USA Field Hockey's regulations and modifications. Failure to comply with any of the rules as outlined may result in sanctions against those not in compliance, including but not limited to matches being declared forfeit. The regulations shall take precedence over the modifications contained in any printed rule books.

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A. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

1) Members of all teams must be in proper uniform (shirts and socks of matching color) with numbers on at least the back of the shirt. Shorts or kilts must be of like color. Each team must have two sets of uniform shirts and socks, one distinctly light and one distinctly dark.
    i. Shirts and Socks must be a minimum of 75% of one-color.
        1. Pinnies will not be accepted as cover ups. Teams wearing pinnies may be penalized with a game forfeit.
        2. Reversible uniform shirts/shirts are acceptable provided numbers are on both sides.
    ii. Teams will be required to present both pairs of uniforms at team check-in for approval.
        1. If a team only has one uniform, and in the event of a color conflict, the game may be cancelled. See A.3.
    iii. It is strongly recommended that all teams have both sets of team uniforms pitch side, at the team bench, when arriving at their matches, to facilitate a quick change in the event of a uniform conflict.
2) The team listed first on the schedule will wear light uniform shirts and socks. As such, the team listed second will wear dark uniform shirts and socks.
3) The team not in compliance will be required to change uniforms at the request of the umpires, tournament officials or USA Field Hockey Staff.
    i. If a team refuses to change or does not have a second set of uniforms that will make them compliant, the game may be cancelled, and the opposing team will be considered forfeited.
    ii. ii. If both teams are in compliance and a conflict still exists, the team listed first will be required to change shirts and socks. Umpires, tournament officials or USA Field Hockey Staff will determine if a conflict exists.
4) Goalkeepers should wear a colored shirt or garment which is completely different- in color and distinctive from that of both teams. Goalkeepers are required to have a minimum of two shirts or garments of contrasting color of their team uniform shirts with numbers on the back.
    i. Clarification on “contrasting colors:” For example, a combination of shirts or garments that are Black/dark Blue or Yellow/Gold are not considered contrasting colors.
5) If the team has less than 9 players in proper uniform at the start of a match they will forfeit.
    i. For 7 v 7 outdoor events if the team has less than 4 players in proper uniform at the start of a match they will forfeit.
6) All players under the age of 19 must wear a mouth guard while participating on the field of play.
7) The captain must wear a distinctive armband or similar distinguishing article on an upper arm, or over one of their socks.
8) Registration wristbands (if provided) must be worn at all times by all participants (players and coaches)
9) All field players must wear face masks when defending penalty corners until the first shot at goal (as described in Rule 13.3 of the Rules of Hockey). It must be a smooth preferably transparent or white but otherwise single coloured face mask or a metal grill face mask, which closely follows the contours of the face.

B. ROSTERS

1) Rosters are limited to 20 gender-specific athletes. Each team must have a minimum of 11 players on their approved roster. Each team must also have 1 distinct coach per team to avoid coaching conflicts in game schedules.

i. For 7 v 7 outdoor events rosters are limited to 12 gender-specific athletes. Each team must have a minimum of 7 players on their approved roster. Each team must also have 1 distinct coach per team to avoid coaching conflicts in game schedules.
ii. For showcase events (National Hockey Festival, The USA Field Hockey Showcase) a club team may roster up to 5 guest players in an 11 v 11 event.
    1. Rosters for 7 v 7 events can roster up to 3 guest players.
iii. For any Regional Club Championship rosters are limited to 20 gender-specific athletes. For National Club Championships an additional 4 athletes may be added (for a 24 total rostered athletes). Each team must have a minimum of 11 players on their approved roster.
    1. The additional 4 rostered athletes cannot be played or used as substitutes at any point mid-tournament. A maximum of 20 athlete wristbands will be given to teams per event at check-in. These additional 4 athletes must be affiliated with their participating club so that they are eligible for the National Club Championships.
iv. Upon check-in for an event, if a team marks an athlete as not at competition but does not remove that athlete from the roster, that player may receive a wristband and participate if they arrive later during competition. If a team removes an athlete from the roster at check-in, a wristband will not be provided for that athlete.

2) Rosters must have age-appropriate players as determined by the dates of 8/1-7/31 of the current year. Athletes may play in a higher age division if the coach feels appropriate. Athletes may not play down an age division. *In accordance with the ADM USA Field Hockey recommends an athlete only play up one age division.
3) Only those players who are on the approved roster at the time of registration may play for the team who has her name on the roster.
4) The same team roster for any Regional Club Championship / National Club Championship must be used at the National Tournament. Exceptions will be made for documented injuries, illness or extenuating circumstances as well as the additional 4 athletes.
5) An athlete may play for only one club and must be affiliated with this club according to the Club Affiliation policy.
    i. An individual player cannot play for more than one team within the same age group during an event.
    ii. An individual player cannot play for more than one team during the Regional Club Championships unless they are playing in a different age group, however the teams must be from the same club. The athlete may only participate in a maximum of two age divisions.
6) Only one club team per age group in each Regional Club Championship event is permitted. The team must play in their designated Region, which is where the majority of their current affiliated members reside.
7) If an athlete plays on more than one club team in breach of 5 above:
    i. All games that the illegal player has participated in will be forfeited (see FORFEITS below);
8) Participants in Adult Divisions must be 19 years of age or older to participate. Exceptions may be made at the sole discretion of USA Field Hockey.
9) For any event with a Mixed (Co-Ed) Division, teams may have no more than 5 male field players on the field at any time.
    i. For 7v7 competitions, teams may have no more than 3 male field players on the field at any time.

ii. Goalkeepers do not count against the limit of male players on the field for Mixed Division competition.

10) Any team using an ineligible player shall forfeit the game in which the ineligible player was a participant and the ineligible player shall be immediately ejected from the tournament.
11) Any team an ineligible athlete participated on while deemed ineligible forfeit all games played with the ineligible player.

C. TEAM AREA & SUBSTITUTIONS

1) Players, Coaches and substitutes are under the jurisdiction of the umpires during the whole game, including any period of temporary or permanent suspension, and are therefore subject to the umpires' decisions under the Rules of Hockey. The umpires' jurisdiction extends through half-time periods and until the signed game card has been submitted to the official scorer.
2) The team listed first shall sit at the designated bench and defend the goal to the RIGHT of their bench when facing the field.
3) The team listed second shall sit at the designated bench and defend the goal to the LEFT of their bench when facing the field.
4) The players on any team who are not on the pitch shall sit on the team's bench as substitutes. Four coaches are allowed in each team's area and must not leave this area at any time. The team area is defined as the area 5 yards away from the sideline between the 23m line and the midfield line in front of the teams designated bench. No other persons or equipment will be allowed in the team/bench area.
5) Substitutions shall be made from the side of the pitch where the team benches are located, within 3 meters of the center of the pitch. Players coming off the pitch shall also leave at the side where the benches are located, within 3 meters of the center of the pitch.
6) Coaches who are suspended or have invalid memberships are not permitted to be in team areas under any circumstances. Coaching activities of any kind will not be permitted from coaches who are suspended or have invalid memberships until the suspension has been served or the membership has been validated.

D. SEEDING

1) Teams will earn 3 points for a win, 1 point for a tie and 0 points for a loss.
2) If, at the end of pool play, there is a tie in determining team placement, the following steps will be taken to break the tie:
    i. Points
    ii. Matches won
    iii. Goal Differential
    iv. Goals For
    v. Head to Head Result
    vi. Shoot-Out (if time and space is available)
        1. In the event that time and space are not available, a Coin Toss will determine placement unless both teams agree to share placement.
        2. If more than two teams are involved, then each team will play a shoot-out competition against the other teams in the same sequence of play as the order of play in the competition, in accordance with Appendix 1 of these Regulations but with one round of 5 shoot-outs only to be taken compulsorily by each team.
        3. A ranking will then be established based upon the results of the round of the shoot-out competition only, with the award for each play of 3 points to the team having scored the highest number of goals, 1 point to each team having

scored an equal number of goals and 0 points to the team having scored the lowest number of goals.

4. If equality remains then teams having an equal number of points shall be ranked according to D.2(i-v) as applied to goals recorded during the shoot-out competition.
5. If an equal position of three (or more) teams still remains thereafter, then the same procedure shall be repeated until the teams can be ranked. The umpires, tournament officials or USA Field Hockey Staff shall make a draw to establish each sequence of play if such further rounds of shoot-outs are required.

3) If more than two teams are involved after the initial full seeding process D.2(i-v), then a ranking based upon the results of the matches among (only) them shall determine their respective position.
4) In the event of a tie during crossover competition, the teams will go directly to the designated field and compete in a shoot-out. Refer to Shoot-out rules (Appendix 1) for further explanation.

Note: Section D above follows the FIH Tournament Regulations.

E. DURATION OF PLAY

1) USA Field Hockey will approve any and all formats of competition before the event begins.
2) The team listed first on the schedule will have the first possession.
3) Duration of games will be two periods of 25 minutes with a running clock (i.e. no time stoppages), unless otherwise noted.
    i. Games at Championship events may be adjusted to match the Rules of Hockey at the discretion of USA Field Hockey and based on time constraints.
4) Halftime will be 5 minutes unless otherwise noted. At no time will it be longer than 10 minutes.
5) In addition to any electronic timing method, Umpires are also required to keep time.

F. ARRIVAL TIME

1) A match is official when both teams have a minimum of 9 players, in proper uniform, on the field, no later than 5 minutes after the official start time. The score of a forfeited game shall be 3-0 against the offending team, if neither team meets the required 9 player minimum at the 5-minute point, the score shall be 0-0.
    i. For 7 v 7 events a match is official when both teams have a minimum of 4 players, in proper uniform, on the field, no later than 5 minutes after the official start time.

G. RESULT CARDS

1) The umpires will have the official Result Cards for each game unless a technical table is in place and operating accordingly.
2) At the conclusion of the game, the score will be written on the Result Card by the umpires with a numerical value. All Result Cards must be verified and signed by the coach of each team.
3) After the coaches sign the Result Card, umpires verify and sign the Result Card.
4) When the Result Card has been signed by the coaches and umpires, the score of that game becomes official.
5) Any disputes around the final score must be settled with the umpires at the time the cards are signed.
6) Should the umpires and coaches involved in the match fail to reach consensus on the final score to be recorded on the result card and/or should one or both of the coaches fail, refuse or neglect to sign the result card, the umpires shall determine the score to be recorded on the result card and sign same. USA Field Hockey will consider this as the correct and final outcome of the contest.

H. FORFEITS

1) A team forfeits a game if:
    i. A team does not show up for the match;
    ii. A team forfeits or is declared “forfeit”;
    iii. A team arrives more than 5 minutes after the match start time;
    iv. A team does not have 9 players dressed in proper uniform on the pitch after the 5-minute grace period. 4 players for 7v7.
    v. A team refuses or is not prepared to change uniforms as stated in Section A of this document;
    vi. An ineligible player participates in the game;
    vii. A suspended coach does not leave the game area within 1 minute of being suspended, does not report to the Tournament Table within 5 minutes after the game, and/or does not cease any and all team contact during the remainder of the game in which the offense occurred and the team’s next scheduled game in that division;
    viii. A team refuses to play or removes their team from the field of play for any reason.
2) If a game is forfeited:
    i. A 3-0 win will be awarded to the opponent

I. MISCONDUCT:

Green and Yellow Cards will be administered as per the Rules of Hockey.

1) Any coach or team personnel may receive a Green or Red Card only. There is not a Yellow Card suspension for coach or team personnel. The team will not play short for any card awarded to a coach or team personnel.
2) Green and Yellow Card: Player
    i. Suspended players will report to the chairs available at the technical bench and sit for the suspension time.
    ii. If chairs are not available the player will stand at the midfield line for the suspension time.
    iii. Umpires are responsible for the timing of suspensions and managing the return of temporarily suspended players to the field of play
    iv. If the time for a temporary suspension expires after the award of a penalty corner, the temporarily suspended player must remain in the designated suspension area, off the field of play, until after the completion of the penalty corner
3) Red Card: Player
    i. When a player earns a red card, the team plays short for the balance of the game and the suspended player sits with their teammates and will take no further part in the match.
    ii. A player who earns a red card must report to the Tournament Table within 5 minutes of the end of the game during which the offense occurred. The player's tournament wristband will be removed.
        1. Adult players over the age of 19 must leave the game area and remain away from the match until its completion.
        2. Players age 19 or younger are to remain with their team until the end of the match.
    iii. The red carded player is suspended for the remainder of the game in which the offense occurred AND the team’s next scheduled game in that division.

iv. The team does not have to play short in the next scheduled game in that division (unless, of course, there is a suspension in that next scheduled game).
v. In the team's next schedule game in that division, the player red carded in the previous game should not be with the team in the team area (unless the player is under 19 years of age and adult supervision is not otherwise available).
vi. In the event a player receives two red cards over the course of a tournament, they will be suspended from the remainder of the tournament.

Red Card: Coach

vii. A coach who earns a red card must leave the playing area within 1 minute (60 seconds) of the issuance of the card. The coach's tournament wristband will be removed. The coach cannot have any further contact in any way with the team for the duration of the match.
viii. A replacement coach is allowed. If a replacement coach is not immediately available, the captain may coach their team.
ix. The team does not play short when a coach is suspended.
x. The team forfeits the game if the suspended coach does not leave the team area within 1 minute and/or does not cease any and all team contact during the remainder of the game in which the offense occurred.
xi. A coach who has been permanently suspended from a match will also be suspended for the team's next scheduled game in that division.
xii. A coach who coaches multiple teams will not be able to participate in the tournament in any way until the suspension is served. Therefore, they will not be able to coach any other team in the tournament until a wristband has been re-issued after the suspension is served.

J. RED CARDS: Administrative Procedures

1) After the player's team has completed its next game, the player may return to the Tournament Table for a new tournament wristband.
2) After the coach's team has completed its next game, the coach may return to the Tournament Table for a new tournament wristband. A replacement coach can receive a temporary band for the team's next game.
3) Umpires will notify USA Field Hockey Staff of any red card issued immediately after the game in which it was issued.
4) Upon recommendation of the umpire, or based upon the severity of the infraction, USA Field Hockey will determine a red carded coach's/player's eligibility for further participation in the tournament beyond the one game suspension or in future tournaments.
    i. If a coach is the recipient of two red cards in the same tournament they will be suspended from the tournament and will be suspended from all future USA Field Hockey events for 12-months (details continued below).
5) Upon receiving a red card, a coach will be in a 12-month "warning" period (beginning on the date the red card was received) in which they cannot receive a second red card without additional consequences. If any coach is the recipient of two red cards in a span of 12-months between infractions, they will not be permitted to coach at any USA Field Hockey event or sanctioned event for 12-months after the date the second red card was received.
6) Any team using a disqualified coach/player shall forfeit the game in which the disqualified coach/player was a participant, and the disqualified coach/player shall be immediately ejected from the tournament.

K. APPEALS PROCEDURE FOR GAME PROTESTS

1) Please refer to Appendix 2, SCORING APPEALS.
2) Game protests will not be allowed at any event.

Appendix 1

SHOOT-OUT COMPETITION

In a shoot-out competition, five players from each team take a one-on-one shoot-out alternately against a defender from the other team as set out in this Regulation. The shoot-out competition comprises all series of shoot-outs required to determine a result.

The following sets out both the playing Rules and the procedures to be followed:

1) If the shoot-out competition takes place after the end of a match, it shall take place immediately.
2) The respective Teams provide 5 players to take and 1 player to defend the shootouts from those on the approved roster except as excluded below. A player nominated to defend the shoot- outs can also be nominated to take a shoot-out. No substitutions / replacements are permitted during the shoot-out competition other than as specified below.
3) If a player nominated to defend the shoot-out is a field player, that player may wear a face mask while defending the shoot-out but may only use their stick as in normal play to defend the shoot-out. A player who is still serving a disciplinary suspension at the time the shoot-out competition takes place or has been excluded permanently (red card) during the match which leads to the shoot-out competition, cannot take part in that shoot-out competition. A player who has been warned (green card) or temporarily suspended (yellow card) may take part in the shoot-out competition even if the period of their suspension has not been completed at the end of the match.
4) A coin is tossed; the team which wins the toss has the choice to take or defend the first shoot-out.
5) All persons listed on the official Team Roster other than any player who has been excluded permanently (red card) during the match which leads to the shoot-out competition are permitted to enter the field of play outside the 23m area used for the shoot-out but must be at least 10 meters from the spot where the ball is placed at the start of the shoot-out.
6) The goalkeeper / defending player of the team taking a shoot-out shall wait on the back-line outside the circle.
7) A player taking or defending a shoot-out may enter the 23m area for that purpose.
8) Players taking a shoot-out and also defending the shoot-outs taken by opponents are allowed reasonable time to take off their protective equipment to take their shootout and subsequently to put back on their protective equipment.
9) 5 players from each team take a shoot-out alternately against the goalkeeper / defending player of the other team making a total of 10 shoot-outs.
10) Taking a shoot-out:
    i. The goalkeeper/defending player starts on or behind the goal-line between the goal posts;
    ii. The ball is placed on the nearest 23m line opposite the center of the goal;
    iii. An attacker stands outside the 23m area near the ball;
    iv. The Umpire blows the whistle to start time;
    v. An official at the technical table starts the clock;
    vi. The attacker and the goalkeeper/defending player may then move in any direction;
    2) The shoot-out is completed when:

i. The 8 seconds has elapsed since the starting signal
ii. A goal is scored;
iii. The attacker commits an offence;
iv. The goalkeeper / defending player commits an unintentional offense inside or outside the circle in which case the shoot-out is re-taken by the same player against the same goalkeeper / defending player;
v. The goalkeeper/defending player commits an intentional offense inside or outside the circle in which case a penalty stroke is awarded and taken;
    1. If a penalty stroke is awarded as specified above, it can be taken and defended by an eligible player
vi. The ball goes out of play over the back-line or side-line; this includes the goalkeeper / defending player intentionally playing the ball over the back-line.

11) The team scoring the most goals (or ahead by more goals than the other team has untaken shoot-outs available) is the winner.
12) A player may be suspended by a yellow or red card but not by a green card during the shoot-out competition.
13) If during a shoot-out competition (including during any penalty stroke which is awarded) a player is suspended by a yellow or red card:
    i. That player takes no further part in that shoot-out competition and, unless a goalkeeper / defending player, cannot be replaced;
    ii. The replacement for a suspended goalkeeper / defending player can only come from the 5 players of that team nominated to take part in the shoot-out competition:
        1. The replacement goalkeeper / defending player is allowed reasonable time to put on protective equipment similar to that which the goalkeeper / defending player they are replacing was wearing;
        2. For taking their own shoot-out, this player is allowed reasonable time to take off their protective equipment to take their shoot-out and subsequently to put it on again.
    iii. Any shoot-out due to be taken by a suspended player is forfeited; any goals scored by this player before being suspended count as a goal.
14) If during a shoot-out competition, a defending goalkeeper / defending player is incapacitated:
    i. That goalkeeper / defending player may be replaced by another player from among the players listed on the official Team Roster for that particular match, except as excluded in this Appendix or unless suspended by an Umpire during the shoot-out competition;
    ii. The replacement goalkeeper:
        1. Is allowed reasonable time to put on protective equipment similar to that which the incapacitated goalkeeper / defending player was wearing;
        2. If this replacement is also nominated to take a shoot-out, this player is allowed a reasonable time to take off their protective equipment to take their shoot-out and subsequently to put it on again.
15) If during a shoot-out competition, an attacker is incapacitated, that attacker may be replaced by another player from among the players listed on the official Team Roster for that particular match, except as excluded above or unless suspended by an Umpire during the shoot-out competition
16) If an equal number of goals are scored after each team has taken 5 shoot-outs:
    i. A second series of 5 shoot-outs is taken with the same players, subject to the conditions specified in this Appendix;
    ii. The sequence in which the attackers take the shoot-outs need not be the same as in the first series;

iii. The team whose player took the first shoot-out in a series defends the first shoot-out of the next series;
iv. When one team has scored or been awarded one more goal than the opposing team after each team has taken the same number of shoot-outs, not necessarily being all 5 shoot-outs, that team is the winner.

17) If shoot-outs are taken with the same player's subject to the conditions specified in this procedure and an equal number of goals are scored after a second series of 5 shoot-outs, additional series of shootouts will be taken
    i. The sequence in which the attackers take the shoot-outs need not be the same in any subsequent series;
    ii. The team which starts each shoot-out series alternates for each series.
18) In the case of limited time being available due to tournament restrictions, 3 players from each team take a shoot-out alternately against the goalkeeper / defending player of the other team making a total of 6 shoot-outs
19) The Rules of Hockey apply during a shoot-out.

Appendix 2

SCORING APPEALS

To reduce the number of incorrect scores posted while maintaining all fairness to the athletes and teams involved, USA Field Hockey will honor only one appeal per team, per tournament for the review or change of a posted score. Should it be found that a result was posted incorrectly after verifying the official score card from the game, the result will be adjusted, and the team retains its right to appeal to be used again later in the tournament if necessary. Should it be found that the official score card reflects the score posted after it has been challenged by a team, this team will lose its right to appeal and will not be able to dispute any posted results for the remainder of the event. The following procedure will be in effect for all USA Field Hockey events:

1) Each head coach is responsible for confirming the final score and signing the correct Result Card at the conclusion of each game.
2) The decision to appeal a score posting rests entirely with the teams involved. USA Field Hockey will consider signed Result Cards as the correct and final outcome of the contest. No changes will be made to the official score unless an appeal is submitted and upheld.
3) Team contacts or coaches are the only individuals who can post the appeal fee and request a review. Parents, athletes, fans or umpires cannot initiate the appeal process.
4) Upon consensus by the coaches and umpires involved in the match, the score will be overturned, and any changes will be made to the official results.
5) Failure to sign a Result Card does not nullify the outcome of the contest or excuse individuals from the appeal process.
6) Any disputes around the final score must be settled with the umpires at the time the cards are signed.
7) Should the umpires and coaches involved in the match fail to reach consensus on the final score to be recorded on the result card and/or should one or both of the coaches fail, refuse or neglect to sign the result card, the umpires shall determine the score to be recorded on the result card and sign same. USA Field Hockey will consider this as the correct and final outcome of the contest.
8) The appeal process applies to posted scores only. There is no appeal process for calls made during any match.
9) Deception on a Result Card is considered unsportsmanlike conduct and is a violation of USA Field Hockey's Code of Conduct (Rule 4). Code of Conduct violations are grounds for restriction of an

individual from future USA Field Hockey programs and/or the loss of eligibility of a team in future USA Field Hockey events.