



FIELD HOCKEY

UPDATED JUNE 15, 2026

***2026-27 RULES
MODIFICATIONS***

IF YOU THINK YOU OR YOUR TEAMMATE HAS HAD A
CONCUSSION

DON'T HIDE IT. • REPORT IT. • TAKE TIME TO RECOVER.



IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME THAN THE WHOLE SEASON.

WHEN IN DOUBT, GET CHECKED OUT.

For more information and resources, visit www.CDC.gov/headsup.



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Rules Overview

The NCAA competes using the [International Hockey Federation \(FIH\)](#) as the standard playing rules for the sport of NCAA field hockey. All rules are applicable to Divisions I, II and III competition. All NCAA field hockey competitions are to be conducted under the rules of the FIH with any modifications approved by the NCAA championship committees. Any rules specific to the NCAA championship can be found in the divisional Pre-Championships Manual.

The following modifications have been recommended by the NCAA Division I Field Hockey Oversight Committee and the NCAA Divisions II and III Field Hockey Rules Working Group and approved by the Division I Field Hockey Oversight Committee and the Divisions II and III Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP).

Any questions concerning rules and interpretations should be directed to:

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NCAA Division I Field Hockey Oversight Committee and Divisions II and III Field Hockey Rules Working Group Information

The chart below lists the members of the Division I Field Hockey Oversight Committee and Divisions II and III Field Hockey Rules Working Group who voted on and approved the modifications included in this edition of the modifications document. For a complete and current listing of the NCAA Division I Field Hockey Oversight Committee, Division II Field Hockey Committee and Division III Field Hockey Committee, please go to www.ncaa.org.

NCAA Division I Field Hockey Oversight Committee

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NCAA Divisions II and III Field Hockey Rules Working Group

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NCAA Field Hockey Rules Modifications

The numbers below refer to the modification that has been changed or edited. Each changed or edited segment is identified in this document by a shaded background.

Major Rules Modifications for 2026

MODIFICATIONS

Modifications	
<u>New 1.2</u>	Permits advertising on the field.
<u>5.1</u>	Changes Division I overtime.

PLAYING THE GAME

MODIFICATION 1 – FIELD OF PLAY

- On multi-lined (use) fields, the 23-meter line (25 yd.) must be clearly distinguishable from all other non-field hockey lines. If the 23-meter line (25 yd.) is not clearly distinguishable, six X's must be marked on the 23-meter line (25 yd.), intersecting the line every 10 yards, with the lines of the X's being one yard long.

-X-X-X-X-X-X-

It is permissible for a player to add water in the area of the 10-meter mark (injection area) during a penalty corner provided there is no delay of the game.

- Advertisements will be permitted on the playing surface. It may not interfere with required markings.

MODIFICATION 2 – COMPOSITION OF TEAMS

Substitution.

- The designated area for substitution is 3-meters on either side of the centerline. It is recommended that this area be marked with cones.
- When play is stopped due to a player being injured and an athletic trainer, medical personnel or coach must come onto the field to attend to the player, the injured player must leave the field and a substitute may take their place. When the injured player is a goalkeeper, they may remain in the game.

MODIFICATION 3 – PLAYERS' CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

3.1 Uniforms.

- Field players of the same team must wear uniform jersey or shirt and socks/stockings. Field players may have the choice of shorts or kilt/skirt as long as the shorts/kilt/skirt are the same color and similar design/trim and cut.

- b. Game shirts must have a minimum of three-inch numbers on the front and six-inch numbers on the back.
- c. The numbers must be of a color that itself is clearly in distinct contrast with the color of the jersey, irrespective of any border around the numbers.

Note: This will apply to all newly purchased uniforms.

- d. Goalkeepers shall have their own uniform number. The color of the jersey must be in clear contrast from field players of both teams; goalkeepers of opposing teams may wear the same colored jersey (e.g., a goalkeeper may wear black but not if either team is playing in navy blue; also any light color that is not in clear contrast with white is not acceptable when a team is playing in white).

Note: It is no longer required for the goalkeeper jersey to be of a solid color.

- e. The game shirt worn by the designated home team must be predominantly dark and the game shirt worn by the designated away team must be predominantly light. In the event that the colors are not of contrasting colors, the home team will be required to change.
- f. Exposed gear worn under the game uniform by the designated home team must be dark (e.g., black gear with navy game shirts). Any exposed gear worn under the game uniform by the designated away team must be of a contrasting color from the home team.
- g. Exposed gear and/or tights worn by team members must all be the same color.
- h. The color of the socks and/or shin guards must be consistent with team uniform colors and of a contrasting color of the opposing team. Multi-colored socks are acceptable. ALL colors must be in contrast to the opposing team's sock colors. It is the responsibility of the home team to wear socks and/or shin guards in clear contrast to those worn by the visiting team. In the event that the colors are not of contrasting colors, the home team will be required to change. Example: If the home team is wearing socks that are blue and white striped (50/50 colors) and the visitors are wearing white socks, the home team must change to comply with the rule.
- i. When possible, teams should consult with each other on uniform colors before arriving at the field (e.g., by phone/email, at the meeting the night before a tournament, an agreeable time at the NCAA championships) and let the umpires know of the decision prior to the game. In the event of a conflict, the final decision of uniform colors, including uniform top, kilt, socks/shinguards and goalkeeper jerseys, will be at the discretion of the umpires.

- 3.2 Equipment. All field players defending a penalty corner shall wear a face mask. 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.

MODIFICATION 4 – MATCH AND RESULTS

- 4.1 Length of Game. Ties played off by using “Sudden Victory” and shoot-outs. (See Modification 5 for tie breaking procedures.)
- 4.2 Halftime. The length of halftime will be ten (10) minutes with the halftime clock starting immediately at the conclusion of the first half.

- 4.3 After Goal Scored. Game clock shall be stopped after a goal has been scored.
- 4.4 Timing.
- a. The visible game clock will count down the 2 minutes between quarters and 10 minutes for halftime.
 - b. A signal will be made at the 0:00 minute mark of the end of the quarter and half-time breaks and play must restart immediately.
 - d. If a team delays in returning to the field of play, the captain will be carded for delay of game.
- 4.5 Suspended Game.
- a. A suspended game shall be resumed at the point of suspension.
 - b. If a game is suspended or interrupted and that game cannot be resumed, that game is considered complete if it has reached the end of the third period, unless mutually agreed upon before the beginning of the contest by the teams or determined by conference policy.
 - (1) If the game has reached the end of the third period and the game will not be resumed, if the game is not tied, the game shall be considered a completed game and the score will stand.
 - (2) If the game has reached the end of the third period and the game will not be resumed, if the game is tied, the game shall be considered a completed game and it will be recorded as a tie.
 - (3) If a suspended game (one in which has not reached the end of the third period) is resumed on another day, the game shall be resumed at the point of suspension.
 - c. No game may be started more than three (3) hours after the originally scheduled start time unless the umpires have been notified and the new start time mutually agreed upon before the start of the game by the teams or determined by the governing sports authority.
 - d. Once a game has been started and suspended, it must be restarted not later than three (3) hours after the originally schedule start time unless mutually agreed upon before the start of the game by the teams or determined by the governing sports authority.
- 4.6 Countable and Championship Games. For information on countable contests, please refer to the respective NCAA Division I, II or III Field Hockey Championships Pre-Championship Manual (www.ncaa.org).

MODIFICATION 5 – TIED GAMES

5.1 Tied Games.

Note: The following overtime procedure shall be used when a game is tied at the end of regulation play.

- a. A tied game will be broken to determine the winner. All game rules apply with the following modifications.
 1. *For Division I:* Overtime will consist of up to one 15-minute “Sudden Victory” periods of teams consisting of eleven team players (of which one may be a goalkeeper).

2. *For Divisions II and III:* Overtime will consist of up to two 10-minute “Sudden Victory” periods of teams consisting of seven team players (of which one may be a goalkeeper).
- b. There will be a five-minute break between the end of regulation and the first overtime period, and a two-minute timeout between the overtime periods, if applicable.
 - c. Coin Toss. A toss of the coin for the first overtime period will determine ball possession or direction of attack. If a second overtime period is necessary, the teams shall switch attacking ends and the team who did not have possession at the beginning of the overtime will begin the second overtime with the center pass. The visiting team will call all coin tosses.
 - d. Each team will begin the first overtime with the appropriate number of players, one of which may be a goalkeeper, unless players were disqualified or have not completed a suspension during any previous playing period.
 - e. Any player who has been disqualified (red carded) during regulation play is not eligible for the overtime period and the team plays short for the entire overtime. A player suspended (yellow/green carded) during regulation play would be eligible at the completion of the suspension timeframe. The team plays short until the suspension is completed.
 - f. On Penalty Corners. When using seven players, the defending team is permitted to have only four team members (of which one may be a goalkeeper) behind its goal line.
 - g. The game is completed as soon as a goal is scored.
 - h. If the score remains tied at the end of overtime period. A shoot-out will take place.
 - (1) A coin toss will give a team the choice to attack or defend.
 - (2) Five players from each team shall go one-on-one alternately against the same goalkeeper from the opposing team. *Note:* Numbers and order of shootouts do not have to be given immediately. Players can be sent to take a shootout at the discretion of the team.
 - (3) There is no substitution of any player during the shootout except for injury to a player or suspension of defending goalkeeper.
 - (4) The shootout will begin within two minutes after the end of the match. No lineup is required to be submitted to the umpires.
 - (5) The team awarded the highest number of goals shall be the winner.
 - (6) Once the shoot-out procedure is decisive, the game shall be complete, and no more one-on-one attempts need to be taken.
 - (7) Taking the shootout:
 - (a) The goalkeeper/defender starts on or behind the goal line between the posts.
 - (b) The ball is placed on the nearest 23m line opposite the center of the goal.
 - (c) The attacker stands outside the 23m line near the ball.
 - (d) The umpire blows the whistle to signal the start of the shootout. The attacker and the goalkeeper may then move in any direction.

- (8) The shoot-out is completed under the following conditions:
 - (a) Eight seconds has elapsed.
 - (b) The attacker scores a goal.
 - (c) The attacker commits an offense.
 - (d) The goalkeeper commits an unintentional offense. (The shoot-out is re-taken.)
 - (e) The goalkeeper commits an intentional offense. (A penalty stroke is awarded.)
 - (f) The ball goes out of play over the back-line or side-line. [This includes the goalkeeper intentionally playing the ball over the back-line (not a foul). The ball simply going outside the circle a second time does not constitute the end of a shoot-out.]
 - (g) If a penalty stroke is awarded, any eligible player on the official roster may take the penalty stroke. This penalty stroke will take place before the next available shoot-out takes place.
 - (9) A player may be suspended by a yellow or red card, but not a green card, during the shoot-out competition.
 - (a) If a goalkeeper is suspended during the shoot-out, they may not take further part in that competition but can be replaced by any eligible player from the team. The replacement goalkeeper is allowed reasonable time to put on protective equipment.
 - (b) If an attacker is suspended during the shoot-out competition, there is no replacement allowed. Any further shoot-out the player was entitled to take counts as no goal.
 - (10) During a shoot-out competition, team members and the coaching staff for that match are permitted to enter the field of play, but only in the area outside the 23m area used for the shoot-out. Only a player who is authorized to take or defend a shoot-out may enter the 23m area. The goalkeeper or defending player of the team taking the shoot-out may be on the backline outside the circle.
- i. If no decision is reached after the first series of shoot-outs.
- (1) A “Sudden Victory” procedure will be used to break the tie.
 - (2) There will be a second series of one-on-ones taken by the same group of players.
 - (3) The order may be changed but not the players.
 - (4) The team who defended first in the first set will attack first in this set.
 - (5) The first team awarded more goals than its opponent after an equal number of shoot-out attempts shall be the winner.
 - (6) Every player of the five selected must attempt a shoot-out before a player is eligible to go again.
 - (7) The same players take part in any subsequent series of shoot-outs except that an incapacitated player can be replaced from eligible players.
 - (8) Teams will alternate attacking first in each subsequent series of shoot-outs.

- j. If an overtime game goes into a shootout, a total of one goal (team goal) is awarded for the winner of the set rather than the number of goals scored in the set.

MODIFICATION 6 – CONDUCT OF PLAY: PLAYERS, GOALKEEPERS, AND COACHES

6.1 Green Card.

- a. The temporary suspension commences when the umpire restarts the play after the award of the card.
- b. A green card may be issued to the head coach as a warning for misconduct prior to assessing other cards. No players are removed from the field when a green card is issued to a coach or bench personnel.

Point of Emphasis: The head coach is responsible for actions of their team bench area and shall receive any card assessed related to bench decorum.

6.2 Yellow Card.

- a. The temporary suspension commences when the umpire restarts the play after the award of the card.
- b. A yellow card may be issued to the head coach for a second offense of coach misconduct. Speaking captain (or captain on the field of play if the speaking captain is not currently on the field) shall be removed from play for 5 minutes of elapsed playing time.

6.3 Red Card.

- a. Player Red Card (Ejection). A player receiving a red card shall be ejected from the game and shall leave the venue, be out of sight and sound and is prohibited from any communication or contact, direct or indirect, with the team, coaches and/or bench personnel until the completion of the contest, including the overtime periods.
- b. Player Suspension. A player receiving a red card shall sit out the next regularly scheduled game, including postseason games. Should a player receive a red card in the last game of the season (including post season games) the suspension would carry-over to the first game of the following season (exhibitions and/or scrimmages do not satisfy the suspension). A player serving a game suspension(s) may be in the team area, provided they are not in uniform. A player serving a game suspension(s) may not participate in any pregame activities.
- c. Head Coach Red Card (Ejection). The head coach shall receive any red card assessed to their team bench area. A head coach receiving a red card shall be ejected from the game and shall leave the venue, be out of sight and sound and is prohibited from any communication or contact, direct or indirect, with the team, coaches and/or bench personnel until the completion of the contest, including the overtime periods.
 - (1). A team whose head coach receives a red card must designate who the “new” head coach will be. Any further cards to that team’s bench area will be assessed to the “head coach” at the time.

Point of Emphasis: It is expected and understood by the NCAA Committees that umpires have the responsibility to deal with misconduct from the bench

area in a professional but firm manner. The issuance of any card to the bench area is at the discretion of the umpires alone and cannot be reversed.

- (2) If a coach is red carded and refuses to leave the site of the contest within a reasonable amount of time (three minutes), the game shall be declared ended, and the opposing team shall be awarded the win (score becomes 1-0). The game shall count as a countable game.
 - d. Head Coach Suspension. A head coach receiving a red card shall sit out the next regularly scheduled game, including postseason games. Should a head coach receive a red card in the last game of the season (including post season games) the suspension would carry-over to the first game of the following season (exhibitions and/or scrimmages do not satisfy the suspension). A head coach serving a game suspension(s) shall not be in the venue from one hour before the scheduled start of the game until 30 minutes after the completion of the contest. During the suspension, the head coach must be out of sight and sound and is prohibited from any communication or contact, direct or indirect, with the team, coaches and/or bench personnel until the completion of the contest, including the overtime periods. A coach serving a game suspension(s) may participate in any pregame activities up until one hour before the scheduled start time.
 - e. There is no procedure for appealing or rescinding any red card issued to a coach or player.
 - f. A red card may be assessed to any player/coach or team personnel for any of the below improper conduct for the entire time an official is onsite at an institution. Institutions are responsible for reporting all red cards to their respective conferences. Umpires are responsible for reporting all red cards to their respective assignor.
 - g. If an ejected or suspended player illegally participates in any game: (1) the original term of suspension for the player shall be doubled, and (2) the head coach shall also serve the same suspension of the player. If an ejected or suspended head coach illegally participates in any game, the original term of suspension for the head coach shall be doubled.
- 6.4 The following shall be regarded as conduct that is improper, unfair, and unacceptable and may result in a warning or ejection:
- a. Verbal/physical abuse or hostility towards any other participant, person or any other member of the public.
 - b. Disputing, appealing, protesting and/or reacting in a provocative or disapproving manner in an inappropriate way toward any decision made by an umpire or official.
 - c. Feigning injury and/or overreacting to an alleged breach or decision.
 - d. Charging or advancing towards an umpire or technical official in an aggressive manner.
 - e. Using rude or abusive language or hand signals.
 - f. Abuse of hockey equipment or clothing, venue equipment or fixtures and fittings.
 - g. Entering the field of play for any reason without the permission of the umpires.
 - h. Not respecting the 5-meter area off the sideline of the field outside of the designated team bench area and remaining behind a clearly marked restraining line.

- 6.5 Misconduct by spectators should be brought to the attention of the field administrator. It should be noted that use of profane and/or vulgar language, and/or harsh treatment towards any participant of the game by spectators shall not be tolerated.
- 6.6 Regulation game player suspensions (yellow card) and player/coach disqualifications (red card) will carry over into overtime play.
- 6.7 Suspended players (green/yellow) shall be placed at the scorer's table on the same side of the table as her bench.
- 6.8 Coaching of players who are suspended from play is permitted.
- 6.9 The coaching of players who are participating in the game at the time when an injury timeout is called is permitted.
- 6.10 Designated Bench Area. The bench area is defined as the area from the substitution area to the 23 meter line.
- The official party on the field must remain within the designated bench area during play.
 - Coaches and players in the bench area must remain behind a clearly marked restraining line (defined as some type of distinguishable and visible marking for all participants, i.e. painted lines, cones or temporary tape) a minimum of five yards from the sideline; if five yards is not available, as close to five yards as possible and no less than 3 meters from the sideline. This is not an option.
- Point of Emphasis: The area from the restraining line to the sideline must be kept clear for the umpires to see and position themselves as they see fit. Interference to the sight line or movement of an umpire will result in a green card warning or possible red card for persistent violations of the designated bench area rule.
- Spectators are not permitted behind the goal area and must be at least 10 yards behind the end line, and a minimum of five yards from the sideline.
- 6.11 Electronic Communication. Electronic communication between team personnel in any location other than the bench area as defined in 6.9 (i.e., video platform) and the team bench area is permissible. There shall be no direct communication, neither verbal nor signal, between team personnel located in any location other than the bench area and players on the field.
- 6.12 Prohibited use of tobacco products. The use of tobacco by student-athletes, or team or game personnel (e.g., coaches, athletic trainers, managers and game officials), is prohibited during competition. Any student-athlete, or team or game personnel, who uses tobacco during competition shall be disqualified for the remainder of that competition.

FIELD AND EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS

MODIFICATION 7 – VISIBLE CLOCKS

- 7.1 Visible Clocks:
- Visible clocks are required.
 - The visible clock will be the official game clock. The on-field umpires and reserve umpire shall keep a back-up clock. The time kept by the on-field umpires or reserve umpire will become the official time in the event of a clock malfunction.

- c. Players shall play to the whistle not the horn. If the penalty corner is not finished, then play continues until the umpire stops play.

MODIFICATION 8 – EQUIPMENT

8.1 Equipment:

- a. All field players have the option to wear soft headgear.
- b. All field players are required to wear a mouthguard at all times.
Note: Failure to comply with this rule will be considered misconduct.
 - Mouthguards for goalkeepers are strongly recommended.
- c. Goalkeepers must wear a throat protector and chest protector at all times.
- d. Goalkeepers are required to wear appropriate protective headgear: a helmet incorporating fixed full-face protection and cover for the head including the back of the head.

GUIDANCE

MODIFICATION 9 – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- a. The use of a designated bench area shall be enforced during all games. No one other than the players on the field are permitted to enter the field of play without permission of the umpires.
- b. A coach or team representative is only permitted to interact with the umpires pre and post game with the opposing coach or team representative present.
- c. Prior to leaving the field of play, the official scorecard shall be signed by both umpires assigned to the game.
- d. Once the scorecard is signed, the game is official. The officials remain in charge of the site until they leave the institution. An umpire may issue a card to any member of the team until the time they leave the institution. All red cards shall be reported immediately to the assignor and the conference.
- e. It is recommended that stick checks occur not later than 45 minutes prior to the start of the game.
- f. When a game is played at a neutral site, a team must be designated as the home team and the home team is responsible for ensuring that all game management responsibilities are confirmed.
- g. If a violation of 6.10 occurs, then it shall be communicated to the appropriate conference office for discussion and/or review.
- h. For Division III only, each team is permitted the use of two (2) video referrals during the game.

Appendix A

Video Referral

The primary purpose of the Video Umpire Referral System is to assist umpires in their decision making and to help reduce major errors which could materially impact the result of a match.

The video umpire will utilize existing TV camera coverage or a system provided by the host institution approved by the NCAA Tournament Committee. The video umpire will be located in a remote area away from the field of play. High resolution TV monitors will be used for reviewing incidents and replays.

The video umpire will be an umpire who is not involved in the match in any other way. The only responsibility will be to monitor the match remotely and only be part of the match when a video referral is properly requested.

For NCAA postseason competition, the video umpire will be appointed by the tournament committee in conjunction with the NCAA National Coordinator of Officials. Changes to recent previous versions of the FIH Briefing are highlighted.

1. POWER TO REFER DECISIONS TO THE VIDEO UMPIRE

- 1.1. The match umpires are the only persons who can refer decisions to the video umpire either directly or after a request from a team.
- 1.2. Referrals cannot be made as a result of protests, queries or pressure from players, team personnel or coaches on any decision. Head coaches will be held responsible for any violation or abuse of the video umpire protocols and deemed as misconduct.
- 1.3. No one other than the match umpires can stop the match to request a referral. The video umpire or any officials at the technical table cannot stop a match.

The only persons who can refer decisions to the video umpire are the match umpires. No one else, including the video umpire or officials at the technical table, can stop the match to request a referral.

2. UMPIRE REFERRAL

- 2.1. The match umpires may refer decisions to the video umpire when they are not convinced that they have taken, or are able to take, the correct decision relating to the awarding or disallowing of goals; or the award / non-award of penalty stroke decisions; or Misconduct incidents anywhere on the field of play.
- 2.2. Referrals shall only relate to whether a goal has been legally scored, or if a penalty stroke has been awarded correctly or not awarded, or if Serious Misconduct has or has not occurred.
- 2.3. The match umpires are therefore entitled to request the video umpire to assist in making decisions which include, but are not restricted to:
 - a. Whether the ball crossed the goal line (within the area bounded by the goal posts and crossbar);

- b. Whether the ball was legally played or touched inside the circle by the stick of an attacker and did not travel outside the circle before passing completely over the goal line and under the crossbar;
- c. Whether the ball traveled outside the circle before it entered the goal from a shot by an attacker during the taking of a penalty corner;
- d. Whether a breach of the rules has been observed within the attacking 23-meter area in the play leading to the awarding or disallowing of a goal (it is then for the match umpire to take any breach into account in reaching their decision); and
- e. Whether an offense has been committed by a defender in the circle which prevents the probable scoring of a goal, or there has been an intentional offense in the circle by a defender against an opponent who has possession of the ball or an opportunity to play the ball.
- f. Whether any Serious Misconduct, dangerous or reckless foul has been committed, on or off the ball, anywhere on the pitch.

Note: The final decision remains with the match umpire and not with the video umpire.

- 2.4. The match umpire requests video umpire assistance using the “television-screen” signal; they relay, by radio, to the video umpire whatever information is necessary.

3. UMPIRE REFERRAL PROCESS

If possible, the engaged umpire signals the decision they consider to be correct.

Play and time shall be stopped before referring to the video umpire.

The engaged umpire indicates that assistance is required from the video umpire by a clear hand signal (rectangular television-screen shape).

The engaged umpire (or their colleague) communicates with the video umpire through radio contact clearly explaining what they wish to be advised upon.

The video umpire confirms that the request has been received and understood.

At an umpire referral, no players, coaches or team personnel may either approach or remain close to the umpires. If anyone interferes with the referral process, this will be considered as “crowding” and misconduct with the offending players liable to personal green card penalties. Repeat offenses may result in personal yellow card penalties.

- 3.1. The video umpire calls for as many replays from any camera angle as necessary to reach a decision. Video umpires should be aware of the time taken when requesting different replays.
- 3.2. Within the shortest time frame possible, ideally 60-90 seconds, the video umpire provides his/her advice and recommendation using the phrase “I have advice for you” when communicating with the on-field umpire:
 - Goal
 - No goal
 - Penalty stroke

- No penalty stroke
- No advice possible
- Plus advice on any observed breach of the rules or Code of Conduct. For any Serious Misconduct offences, the VU advice may include whether a 10 minute temporary suspension (yellow card) or a permanent suspension (red card) should be awarded.

Note: These are the only possible outcomes of umpire referrals.

- 3.3. If a breach of the rules is observed and advised to the match umpire, **it is then for the match umpire to take into account the breach in reaching their final decision.**
- 3.4. In the case of “no advice possible” (if the video footage is inconclusive, including through not having the correct replays available, the ball never being in shot in the replays, the footage being of insufficient quality to permit a decision or technical problems with the referral equipment), the original decision of the match umpire stands. **If there was no decision given before the referral, then the final decision is “no goal” or “no penalty stroke” or ‘no Serious Misconduct’ depending on the type of referral.**

In general, for an umpire referral, the video umpire will provide the match umpires with information as follows:

- Advice and recommendation regarding the decision;
- Indicate how the play should be re-started (if this is not already clear).

Note: The match umpire should repeat back the video umpire’s advice and recommendation, if necessary, to ensure that it has been correctly heard and understood.

- 3.5. An umpire referral that has already been adjudicated upon may not be the subject of any subsequent team referral from either team.

4. TEAM REFERRAL

- 4.1. Each team is allowed one team referral request (which must be made through the match umpires) during regulation time in any match. There will be allowed one team referral request during a shoot-out competition.

Note: Referrals remaining from regulation time are not carried over into the shoot-out competition.

Team Referrals provide for a wider range of referral possibilities than the umpire referrals, but are restricted to decisions within the 23-meter area relating to the award (or non-award) of Goals, Penalty Strokes, or Penalty Corners.

Teams may NOT ask for a referral outside of the 23m areas, even if they believe Serious Misconduct has occurred.

During a shoot-out competition, the decisions will be related to the award (or non-award) of Goals, Penalty Strokes; and Shoot-out re-takes.

- a. A team referral will be restricted to decisions within the 23-meter areas relating to the award (or non-award) of goals, penalty strokes and penalty corners and, during a shoot-out competition, whether a shoot-out should be re-taken. The award of personal penalty cards may not be the subject of a team referral.

- b. Any student-athlete/player on the field of play at the time of the incident can request a team referral.
- c. This player must indicate to a match umpire that she wishes to use their team referral. They must do so “immediately” after the incident or decision which is to be referred by using the “T” signal as well as confirming this verbally to the umpire.
- d. The match umpires will not disallow any request for a team referral provided the “T” signal has been used by a player and seen by the umpire.

Umpires should not engage in any discussions as to the merits of referring, in order not to be perceived as trying to talk players out of making a referral.

Once the “T” signal has been received, no player other than the one making the referral (with the possible exception of one further player to assist with the question for language difficulties only) may either approach or remain close to the umpires. If any other players interfere with the referral process, this will be considered as “crowding” and misconduct with the offending players liable to green card personal penalties. Repeat offenses may result in yellow card personal penalties.

- e. The student-athlete/player requesting the team referral must inform a match umpire of the exact nature of the decision (or non-decision) that their team wishes to be reviewed within a maximum of 20 seconds.
- f. If no question is received within 20 seconds, the team referral will automatically default to a review of the last decision (or non-decision) relating to the award (or non-award) of a goal, penalty stroke, penalty corner or re-take of a shoot-out.
- g. The match umpire will then request video umpire assistance using the “television-screen” signal, followed by a “T” signal to denote a team referral. They relay by radio to the video umpire the pertinent information.

5. TEAM REFERRAL PROCESS

- 5.1. The video umpire calls for as many replays from any camera angle as necessary to reach a decision.

Note: Video umpires should be aware of the time taken when requesting different replays.

- 5.2. Within the shortest time frame possible, ideally 60-90 seconds, the video umpire provides his/her advice and recommendation using the phrase “I have advice for you” when communicating with the on-field umpire:

- Goal
- No goal
- Penalty stroke
- No penalty stroke
- Penalty corner
- No penalty corner
- Shoot-out to be re-taken
- No shoot-out re-take
- No advice possible
- Plus advice on any observed breach of the rules.

Note: These are the only possible outcomes of umpire referrals.

If a team referral is in respect of whether a defender crossed the back-line or goal-line before permitted at a penalty corner then the video umpire should advise whether the penalty corner should be taken again and advise whether the re-taken penalty corner must be defended with one fewer player or not.

If, during open play in the circle, a PC is awarded which the defending team refer, and the decision is found in their favour that there was no defending team foul, they will keep their referral and a bully at the 15m line will be the restart, and not a defending free hit as has been the case previously (the attacking team have also not committed a foul so should not automatically lose possession).

If play is stopped during a penalty corner either because of a Team Referral or because of a decision by the Match Umpire before the penalty corner has been completed, then in accordance with Rule 6.5, if a PC has not been completed and play is stopped without any valid reason, the PC should be retaken. This includes when an umpire has awarded a non-justified re-take of a PC (e.g., umpire awards a re-taken PC because of a defender's foot, however the ball hit only the player's stick). Therefore, if play is stopped and a re-taken PC is awarded, the defending team can only refer the decision if they believe there was a foul by the attacking team. If they are correct, a free hit to the defence can be awarded and they keep their referral. However, if there was no foul by either team, then the PC will be re-taken but the defending team will not lose their referral, as there was no foul by them. If the Team Referral was made by the attacking team, and the referral decision is in their favour, then the match will restart with a penalty corner and the attacking team will retain their referral.

If during a shootout, the match umpire stops the shootout before the 8 seconds have elapsed, and they are then advised by their on-field colleague or VU that there was no valid reason for the shootout to be stopped, then the shootout will be re-taken.

5.3. If a breach of the rules is observed and advised to the match umpire, it is then for the match umpire to take into account the breach in reaching their final decision.

If during reviewing the replays it is observed that, immediately before the incident which led to the referral, the ball travels over the back-line or side-line (and no prior breach of the rules is observed), the video umpire will advise the match umpire accordingly, with the recommendation for the appropriate re-start. On this basis, the referring team does not lose its right to refer since the ball was out of play prior to it attempting to refer the subsequent incident.

If during reviewing the replays it is observed that, immediately before the incident which led to the referral, there is a breach of the rules, the video umpire will advise the match umpire accordingly, with the recommendation for the appropriate re-start. On this basis, the referring team does not lose its right to refer since the breach occurred prior to it referring the subsequent incident.

5.4. Implications for the retention or loss of team referral rights:

- a. In the event that the referral is upheld, the referring team retains its right of referral;

The attacking team will retain their right to refer if: -

- A no decision and play on referral results in a Penalty Corner, Penalty Stroke or Goal
- A free hit referral for an intentional offence in the 23m results in a Penalty Corner
- A Penalty Corner referral results in a Penalty Corner, Penalty Stroke or Goal

- A Penalty Stroke referral results in a Penalty Stroke or Goal
- A Penalty Stroke referral results in a Penalty Corner when the original decision was either play on or a free hit (because the original decision has been upgraded in the attacking team's favour)
- A Goal referral results in a Goal
- A Shoot-out re-take referral results in a Shoot-out re-take, Penalty Stroke or Goal
- A Shoot-out Penalty Stroke referral results in a Penalty Stroke or Goal
- A Shoot-out Goal referral results in a Goal

The defending team will retain its right to refer if:

- A referred penalty corner decision results in a corner, free hit, 16-yard hit/bully, sideline ball;
 - A referred penalty stroke decision results in a penalty corner, corner, free hit, 16-yard hit, sideline ball or ordinarily a bully;
 - A referred goal decision results in a penalty stroke, penalty corner, corner, free hit, 16-yard hit, sideline ball or ordinarily a bully;
 - A referred shoot-out decision results in no shoot-out re-take or a defensive free hit;
 - A referred shoot-out penalty stroke decision results in a shoot-out re-take, no shoot-out re-take or a defensive free hit; or
 - A referred shoot-out goal decision results in a penalty stroke, shoot-out re-take, no shoot-out re-take or a defensive free hit.
- b. In the event of "no advice possible" (if the video footage is inconclusive, including through not having the correct replays available, the ball never being in shot in the replays, the footage being of insufficient quality to permit a decision or technical problems with the referral equipment), the referring team retains its right of referral;

Note: The referring team retains its right of referral if its referral is upheld or if the conclusion of the video umpire is "no advice possible."

- c. If there is no clear reason to change the match umpire's original decision, the referring team loses its right of referral;

The attacking team will lose its right to refer if:

- A no decision and play on referral does not result in a penalty corner, penalty stroke or goal;
- A free hit referral for an intentional offense in the 23-meter area does not result in a penalty corner;
- A penalty corner referral results in a corner, free hit, 16-yard hit, sideline ball or ordinarily a bully;
- A penalty stroke referral results in a penalty corner, corner, free hit, 16-yard hit, sideline ball or ordinarily a bully;
- A goal referral results in a penalty stroke, penalty corner, corner, free hit, 16-yard hit, sideline ball or ordinarily a bully;
- A shoot-out re-take referral results in no shoot-out re-take or a defensive free hit;

- A shoot-out penalty stroke referral results in a shoot-out re-take or a defensive free hit; or
- A shoot-out goal referral results in a penalty stroke, shoot-out re-take or defensive free hit.

The defending team will lose its right to refer if:

- A referred penalty corner decision is unchanged or upgraded to a penalty stroke or goal (including any additional breach seen, even if their original question is correct);
- A referred penalty stroke decision is unchanged or upgraded to a goal (including any additional breach seen, even if their original question is correct);
- A referred goal decision is unchanged;
- A referred shoot-out re-take decision is unchanged or upgraded to a penalty stroke or goal;
- A referred shoot-out penalty stroke decision is unchanged or upgraded to a goal; or
- A referred shoot-out goal decision is unchanged.

d. If the on-field umpire does not agree with the advice given by the Video Umpire and chooses to maintain their original decision, the referring team retains its right of referral.

5.5. A team referral that has already been adjudicated upon may not be the subject of a subsequent referral by the opposing team.

In general for a team referral, the video umpire will provide the match umpires with information as follows:

- *Advice and recommendation regarding the decision;*
 - *Indicate how the play should be re-started (if this is not already clear);*
 - *Update the team referral status in light of the decision (if this is not already clear).*
- In the event of “no advice possible,” this will be communicated by the match umpires to the teams on the pitch via the referring player/team captains as appropriate.*

The match umpire should repeat back the video umpire’s advice and recommendation, if necessary, to ensure that it has been correctly heard and understood.

6. UMPIRE AND TEAM REFERRALS

6.1. **The final decision, including any matter of interpretation, remains with the match umpire and not the video umpire.**

6.2. All other decisions remain with the match umpires.

6.3. Substitutions may not take place during the stoppage of play for a video referral; substitutions may take place on the resumption of play subject to the Rules of Hockey.

Coaches and players are advised that referrals related to re-starts of play, where a minor infringement gives no significant advantage, are unlikely to be successful. Examples include:

- *The penalty corner injector’s foot not being completely outside the field of play.*
- *At a penalty corner, the feet or the sticks of attacking and defending players not being completely outside the circle or behind the goal line.*

- *The ball not being exactly on the side-line or back-line to re-start play.*
- *The ball not being exactly on the right spot at a free hit.*
- *Players being within 5 meters of an attacking free hit in the 23-meter area who are not playing or attempting to play the ball or influencing play.*

Referrals will not be accepted either where a team has been asked if they wish to refer, has confirmed that they will not and then change their mind and/or try to refer once replays have been shown on the stadium public screen.

Referrals will not be accepted regarding an incorrectly awarded free hit or side-line ball prior to the play leading to the award of a goal, penalty stroke or penalty corner.

In general, referrals involving matters of interpretation are less likely to be successful; teams may still refer but must understand that they risk losing their right to refer.

Appendix B

NCAA Rules Modification Process

The Playing Rules and Officiating staff will provide technical expertise and leadership for NCAA conferences, coaches, and game officials by developing and interpreting rules for intercollegiate sports to enhance the student-athlete experience and ensure fair competition. To achieve our mission we will:

- Preserve sport traditions and integrity;
- Emphasize student-athlete safety;
- Construct playing rules that are enforceable; and
- Manage the playing rules process from development to application.

In sports that the NCAA does not write the specific playing rules, a modification document is created by the NCAA sport rules interpreter and/or Playing Rules and Officiating liaison, with consultation and suggestion from the championship committee(s) to enhance and champion the unique differences between collegiate athletics and international or domestic sports programs.

The rules modification document is reviewed on an annual basis by the sport committee(s) with the rules interpreter and playing rules liaison. The rules interpreter and liaison will develop the proposed rules modifications and distribute the proposed changes for a two-week comment period. Following the comment period, the proposed modifications will be reviewed for approval by the Division I Oversight Committee and Divisions II and III Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP).

Upon approval by the DI Oversight Committee and DII/III PROP, the rules interpreter and/or playing rules liaison will update the rules modification document. The document will be updated on the sport playing rules page on www.ncaa.org/sports/2021/2/9/playingrules.

Appendix C

Accommodations for Student-Athletes with Disabilities

The NCAA encourages participation by student-athletes with disabilities (physical or mental) in intercollegiate athletics and physical activities to the full extent of their interests and abilities. An NCAA member institution will have the right to seek, on behalf of any student-athlete with a disability participating on the member's team, a reasonable modification or accommodation of a playing rule, provided that the modification or accommodation would not:

1. Compromise the safety of, or increase the risk of injury to, the student-athlete with a disability or any other student-athlete;
2. Change an essential element that would fundamentally alter the nature of the game; or
3. Provide the student-athlete an unfair advantage over the other competitors.

To request any such modification or accommodation, the member's director of athletics, or their designee, must submit a rule waiver request, in writing, to the secretary-rules editor. Such written request should describe:

- a. The playing rule from which relief is sought;
- b. The proposed modification or accommodation;
- c. The anticipated duration of the requested modification or accommodation;
- d. Any modification or accommodation the student-athlete has received from the university or college and/or any sports governing body;
- e. Current, signed documentation of diagnosis/condition (including relevant test data and recommended treatment) from the treating professional (e.g., medical doctor, clinical psychologist, or another qualified individual);
- f. The original date of diagnosis of condition/disability;
- g. Modification or accommodation being recommended and rationale for this recommendation;
- h. Clarification if this is a temporary issue/injury or a permanent condition/disability; and
- i. A written statement from the school's healthcare provider (e.g., team physician) indicating that the student-athlete has been cleared to participate in competition. Please specify the date of this medical clearance.

Upon receipt of a complete waiver request, the NCAA staff liaison will consult with other NCAA staff, sport governing bodies, and/or external subject matter experts, to conduct an individual inquiry as to whether the requested modification or accommodation can be made. In making this assessment, the NCAA may request additional information from the member institution. The information will then be forwarded to the applicable sports committee, who will make a final decision. A member of the NCAA staff will communicate the decision in writing (which may be via email) to the requesting member institution. If the request is granted, the member school should be prepared to provide the written decision to the head official and tournament director (if applicable) for each competition in which the student-athlete will participate. NCAA members are directed to consult Guideline 1L of the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook for further considerations regarding participation by student-athletes with disabilities.

Please allow a minimum of two weeks following submission for this process to be completed.

Appendix D

Concussions

REVISED MAY 2025

Sport-related concussion is a traumatic brain injury caused by a direct blow to the head, neck or body resulting in an impulsive force being transmitted to the brain that occurs in sports and exercise-related activities. Signs and symptoms may present immediately or evolve over minutes or hours.

Game officials are often in the best position to observe student-athletes after they have had a blow to the head or body, and may be the first to notice the behaviors that indicate a concussion may be present. An official may observe the following behaviors by a student-athlete with a suspected concussion:

- Appears dazed or stunned.
- Appears confused or incoherent.
- Shakes head.
- Stumbles; has to be physically supported by teammates.
- Moves clumsily or awkwardly.
- Shows behavior or personality changes.

Student-athletes with a suspected concussion must be removed from competition so that a medical examination can be conducted by the primary athletics healthcare provider (i.e., athletic trainer or team physician).

Importantly, a game official is not expected to evaluate a student-athlete. Instead, if an official notices any behavior that suggests a concussion, the official should stop play immediately and call an injury timeout so that an appropriate medical examination can be conducted. A simple guide to the official's role is: "When in doubt, call an injury timeout."

A student-athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion, must be removed from practice or competition and may not return to sport activity on that day. The athlete must undergo medical evaluation and follow a return-to-learn/return-to-sport protocol under the supervision of the team physician, and may not return to sport until cleared by an appropriate health care professional. Sports have injury timeouts and player substitutions so that student-athletes can receive appropriate medical evaluation.

IF A CONCUSSION IS SUSPECTED:

1. **Remove the student-athlete from play.** Look for the signs and symptoms of concussion if the student-athlete has experienced a blow to the head. Do not allow the student-athlete to just "shake it off." Each student-athlete will respond to concussions differently.
2. **Ensure that the student-athlete is evaluated immediately by an appropriate health care professional.** Do not try to judge the severity of the injury. Call an injury timeout to ensure that the student-athlete is evaluated by one of the primary athletics healthcare providers.
3. **Allow the student-athlete to return to play only if the primary athletics healthcare provider has determined that the student-athlete did not suffer a concussion.** Allow athletics medical staff to rely on their clinical skills and protocols in evaluating the student-athlete to establish the appropriate management.

Additional information and details regarding concussions can be found at [ncaa.org/sports/health-safety](https://www.ncaa.org/sports/health-safety).



FIELD HOCKEY MODIFICATIONS

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