October 14, 2026

# NFHS Field Hockey Weekly Rule Interpretations

## Gloves Worn By Players

### RULE REFERENCES: Rule 1-5-4

**PURPOSE:** To clarify that field players are permitted to wear mittens/gloves and to explain the official's authority when determining whether the equipment being worn complies with the rules.
**RULE 1-5-4:** Individual players may wear mittens/gloves.

**SITUATION 1:** During pregame equipment verification, the official observes that A1 is wearing a field hockey glove on one hand. The glove is soft and flexible and does not contain any hard or unyielding material. The coach asks whether A1 may wear the glove during the game. What is the ruling? **RULING:** Legal. A1 may wear the glove. **COMMENT:** Rule 1-5-4 permits individual players to wear mittens/gloves. The rule does not require all players on the team to wear gloves or require a player who chooses to wear a glove to wear one on both hands.

**SITUATION 2:** A1 is wearing a glove that provides additional padding over the hand and fingers. The glove is flexible and contains no hard or unyielding components. The official determines that the glove complies with the applicable equipment requirements. What is the ruling? **RULING:** Legal. **COMMENT:** The presence of padding, by itself, does not make a glove illegal. When equipment is specifically permitted by rule, officials should not prohibit its use solely because of its appearance, amount of padding or design.

**SITUATION 3:** A1 is wearing a glove that the official determines does not comply with the applicable equipment requirements. The official instructs A1 that the glove may not be worn during play. A1's coach states that the glove is commercially manufactured for field hockey and should therefore be legal. What is the ruling? **RULING:** A1 may not participate while wearing the glove. **COMMENT:** The fact that equipment is commercially manufactured or marketed for field hockey does not, by itself, make the equipment legal under NFHS rules. Officials have the authority and responsibility to enforce the equipment requirements contained in the rules. When an official determines that equipment does not comply with the applicable requirements, the player must correct the equipment before participating.

**OFFICIALS' VIEW:** Officials should enforce the equipment requirements established by the rules. The official's role is not to establish additional equipment restrictions based solely on personal preference or the appearance of an item.

When a player is wearing gloves, officials should:

- Recognize that gloves are specifically permitted by Rule 1-5-4.
- Determine whether the equipment complies with the applicable NFHS requirements.
- Address equipment that does not comply with the rules.
- Require correction of illegal equipment before the player participates.
- Avoid declaring a glove illegal solely because it is different in appearance from equipment traditionally worn by players.

The official's authority comes from the rules. A glove that is permitted by rule and complies with the applicable requirements should not be prohibited simply because an official would prefer a different style or construction.

**KEY POINT:** The rule permits gloves; it does not give the official unrestricted discretion to prohibit them. Officials are responsible for enforcing the requirements established by the NFHS rules. When a glove complies with those requirements, it is legal. When it does not, the official must require the player to correct the equipment before participating.