Officiating Track & Field
The Rules and Beyond

Presented by
USATF New Mexico
Acknowledgements

Thanks to USATF Michigan & the National Officials Committee for some of the materials used in this presentation.

Thanks to the following USATF New Mexico officials -

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Clinic Goals

• Identify basic rules, key officiating techniques
• Understand key differences in rules at different levels of competition
• Develop a proactive approach to ensure fairness
• Share a vision of an ongoing process necessary to develop skills and experience
• Discussion; share experiences
• To keep this volunteer activity fun
### Track & Field Acronyms

- **NFSHSA** (NFHS) National Federation of State High School Associations
- **NMAA** New Mexico Activities Association
- **NCAA** National Collegiate Athletic Association
- **USATF** USA Track & Field
- **IAAF** International Association of Athletics Federations

In the U.S. there are four different rule books
USATF Certification

Training and certification of officials is key to ensuring fair and safe competitive opportunities for athletes at all levels of competition.

The training and certification process promotes a professional approach to officiating, and a commitment to excellence.

Officiating skills develop with experience and training.
USATF Certification Levels

• Apprentice
• Association
• National
• Master
• Grades 1-3 Referee, CE Coordinator
• Technical Manager
• Electronic Recorder, Measurer, Measurement Judge
The Purpose of Officiating

SAFETY

&

FAIRNESS
CONCUSSION

Injury to the brain from the sudden/rapid movement of the brain against the skull
Does NOT require a direct blow to the head
Does NOT require loss of consciousness
75% of traumatic brain injuries (TBI)
Cumulative effect
Neurologic and cognitive impairment with repeated injuries over the long-term
Catastrophic and/or fatal consequences with repeated injury over the short-term
SYMPTOMS

Headache
Nausea/vomiting
Loss of balance/coordination
Vision changes (blurred; double vision)
Confusion/ memory loss
Sensitivity to light/noise
Slowed speech/responses
CONCUSSION

SIGNS
Dazed, confused
Clumsy
Delayed responses to questions
Loss of consciousness – no matter how brief!
Behavior/personality changes
Does not recall events before or during injury
WHEN IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT!

Officials do not make the diagnosis
The potential for injury = the potential for prevention

HJ/PV –
- Injury from hitting a standard or missing the pit = need for extra padding;
- Injury from slipping = maintaining a clean/dry approach
CONCUSSION

The potential for injury = the potential for prevention

LJ/TJ –
injury from a hard landing = digging up and wetting the pit before competition;
hitting edge of pit = extra padding;
slipping on approach = maintaining a clean runway/board
The potential for injury = the potential for prevention

Throws –
getting hit by an implement = proper positioning and instruction of athletes/officials;
slipping in the ring = maintaining a clean ring
Running –
falls and collisions = having enough heats/sections
The Golden Rule for Track Officials:

No athlete should be allowed to gain an unfair advantage, and no athlete should have to suffer an unfair disadvantage.
The “Athlete-Centered” Official

• Properly applies rules
  – Fair
  – Objective
  – Impartial
• Communicates clearly and consistently
• Practices preventive officiating
• Demonstrates professionalism, integrity and teamwork
An Effective Official Is:

- Knowledgeable
- Consistent
- Impartial
- Calm and composed
- Dressed appropriately
- “Invisible”
Self-evaluation Check for Officials

If you can leave the meet unnoticed, your job has been well done.

(The attention should always be on the athletes.)
An Effective Official is Prepared

**Heat**
- Sunscreen
- Hat
- Water or cool drink

**Cold**
- Gloves and hand warmer
- Waterproofs and hat
- Boots
- Water or warm drink

**Snack**

Right equipment for the job

(Rule book, clipboard, pencils, etc.)

“A prepared official is an effective official”
Meet Organization

Meet Director
Games Committee
Jury of Appeals
Referee(s)
Head Event Officials
Official Crews

Implement Inspector, Wind Gauge Operator,
CE Coordinator
Role of Meet Director and Games Committee

- Coordinate subcommittees
- Promote event and secure sponsors
- Process entries and prepare event sheets
- Recruit and manage sufficient officials
- Secure needed equipment
- Prepare facility for competitions
- Record and distribute results
Games Committee

Makes decisions concerning conduct of the meet that are not clearly defined in the rules. For example,

- Opening heights in HJ & PV
- Number of throws or jumps (LJ/TJ)
- Kinds of markers to use along runways
- Minimum marks for measurement
- Designates the Jury of Appeals
Role of the Referee

- Supervises all officials
- Reviews reports from officials concerning possible violations and takes action (only referee or starter can DQ an athlete)
- May reschedule or add events in consultation with the Meet Director
Officiating Track Events
Clerk of the Course Duties

• Know the facility (Walk the track!)
• Check in and organize competitors into assigned heats and lanes
  • Check uniforms, spike length
  • Check for electronic devices (cell phones, CDs, etc.)
• Gather, hold, escort and place competitors into lanes
• Provide starting and advancing instructions
• Anticipate and resolve challenges
• Keep the meet on schedule
Clerk of the Course Duties

In larger meets, the duties are divided among several clerks:

- Head clerk
- Check-in Clerk
- Staging Clerk
- Hipping Clerk
- Escort Clerk
- Line Clerk
The Starter
Position of Starter and Recall For Staggered Lanes Starts
Position of Starter
800m and Longer

Step Up Line
Start Line
False Start Rules

- No false start rule (IAAF, USATF Open, NCAA and NFHS) - “One and Done”
- Two false start rule (for USATF Combined Events, Youth and Masters)
- One false start rule or ‘One to the Field’ (IAAF Combined Events)
UMPIRES

• Observe & report.
• Umpires do not disqualify athletes.
• If you see an infraction, raise the yellow flag and stay at your position until the Referee (or Chief Umpire) comes to you.
• Be prepared to give a full (written) description of who did what to whom and when.
• If you’re not sure, don’t make the call.
• If you see a situation you know is not a foul, but there may be a question, write a report to pass on to the Referee (NCAA rules specifically ask for report on any ‘incidents of concern’).
Umpiring Positions - Prioritized
Observe & Report Possible Violations

- Impeding or jostling
- Failing to run in a direct line on final straight
- Illegal hurdling – trail leg, intentional knock down, etc.
- Unfair assistance or contact
- Exchanging the baton outside the relay exchange zone
- Running on or over inside lane line on a curve
What Constitutes a Lane Violation?

This is one of those instances where there are major differences among the rule books:

- **NFHS** – three consecutive strides on or over the inside line (left, right, or a combination of both)
- **NCAA** – two consecutive strides with the left foot
- **IAAF and USATF** – one stride is all it takes
Observe & Report Possible Violations

In races run in lanes, running on the outside of a lane line on a curve is not a foul, as long as the runner does not interfere with the runner who is supposed to be in that lane.

Running outside a lane on a straight is not a foul as long as there is no interference and no advantage is gained.

In races not run in lanes, running inside the curb on a curve is a foul (unless pushed inside by another runner). Running inside on the straight is not a foul if pushed, but it is a foul if an advantage is gained.
Hurdle Violations

Observe for and report if competitor fails to clear the horizontal plane of a hurdle, intentionally knocks down a hurdle (e.g. - by hand), goes around a hurdle or goes over a hurdle in another lane (HS/NCAA)

(Also, in Masters competition competitors shall hurdle with a continuous motion such that both feet shall be off the ground for at least an instant; i.e., no stepping over hurdles or SC barriers)
A competitor may clear the barrier in any manner as long as the leg or foot does not trail “below the horizontal plane of the top of the hurdle at the instant of clearance” (use of hands is OK)
Relay Passes
Baton Must Be Within the Zone
Hurdle Crew

• Crew chief should have track markings diagram and list of hurdle heights
• 6-8 persons
• Place hurdles, aligning edge of crossbar closest to approaching athlete directly above edge of mark on track closest to approaching athlete
• Set hurdles from start line to finish line
• Check hurdle heights, position of weights
• After event, reset to next height, reposition and stack
The Finish
- when Fully Automatic Timing (F.A.T.) is not used
Finish Judges

- Assigned to a place, NEVER to a lane
- Stop the watch, identify placer, follow placer
- Communicate immediately if problems occur
- Don’t bluff; not a contest
- Work as a team
Competitors Timed and Placed to Near Edge of Finish Line
Time/Place Finishers Based on Position of the “Torso”

Torso = Trunk
NOT - head, neck, arms, hands, legs or feet
Converting Hand Times

• For track events - convert times to next higher 1/10th of a second
  - Time on watch = 10.43
  - **Reported time is** 10.5
  - Time on watch = 10.50
  - **Reported time is** 10.5

• For races not fully on the track, convert times to next highest second; e.g., marathon, XC:
  - Time on watch = 3:29:45.12
  - **Reported time is** 3:29:46
  (times may be published in 1/10th second, but only times rounded up to next full second are official)
Differences in Times

• If 3 watches disagree (after rounding up), select the **middle** time
• If 2 of 3 watches agree, select the time of the **agreeing** watches
• If only 2 timers and they disagree, take the **slower** of the 2
• Priority given to timer assigned to time the **higher** place
• Important to have back up timer

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Officiating Field Events
SAFETY!

Your Most Important Consideration in Officiating Field Events
Officiating Field Events

- Think Safety First!
- Administer an organized event
  - Review rules prior to competition
  - Provide clear and complete instructions
  - Inspect all implements and competitors
  - Assure accurate measurements
  - Create a fair competition environment
Field Events Flags

White – Fair/legal attempt; raised after the attempt is completed

Red – Foul

Yellow – Raised and held overhead when 15 seconds are left in the athlete's time (in USATF, NCAA and IAAF meets, but not NFHS)
## Field Events Time Limits

### Time Limits for Field Events:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># Remaining</th>
<th>-- Open --</th>
<th>-- Combined --</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Threws/</td>
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<td>Horiz. J.</td>
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<td>Greater than 3</td>
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<td>USATF/IAAF</td>
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<td>2-3 Remaining</td>
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</table>

**Yellow warning flag** is raised and held overhead at **15 seconds remaining** for USATF, IAAF, NCAA.

Consecutive attempts: generally 2 minutes, 3 minutes for PV.
Tips for Conducting Safe Competitions

• Limit access to jumps and throws areas
• HS rules require coach or official supervision during warm-ups
• Provide adequate time for warm-up, prior to (30 min.) and between flights (15 min.)
• Closely supervise all warm-up activities
• Use calls, rules and assertive leadership
Tips for Conducting Safe Competitions

• Warm-up throws within sectors only
• All warm-ups under supervision/control
• Control access to implements (impound)
• Check implements for damage (and for Wts & Meas ‘mark of the day’)
• Walk all implements back, no tossing
Assigning Officials

• Match assignment with experience and skill
• Assign the duties for entire event
• Rotate positions between events
The Competition
Warm-up

• Announce a specific time period for warm-ups (before start of competition, between flights, before finals)
• Supervise to maintain a safe event venue
• Close pit/runway/circle at the end of warm-up - put cone on runway/in circle; then
• Prepare venue:
  – LJ/TJ: level/prepare pit
  – HJ/PV: adjust mats, set bar
  – Throws: check circle & sector
  – Ensure that no marks are placed on the runway or in landing area
The Competition
Competitor Instructions

• End warm-ups five minutes prior to start
• While the crew prepares the venue, the head official:
  • Gathers all competitors
  • Reviews:
    • Applicable rules
    • Any special rules applying to this meet
    • Time limit per attempt and calls
    • Procedures for checking out of the event
    • Order of attempts and method for advancing to the final
Order of Attempts

At the discretion of the head event official, athletes competing in other events may make their preliminary attempts out of order or in succession (NFHS, NCAA, USATF)

In NCAA & USATF meets, athletes must be present and take their attempts in order during the finals

In HS meets, athletes may take their attempts out of order during the finals
The Competition - The Final

- Determine the competitors who will advance. The number should be on results sheet.
- Determine the order in the finals (reverse order - best mark goes last).
- Announce names, order.
- Announce final round, final attempt for each competitor.
- Recheck results, sign, submit results.
- Leave competition area in good condition.
Advancing to Finals - Special Case (throws, LJ & TJ)

If the total number of competitors if less than or equal to the number going to finals, all advance if:

- For HS – competitor has made at least one valid (fair) preliminary attempt
- For NCAA, USATF – competitor has made at least one preliminary attempt (fair or foul)
# Results Form

(throws & LJ/TJ)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEET</th>
<th>DATE</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>CIRCLE ONE</th>
<th>SHOT</th>
<th>DISCUS</th>
<th>LONG JUMP</th>
<th>TRIPLE JUMP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONTESTANT</td>
<td>PRELIMINARIES</td>
<td>FINALS</td>
<td>BEST</td>
<td>EFFORT</td>
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## Results Form (HJ & PV)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Boys High Jump</th>
<th>Flight 1 of 1</th>
<th>O-Make</th>
<th>P-Pass</th>
<th>X-Miss</th>
<th>Best</th>
<th>Place</th>
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Cherry and Silver Invite HS - 1/23/2010
Albuquerque Convention Center
Field Score Sheet - Field Events
The Competition

A final comment regarding all throwing events and the horizontal jumps:

In USATF competitions all attempts are to be marked and the landing mark is to be preserved (whether it is called fair or foul) until the Chief Judge authorizes removal.

This also is a good practice at other levels of competition. It prevents problems when an athlete protests a foul call, but the mark has already been removed (or never marked).
Officiating Horizontal Jumps
Officials Positions - Horizontal Jumps

LONG & TRIPLE JUMP OFFICIALS POSITIONS

A – flight coordinator, timer, recorder
B – foul line judge (positioned at appropriate board along with cone), reader, signals fair jump or foul, recorder
C – watches hop/skip in TJ, tape puller
D – marker
E – raker

Position of take-off boards is not to scale
Preparation - Essential Supplies

• Fiberglass tape (20 meters)
• Clipboard and Pencils
• Stopwatch
• Rake
• Shovel
• Broom
• Access to water/hose
Preparation - Readying the Competition Area

- Check the board - condition and steadiness
- Moisten the pit
- Turn pit with shovel or roto-tiller, remove debris
- Level pit
- Sweep area around pit, clean the runway
- Sweep and rake following warm-up period
Normally, the toe of the shoe must be seen by the eye to extend beyond the edge of the board to be considered a foul. *If plasticine is being used*, there must be a mark in the plasticine in order for a foul to be called (i.e., if your eye sees the toe beyond the edge of the board, but there’s no mark in the plasticine, there’s no foul).
Triple Jump Technique

Triple Jump Sequence

**Hop**
Take off and land on same foot

**Step**
lands on opposite foot

**Jump**
must land in pit
The Competition
Calling ‘Fair’ or ‘Foul’

• The board judge makes the decision whether the attempt is ‘fair’ or ‘foul’.
• The final decision is not made until the athlete has completed the attempt (i.e., has properly left the pit).
• At the completion of the attempt, the board judge indicates the decision by raising a white flag (‘fair’) or a red flag (‘foul’).
• If no flags are available, a verbal call may be used.
• If the attempt is fair, the measurement is then made.
The Competition
Proper Measurement

• Mark and put zero end of the tape at the edge of the break in sand closest to the take-off board
• Measure perpendicular to take-off board
• Measure and announce distance to lesser whole centimeter, or “foul” as the red flag is raised after attempt is complete
• All fair attempts are measured immediately
• No foul attempt is measured, unless the athlete makes an immediate protest of the call (if plasticine is being used, pit rakers should not cover up mark until athlete has had a chance to see the mark in the plasticine)
Open Pit Option
(usually for local HS or JO meets)

• Pit is open for a set period of time, usually 60 minutes
• Competitor must complete the four allotted attempts within the designated time period
• Jumps normally are taken one at a time
• At the end of the time period, the order of finish is determined in the usual manner
Officiating
Vertical Jumps
Vertical Jump Tasks

• Preparing area
  – Set standards and mark their placement
  – Set and mark the bar
  – Measure the height of crossbar at standard point

• Observing proper clearance
Vertical Jumps - Competition

Competitors are allowed 3 consecutive attempts to clear a bar.

The attempts do not have to be at the same height (e.g.- a competitor fails 2 attempts at one height, then passes the 3\textsuperscript{rd} attempt; the competitor then has 1 attempt left at the next height).

A jump is not called until after it is completed and it is clear that the bar will remain on.

A competitor is out after 3 consecutive misses.

When 1 jumper remains in the competition, he/she gets to choose the next height.
Vertical Jump Tasks
Calling ‘Fair’ or ‘Foul’

• If it is clear the athlete has completely cleared the bar, but it is dislodged because the pad has contacted the upright(s) upon landing, or the athlete accidentally contacts an upright while exiting the pit, it is counted as a fair attempt.

• If the athlete has definitely cleared the bar, but an outside force (e.g., wind) dislodges the bar after clearance, it is a fair attempt; if an outside force dislodges a bar during an attempt under any other circumstances, the athlete is awarded another attempt.

• If the pole in the PV knocks the bar down, it normally is a failed attempt, unless it is clear the athlete made a definite effort to push the pole away from the bar, but wind blew it back into the bar; it is then ruled a fair attempt.

• If there is an official’s error (e.g., improper placement of the uprights), or equipment failure (e.g., uprights fall) the athlete is awarded a replacement jump.
Vertical Jumps - Passing (P)

An athlete must declare the intent to pass before timing starts or it will be considered an attempt.

In USATF (Open) -

Athletes can only pass to the next height.

In USATF (Youth, Masters)

Athletes can only pass to the next height.

If an athlete has passed 3 or more heights before entering the competition, the athlete may take 1 run-through without the bar as earned.
Vertical Jumps - Passing

In NCAA -
Athletes can pass each attempt at a given height; they must state if they are passing the entire height.
If an hour has passed since the start of the competition, an athlete may have 2 minutes warm-up without the bar at the height change where they enter the competition.

In HS -
Same as NCAA except the athlete has passed 3 heights before entering the competition.
Vertical Jumps - Scoring

The higher place is given to the competitor with the fewer attempts at the highest height cleared.

If there is a tie, then the higher place is given to the athlete with the fewest total misses in the competition (passes do not count).

If there is still a tie, it stands unless the tie involves first place.
Breaking 1st Place Ties
The Jump-Off

Tied competitors make one attempt at the next height above the highest height cleared (no passing allowed; a competitor who chooses not to jump, forfeits 1st place)

If all make the height, the bar goes up 2cm/1inch (HJ), 5cm/3inch (PV)

If all miss, the bar goes down by the same

Competitors get only 1 attempt at each height

The bar goes up & down until only 1 competitor remains
High Jump Tasks
Preparing Area

- Set up mats and ensure they are centered so left and right jumpers can approach at the same width (18-19 ft.) and same length (70 ft.)
- Set standards and mark their placement
- Standards should not touch the mats
- Set and mark the bar so it is replaced exactly the same every time (mark both ends and the middle)
- Bar should not touch sides of standards (1 cm)
- Measure the height of crossbar at a standard point (usually at the lowest point near the middle)
- Mark the plane indicator lines with tape.
High Jump

Bar Placement and Measurement

(USATF rules require at least 10 cm between uprights and the landing pad)
High Jump Tasks
Before Competition

- Arrive at least 1 hour early
- Pick up equipment, clipboard and event sheets
- Get a copy of the meet schedule so you know the order of events (boys, girls)
- Find out the starting heights and the height progressions
- Ask about games committee rules for athletes excused to compete in other events
- Identify the field referee or meet director
- Meet with your crew and explain their positioning and responsibilities.
Officials Positions - High Jump

A – flight coordinator, recorder, measures bar height, signals make or miss

B – timer, replaces bar, adjusts standard at height changes

C – watches plane of standards, replaces bar, adjusts standard at height changes
High Jump

Observing the Bar
High Jump Tasks
Before Competition
Check In

- Check in athletes and get their starting heights
- Based on the athlete's starting height, fill in the passes on the event sheet
- Find out if the athlete jumps from the right or left side and mark on the event sheet
- Find out if the athlete is competing in another event and mark on event sheet
High Jump Rules

- Call athletes together 5 minutes before the start and review the rules and procedures.
- Explain that no audio, video, or electronic devices of any type are allowed in the competition area.
- Competitors may not cross the track to speak to a coach. If there is a coaching box show the athletes where it is located.
- Explain Time limitations.
- Explain Passing.
- Explain Fouls.
- Let the athletes know that if they have any questions during the high jump they should talk to you.
High Jump Rules

Time Limits

TIME LIMITS PROCEDURE (Athletes will be called “Up, On deck, and On hold”) When the bar is ready, the name of the athlete who is “Up” will be called again, the official will then gesture toward the athlete and the time starts.

- 4 or more jumpers (1 minute)
- 2-3 jumpers (1.5 minutes - 90 seconds)
- 1 jumper (3 minutes) and competitor decides the height of the bar
- Consecutive jumps (2 minutes)
- A yellow flag will be raised overhead for the final 15 seconds remaining of the time allowed. When the time expires the flag will be lowered.
High Jump Rules
Fair, Passing, Foul

- Fair jumps are recorded as an (O)
- Passing is recorded as a (P)
- Foul jumps (X) are:
  - The competitor does not initiate the jump within the time limit.
  - The competitor does not take off from one foot.
  - It is a failed attempt if after the jump, the bar does not remain on the supports because of the action of the competitor while jumping.
  - It is a failed attempt if during or after the jump, the competitor deliberately steadies or replaces the bar.
High Jump Rules
Breaking the Plane Foul (X)

– It is a foul if the competitor touches the ground, or the pit beyond the plane of the crossbar—either between or outside the supports—without first clearing the bar.

– To determine the plane a white indicator line 50 mm wide shall be placed on the ground. The line is placed on the vertical plane and extends for 3 meters on either side of the uprights. It is usually made with tape.
Pole Vault
Pole Vault Crew

- Ideally, at least 6 officials
  - Flight Coordinator – checks in athletes (and poles), getting opening heights & standard settings from athletes, calls athletes up, records results
  - Pit Coordinator – measures bar height, confirms setting of standards, starts timing when standards are set, judges fair/foul jumps
  - Standards officials (2) – raise bar & set standards
  - Bar officials (2) – place crossbar on pegs
Officials Positions - Pole Vault

A – flight coordinator, recorder, verifies standard setting w/ athlete
B – timer, measures bar height, supervises standard settings, signals make or miss
C, D – adjusts standards, replaces bar
Pole Vault Preparation

- Arrive 1 ½ to 2 hours before the competition starts
- Set up standards
  - Zero line at back of plant box, perpendicular to runway
  - Bases of standards parallel to each other so that uprights are 5.3 meters apart
- Arrange mats, clean out & dry plant box
  - Cover all hard surfaces
  - Do not obstruct plant box
- Set up crossbar
  - Centered & level with sag down
Pole Vault - Fair vs Foul

Fair jumps are recorded as (O)

Fouls jumps (X) are:

- Displacing the crossbar from the pegs by the athlete
- After leaving the ground, placing the lower hand above the upper, or moving the upper hand higher on the pole
- Replacing or steadying the bar by hand to prevent displacement
- Touching anywhere beyond the vertical plane along the back of the plant box (zero line) without first clearing the bar
- Exceeding the time limit
Abort an attempt

In all rule books it is not a failed attempt if the vaulter leaves the ground with both feet and then comes back down without attempting to go over the bar. The vaulter in this situation may go back up the runway and make another attempt, as long as no other rules are broken (e.g., time limit or breaking the plane).

The HS rule book emphasizes that this applies to attempting to abort an approach, not aborting an attempt.
Another Rule Difference:

- In all rule books, jumpers may use one or two check marks along the side of the runway (or on the apron in the HJ).
- In USATF JO competition, HJ and PV competitors may use up to three check marks (each no longer than 3” in length).
- In NCAA, shoes are not allowed as check marks.
Officiating Throwing Events
Implements Inspection

All throwing implements should be weighed and measured prior to the competition. Legal implements are marked, and maybe impounded until start of warm-up; illegal implements are impounded until after competition is completed.
Throwing Events

Indoor:
• Shot Put
• Weight

Outdoor:
• Shot Put
• Discus
• Hammer
• Javelin
Throws Crew

At least 4 officials -

• Flight Coordinator - checks in athletes, checks that implements are marked as legal, calls athletes up, controls the pace of the competition, judges at the ring, read & records results

• 2nd Ring Judge – judges at the ring, times, pulls tape

• Sector Judges (2) – judge sector fouls, spot implement landings, marks or retrieves (better to have one or two others to retrieve)
Throws from a Ring Crew Positions

THROWS FROM A RING

A – flight coordinator, reader/recorder, ring judge, signals good throw or foul
B – timer, ring judge, tape puller
C – spotter, sector judge, retriever
D – spotter, sector judge, marker
A, B – stand outside cage during throw (discus)
C, D – can exchange roles depending to which side implements are returned
Javelin Crew Positions

A – flight coordinator, reader/recorder, foul line judge, signals good throw or foul
B – timer, tape puller
C – spotter, sector judge, marker
D – spotter, sector judge, retriever
Throws Preparation

Arrive at least 1 hour before competition

Check sector (properly marked and cordoned off); check/set up tape measure

Check cage (discus, hammer, weight) for gaps, operation of gates

Check circle (2.5m diam for discus, 2.135m for hammer, weight and shot put) or runway (javelin); locate/mark center of circle

Check stopboard (shot put)
The Golden Rule for Throws Officials

NEVER
Take Your Eyes Off the
Ring, Runway or Implement
!!!!
Fair vs Foul

Mark all throws until declared fair or foul
Measure only fair throws (unless there is a protest)
An attempt is foul (F) if:

• The athlete does not pause in the ring/runway before starting a throw
• The athlete touches on top of or beyond the edge of the ring/stopboard/runway
• Exits the ring/runway out of control or before the implement lands
• Does not exit the back half of the ring
• Exceeds the time limit (1 minute)
Fair vs Foul Shot Put

In the shot put:

USATF - “the shot shall be put from the shoulder with one hand...touch or be in close proximity to the neck or chin, and the hand shall not be dropped below this position...The shot must not...be brought behind the line of the shoulders”

NCAA/NFHS - “A legal put shall be made from the shoulder with one hand only so that...the shot does not drop behind or below the shoulder”
Fair vs Foul

Javelin

USATF (Open, Masters), NCAA -
   The head/tip must be the first point of contact in a legal throw; the javelin does not have to stick in the ground

USATF (Youth), NFHS -
   A legal throw is measured from the first point of contact (head or tail), or from the back of the grip if the landing is flat
Fair vs Foul
Discus, Weight, Hammer

If the implement hits the cage:

USATF, NCAA -
The throw is legal as long as no other rules have been violated

NFHS -
The throw is called foul
Fair vs Foul
Hammer

It is not a foul if the head of the hammer hits the ground during preliminary swings, and the thrower then stops the attempt and restarts
In NFHS meets:

The athlete cannot leave the circle until the circle judge has called ‘mark’ after the implement has landed (within the sector).

The athlete must then exit the back half of the circle.
A Recent Rule Change

In IAAF, USATF and NCAA competitions, the thrower (in throws from a circle) may use one marker placed on the ground behind or adjacent to the circle. The marker must be temporary, in position only for the duration of the athlete’s attempt, and must not impair the view of officials. (This does not apply to HS competition.)

Personal markers are not allowed in or beside the landing area.
"Foot" Fouls

Note: Also applies to discus, hammer, weight (no stopboard) and javelin (runway and foul line).

Cartwheeling techniques are not permitted.
Sector Fouls

Implement must land completely within the sector. Contact on or outside the sector lines is a foul. Applies to all the throwing events.
Measuring Throws

Measure each fair throw immediately after the attempt.

Measure from the first point of contact (zero point of tape) to inside edge of ring or scratch line through the center of the ring or marked spot on the javelin runway.

No foul attempt is measured, unless there is an immediate protest of the call by the athlete.
Combined Events

Same rules as the open events, except:

- Competitors get only 3 attempts in the throws and long jump
- Height change remains constant in the HJ (3 cm for USATF Open, NCAA; 5 cm for USATF Youth) and PV (10 cm & 15 cm) even when only 1 competitor remains
- Place within an event, # of misses (HJ/PV) does not matter; competitors get the same points for the same performance
Officiating
Race Walking
Rules of Race Walking Technique

• **Rule # 1** The walker is to maintain continuous contact with the ground

• **Rule # 2** The walker’s advancing leg is to be straightened from first contact with the ground until the leg is in the vertical upright position
Judging Sectors on Track

Diagram of track with sectors labeled A, B, C, D, and E, indicating areas during race and dotted lines indicating zones.
Proper Area of Observation

competitor(s) in lane one

6-9 meters (20-30 feet)

judge in lane eight

48°
Race Walk Caution Paddles

Loss of Contact

Bent Knee
Officiating Track & Field for Athletes with Disabilities
Officiating Track & Field for Athletes with Disabilities

There are six Disabled Sports Organizations promoting T&F for disabled athletes:
- Wheelchair Sports, USA
- National Disability Sports Alliance (Cerebral Palsy)
- Special Olympics
- United States Association for Blind Athletes
- USA Deaf Track & Field
- Disabled Sports USA (Amputee)

All base their rules on IAAF and USATF rules, making modifications only as necessary to accommodate the particular needs of the type of disability.
Officiating Track & Field for Athletes with Disabilities

• While Masters and Youth competitions are grouped by age, disabled competitions are grouped by age and by type and level of disability.
Officiating Track & Field for Athletes with Disabilities

Examples of rule modifications:
- In wheelchair racing, the start and finish are determined by the hub of the front wheel
Officiating Track & Field for Athletes with Disabilities

Examples of rule modifications:
- In wheelchair racing, the relay exchange zones are doubled in length and two lanes are allowed per team.
Examples of rule modifications:

- In wheelchair racing, an athlete passing carries the responsibility of ensuring full clearance of the chair being overtaken, and the athlete being passed has the responsibility to not obstruct or impede once the front wheels of the passing athlete are in sight.
Officiating Track & Field for Athletes with Disabilities

Examples of rule modifications:
For all running events, leg amputees must wear prostheses; but…
for field events, they can wear them…
or not wear them.
Examples of rule modifications:
- When starting races for deaf athletes, the starter must use visual cues such as a flag or a strobe light
- Blind athletes are allowed sighted guides in running events, do not have to use a baton in relays (exchange is by touch), and are allowed aural cueing in field events
Field events for wheelchair athletes involve the use of chair tie-downs or a throwing frame (maximum height of the seat is 75 cm)
Officiating Track & Field for Athletes with Disabilities

A complete set of rule modifications for each disability group is in a special section of the USATF Rule Book.
Officiating Track & Field for Athletes with Disabilities

And...
Persons with disabilities can be officials, as well.
Resources

www.newmexico.usatf.org

www.usatf.org/groups/officials/

www.nmact.org/

www.nfhs.org

www.ncaapublications.com/

www.iaaf.org/competitions/technical/regulations/index.html
Resources

ALLSPORT Photographs. 1998


Robertson, L.G., Kleeman, G., Thompson, P. J. L. *A Guide to Track & Field Officiating*. USATF, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1999

Seese, Eddie, Photographs, Personal Record Sports, Vallejo, California, 1999

Zemper, Eric D., *Starters* USATF Training Monograph

For use by non-profit organizations for athletics officials training purposes only
Officiating Track & Field
The Rules and Beyond

USATF New Mexico
Thank You