



Track and Field Pre-Meet Notes

In this issue:



Rule 7-5-24—Pole vault plant box padding



Rules 4-3-1, 9-6-1—Foundation garments

2014



Track and Field Pre-Meet Notes

National Federation of State High School Associations

2014

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Venue Inspection Checklist

Risk minimization is the number one responsibility and should be the number one priority for all who are involved in conducting a track and field meet at any level of competition. This is a responsibility shared by meet directors, referees, officials, coaches, and volunteers. All should be proactive in making sure the venues and facilities are safe before competition begins. They should also be attentive throughout the competition to make sure that if any risk minimization issues arise, they are quickly and thoroughly addressed.

The USATF Officials Training Subcommittee has created a "Venue Inspection Checklist." It can be downloaded at www.usatf.org/groups/officials/resources/field-events/. The checklist is meant to raise common questions about reasonable steps to take to minimize risk of injury at the venue. It is not exhaustive and may not cover all situations. It should not be construed as legal advice. Officials should follow the rule book provisions and state laws, and act reasonably. Every facility and venue is different and each presents unique conditions and situations. Weather conditions can change quickly and cause risk minimiza-

tion issues. The Venue Inspection Checklist is a starting point in thinking through some of the risk minimization issues that can arise at a track and field meet. It is designed to help officials, referees, coaches and meet directors begin to think about some of the common risk minimization issues. Officials, referees, coaches, and meet directors have a responsibility to go beyond the limits of this document to think through and address potential risk minimization issues at the venues and facilities for each meet in which they are involved. Meet directors and referees should personally examine every event venue before the start of warm-ups. Officials should thoroughly check the venue before athletes arrive. And, as the athletes begin to prepare for competition, coaches should be attentive to risk minimization issues.

Risk minimization is the responsibility of everyone involved in a track and field meet. It needs to be taken seriously and dealt with proactively. Meet directors, referees, officials, coaches, and volunteers are encouraged to use the Venue Inspection Checklist at each meet as a part of their regular pre-meet preparation and protocol.

Want to become an official? Start your training today!

The NFHS Track and Field Rules Committee and the USA Track & Field Officials Training Subcommittee are combining efforts and experience to provide the NFHS Pre-Meet Notes, an online track and field education publication. It is our goal to encourage more individuals to become track and field officials. Another way to ENJOY the sport!

High School - Contact your state high school athletic/activities association at www.nfhs.org >State Association Listing >NFHS Member State Associations
USATF - Contact USA Track & Field at www.usatfofficials.com >Certification

Consecutive Attempts in Field Events



An often-asked question in field events is, "When can a competitor take successive attempts?"

First, it's most important to remember that the ability for competitors to take successive attempts in the field events is at the discretion of the head event official. The event official may alter the order of competition only when the competitor needs to be excused to compete in another event. Consecutive attempts should not be allowed for the convenience of a competitor to finish the event when he/she is not competing in another event.

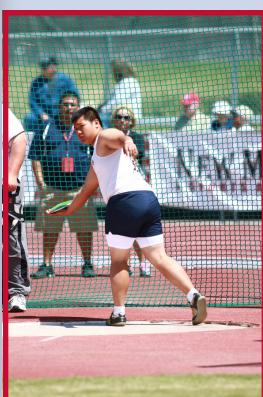
In the throwing events, Rule 6-2-5 allows the head event judge to alter the order in any fashion, even allowing for the taking of successive trials or changing the flight of the competitors. Rule 6-2-6 stipulates that if weather conditions create an unfair competitive advantage, the referee can order single attempts, and can alter any previous alterations to the successive attempts.

In all jumping events, Rule 7-2-12 is identical to Rule 6-2-5 for the throwing events, and Rule 7-2-14 corresponds to Rule 6-2-6. A unique variation exists in Rule 7-2-7, where the rule book describes what is often referred to as the "open pit" type of competition. In this type of competition, the pit is open for a specific period of time in which all

competitors must complete their attempts and taking successive attempts is allowed. The "open pit" method should only be used in preliminary rounds or when the Games Committee is only allowing four trials in the competition. Finals should still be conducted in reverse order of qualification.

It should be noted that in the vertical jumping events, when consecutive attempts occur as part of the natural conduct of the events, the time limit is extended for each attempt. In the pole vault, consecutive jumps are afforded three minutes between jumps and in the high jump, two minutes. In all other cases in the throwing and jumping events, it is important to note that two minutes are afforded for consecutive attempts.

The head event judge is responsible for conducting a fair competition so no competitor gains an unfair advantage and no competitor is placed at an unfair disadvantage. Athletes need time to recover between trials but also need to keep their fitness at a high level by not waiting too long between trials. To ensure fairness of competition and promote proper recovery time, flights sizes are to be kept between five and 16 competitors. A balance must be kept between all the competitors to ensure a fair competition.



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Acknowledgments to authors and editors who contributed to the 2014 NFHS Track and Field Pre-Meet Notes: George Adams (Dallas, TX); Mike Armstrong (Springdale, AR); Roger Burbage (Raleigh, NC); Roger Buhrey (Clearfield, UT); Stan Druckrey (South Milwaukee, WI); Patricia Hanna (Florissant, MO); Mark Heckel (Hughesville, PA); Tracey Heisler (East Grand Forks, MN); Robert O. Kern (Milwaukee, WI); Gloria Louis (Lafayette, LA); Mary Onken (Central Valley, NY); Jay Preston (Waukesha, WI); Jody Redman (Golden Valley, MN); Tom Shinnick (Atlanta, GA); Bob Springer (Seattle, WA); Bob Tice (Whispering Pines, NC); Rick Tune (Honolulu, HI); Troy Urdahl (Minneapolis, MN); and Dan Woolley (Herndon, VA).

Graphic Designer: Juli Doshan, NFHS

To Rerun or Not to Rerun

The decision to order a race be rerun is one that should not be taken lightly. It is the sole responsibility of the referee (Rule 3-4-3) to decide to rerun a race unless the matter is petitioned to an established jury of appeals that has been designated as the final board of appeals.

A race rerun will rarely, if ever, be fair to everyone and should be avoided if at all possible.

To consider a rerun, one of the following must apply:

1. interference by another competitor resulting in disqualification;
2. interference caused by a nonparticipant; or
3. a meet administration error, i.e., wrong staggers, hurdle setting, official's instructions, etc.

A rerun should only be considered when no other remedy is available and only in races or relays with individual legs of 400 meters or less for a one-day meet. A race rerun wipes out any performance, including place, time or record in the original race, unless it is obvious that the interference that caused the rerun did not affect the winning of certain places.

Once the decision to rerun has been made, the referee must determine who is eligible to participate in the rerun.

The referee:

1. must carefully weigh the disadvantages of the interfered competitor with the hardship or possible disadvantage of the original place winners, record setters, etc.
2. should consider the possibility that the original place winner may not physically be able to participate in the rerun.
3. may order the race rerun for the places in question.

When a race is rerun, any disqualification that occurred in the original race will stand; thus, only those competitors from the original race, still eligible to race, may participate in the rerun. All those eligible and wishing to compete for the remaining places must participate in the rerun.

Once the decision is made to rerun a race, determining the time to rerun the race must be made. Determining a rerun time is crucial to the rerun process. The NFHS Case Book states "... a race rerun will rarely, if ever, be fair to everyone ..." Athletes involved in the rerun will be competing in other events and adequate recovery time must be taken into consideration. This is even more of a problem if a relay is rerun, as there are now potentially 32 athletes affected

instead of generally eight.

One method for the referee to consider in determining a time to rerun is to look at each athlete in the race to see in what other events each athlete is competing. This can assist the referee in determining a rerun time, which is most advantageous for the remaining competitors and can be helpful for the referee going into a meeting with the coaches. Creating a rerun time must be done in consultation with meet management so that all involved can be properly informed and the rerun event is smoothly and seamlessly administrated.

A meeting with the coaches affected needs to take place, so that they can be apprised of the disqualification, the decision to rerun the race, who is eligible to participate in the rerun and when the rerun race will take place. The coaches need to hear these decisions from the referee directly. This meeting should also include meet management.

Let's review two situations that actually occurred at high school meets:

Situation #1: In the first of 12 heats of the 300 hurdles, the runner in lane 5 knocks over the third hurdle and it causes the runner in lane 4 to fall. The impeded runner, in lane 4, finished last and did not qualify for the next round.

Resolution: Lane 5 is disqualified for interference and lane 4 should be provided the opportunity for a rerun. If there is an available lane in a later heat, lane 4 could be assigned to rerun the heat after an adequate amount of rest and recovery. If there is no available lane, heat 1 would have to be rerun. It is the decision of the referee to determine which runners from heat 1 would be required to rerun the race, after weighing all of the facts of heat 1.

Situation #2: The starter had never been at the particular track before. After the conclusion of the only heat of the 4x100 relay, the starter realizes that he/she was unable to see correct colors of the start lines from his/her starting position, and the race was started from a 3-turn stagger, rather than the 2-turn stagger. The finish order of the race was identical to the lane assignments.

Resolution: Due to a meet administrative error, the race should be rerun. It is understood that only lane 1 ran the required distance and all other lanes ran varied distances. Each team will be included in the rerun, as no team was disqualified.



Reruns are seldom called for and should be avoided if at all possible. A rerun should only be considered when no other remedy is available. The NFHS Case Book (page 16) clearly defines the role of the referee in determining when a race can be rerun, who will participate in the rerun and the time when the race will be rerun. Remember, it is the sole responsibility of the referee to decide all matters concerning a rerun race. Careful consideration needs to be taken in scheduling the rerun so that all athletes have adequate recovery time before and after the rerun.

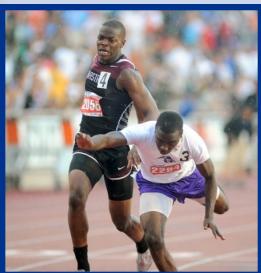


National High School Sports-Related Injury Surveillance Study

Study

As high school sports participation continues to increase in the United States, the number of sports injuries have the potential to increase. The NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) and the NFHS Sport Rules Committees use information from the National High School Sports-Related Injury Surveillance Study (High School RIO™) to monitor rates and patterns of sports injuries among high school athletes. High School RIO™ is currently collecting its sixth year of track and field exposure and injury data.

2012-13 High School RIO™ data shows that both boys' and girls' track and field have among the lowest injury rates of the 20 sports under surveillance. In addition, both boys' and girls' track and field injury rates have declined slightly in the most recent year of data collection. Thigh/upper leg sprains/strains are by far the most common injury in track and field representing 43.9% of all boys' and 31.8% of all girls' injuries. Injury patterns differ by event. For example, pole vaulting accounted for 6.0% of all track and field



injuries across all years of data collection. However, 12 of the 36 (33.3%) concussions sustained in track and field occurred while pole vaulting. Likewise, shot put and javelin, when combined, accounted for only 4.9% of all track and field injuries, but 27 of the 42 (64.3%) shoulder injuries occurred during these events. Girls' track and field injury rates have remained slightly higher than boys' track and field injury rates across all years of data collection. Understanding such patterns of injury is one important tool when considering the potential of efforts such as new educational materials, new rule changes, etc. as risk minimization is maintained as a priority in the efforts to keep track and field athletes as safe as possible.

If you are interested in more information on the High School RIO™ Study or interested in becoming a reporter for boys' and/or girls' track and field, please visit <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/PublicHealth/research/ResearchProjects/piper/projects/RIO/Pages/Study-Reports.aspx> for summary reports or send an email to highschoolrio@nationwidechildrens.org.



Interested in More Information or Becoming a Reporter?

To become a reporter for boys' and/or girls' track and field, please visit <http://injuryresearch.net/rioreports.aspx> for summary reports or send an email to highschool-rio@nationwidechildrens.org

Uniforms—2014

Each year the NFHS strives to simplify rules that relate to the uniform policy. The major modification for 2014 can be summarized as follows:

1. Any visible undergarment worn underneath the uniform bottom that **does not extend below the knees** is now **considered a "foundation garment" and NOT subject to the single, solid color rule.** [Rules 4-3-1c(7) and 9-6-1c(7)]
2. An **undergarment extending below the knees shall meet all requirements regarding a visible undergarment.** It must be unadorned and of a single, solid color. A single manufacturer's logo and/or single school insignia no more than 2½ inches is permitted. For relays and cross country teams, the 2014 Uniform Rules are applied as follows:
1. Any visible garment(s) worn by two or more relay (cross country) team members underneath the uniform bottom and **extending below the knees shall be unadorned and of a single color, but not necessarily the same length.**
2. A visible undergarment worn underneath the uniform bottom that does not extend below the knees is now **considered a "foundation garment" and NOT subject to the single, solid color rule.**

The new uniform rule can best be illustrated by the following situation:

Situation: A relay team reports for their race with all runners wearing a uniform bottom under which runner 1 wears a solid red compression garment; runner 2 wears a solid green compression garment; and runner 3 wears a black compression garment with two white stripes down the side. (a) All compression garments

worn by runners 1, 2, and 3 are above the knees. (b) Runners 1 and 2 have compression garments above the knees and runner 3 has a compression garment that extends below the knees. (c) Runners 1 and 3 have compression garments above the knees and runner 2 has a compression garment that extends below the knees.

Ruling: (a) and (c) legal; (b) illegal.

Comment: The team in (a) is "legal," as all compression garments are considered "foundation garments" and NOT subject to the single, solid color rule; (c) is "legal" because the compression garment worn by runner 2 complies with the visible undergarment rule; and (b) is "illegal" since runner 3's below-the-knee compression garment is not a single color.

If a relay team (cross country team) wears compression shorts as outer garments, making them the uniform bottoms, then these compression shorts are subject to all the restrictions as to relay team (cross country team) colors and logos.

The 2014 Uniform Rule emphasizes that foundation garments play no significant role in the officiating process and are now treated identical to sport bras. The penalties for violating the 2014 Uniform Rules are identical to the penalties enforced and applied in 2013.



Visible undergarment extends below the knees
LEGAL



Visible undergarments extend below knees
Both must be same color
ILLEGAL



Foundation garment ends above knees
LEGAL



Foundation garments end above knees
LEGAL



How the Coach Can Reduce Uniform Issues

Most track and field and cross country coaches have probably seen the following scenario played out several times through the years: It's the most important meet of the season. After months of preparation, an athlete arrives ready to compete. He/She feels physically and mentally prepared for this moment. Following a thorough warmup, the athlete reports to the bullpen upon the first call for his/her event. The best performance of his/her career awaits. As the officials are going over the final heat/lane/flight assignments and giving final instructions for the event, the Clerk of the

Course notices that the competitor is clad in an illegal uniform and orders him/her to make the necessary modifications before being allowed to compete. The competitor is in a panic, but is finally able to make the changes just moments before the event begins. Physically, he/she is still ready to compete, but mentally, he/she is a wreck. In recent years, it seems as though the rules governing jewelry and uniforms have impacted high school track and field more than false starts, hurdle infractions and relay exchange zone violations, combined. These issues always seem to surface at the end of the year when the stakes are the greatest. As coaches, we need to do everything possible to eliminate our team and athletes' performances being impacted by violations of these rules. How can this be accomplished?

The first step as a coach is to thoroughly read the NFHS Rules and Case Books before the start of each season. Pay close attention to any rule changes, as well as new interpretations that may be included in the Case Book. While the rules are quite specific, there is always some grey area open

to interpretation by meet officials. Try to anticipate the strictest interpretation of the rules that your team may encounter. Now, prepare for the upcoming season with this



assessment in mind. Order any new or replacement uniforms accordingly to have your athletes in legal uniforms.

As the season begins, make sure your athletes thoroughly understand the rules governing jewelry and uniforms. Even though most of the early small meets may not strictly enforce these rules, impress upon your athletes the importance of being in compliance anyway. Prevent a pattern of competing while violating these rules even if there are no apparent consequences for doing so.

As important meets approach, reaffirm that all athletes are fully aware of, and in compliance with the rules. This is extremely important in relays. Again, try to anticipate the strictest interpretation and prepare accordingly.

Setting a pattern of compliance and accountability with these rules as a team throughout the season will help ensure that when important meets occur, the athletes will be able to focus on the competition instead of worrying about complying with the NFHS Rules or the interpretation by meet officials.

Electronic Devices

It is important that we recognize and acknowledge that technology surrounds us and is inescapable in our daily lives. These technologies have invaded the traditional "competition" area. When utilized correctly and within the rules, technology can be a useful tool in the coaching process.

A major change to the NFHS Track & Field Rules in 2014 is the interpretation of the use of electronic devices during competition. Let us examine the change.

ART 8... Electronic devices may be used in unrestricted areas and coaching boxes, providing the location does not interfere with progress of the meet as determined by the meet referee.

- a. *Electronic devices shall not be used to transmit information to the competitor during the race or trial.*
- b. *Electronic devices shall not be used for any review of an official's decision.*
- c. *State associations may also have policies in place to further address the use of electronic devices.*

The changes made are for coaches only - NOT competitors. Let's examine the language.

- **"*Electronic devices shall not be used to transmit information to the competitor*" —**

The context of the rule is that the device is not to be used to transmit electronic data on the performance of the athlete directly to the athlete while in competition. Also, the context of the rule is to allow the coach, located in a designated area, to "coach" the athlete by providing video capture of his/her performance.

Coaches are there to use their skills and to use video replay they have captured to aid in the coaching of an athlete. When data is transmitted or received externally, they have circumvented the rule.

- **"*may be used in unrestricted areas and coaching boxes*" —** All that this says is that the games committee authorizes designated areas for the coaches to observe and confer with competitors, and these areas shall be clearly marked by the host meet management. These areas should

be identified and clearly marked off prior to the start (warmups) of the event for which they are intended. If the area is not marked off prior to the competition, the head field judge of the event, in conjunction with the appropriate referee, can establish any limitations/restrictions of movement of the competitors outside the event venue.

- **"*providing the location does not interfere with the progress of the meet as defined by the referee*" —** All running events have a designated start time that should not be delayed by coaching of a competitor. Likewise, field events have a time limit for each trial and these time limits must be adhered to and strictly enforced.

Technology: Friend or Foe?

If you've looked around recently, a lyric by Bob Dylan certainly applies: "For the times they are a-changin'." People connect in a virtual reality through Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. Massive amounts of information are stored in devices no bigger than a dime, and phones can print sporting event tickets, allow you to check into your flight and turn off the lights in your house hundreds of miles away. Heck, I'm even writing this article on a tablet and accessing the Internet while flying 35,000 feet in the air! No one could have dreamed all of this would be available, even 10 years ago. Technology has penetrated every corner of our existence and the high school sports world is no exception. As high school coaches, we sit on the precipice of a new dawn in our sport. With the adoption of Rule 3-2-8 by the NFHS, many new electronic tools will be available and legal for the high school coach.

Tablets or phones can be used as coaching tools and give instant feedback to an athlete. If used as intended, as an educational tool, technology can quicken the learning curve, ease the heavy lifting of trying to explain a technique and enhance the experience for all involved. It is truly a blessing and a privilege to be part of this sport at such an exciting time.

However, with great privilege comes great responsibility. While advocates for the use of technology cite the many benefits, critics bring up justified concerns. With blanket permission to use technology from appropriate areas as covered in the rules (use by competitors during



a race or trial is still prohibited), how do we make sure coaches and athletes are using it in an honorable way? The answer is we can't. Technology does invite the possibility that individuals will use it in ways it was not intended. If this is the case, why not put restrictions on it? Legalizing the use of technology has sent the sport of track and field into uncharted waters and placed technology's future on the shoulders of a few. The future of the use of technology will come down to our nation's coaches. Track and field is an honorable sport largely due to our coaches' investment in educating beyond the track and field skills, that they remain concerned with more than just first-place finishes. Coaching is still a vehicle used to teach ethics, morality and to foster resiliency. If we adopt technology as a part of that coaching framework, it will only help to teach our young men and women to grow into individuals of whom we can all be proud. If we do not, we may lose an invaluable asset. Technology: friend or foe? Only time will tell.



Survival of the Fittest Coach

**POINT OF
POZ
EMPHASIS**

Coaching, teaching and parenting all share a commonality in that no matter how many classes one takes or books one reads, there will always be situations, challenges and occurrences that are unexpected. The trick for survival is being prepared for all the situations over which one has control, so time and energy can be used for those surprising situations.

For young coaches, the one aspect over which you have control is knowing the rules of the sport you are coaching. Having a firm grasp of the rules and conveying them to your athletes will make your coaching life much easier. In track and field, many coaches and

athletes take some rules for granted, but coaches must remember that some athletes—those who are young or new to the sport—may not know even the most basic of rules. Each year, I begin the year introducing not only my coaching staff, but also those athletes who are veterans to my program. These athletes may not be seniors; they are the athletes who have participated in track and field in the past and are veterans in aspects of training, competing, and comporting themselves on and off the track. I let these athletes know they are to be mentors for the rookies and less experienced members of our team. I expect the veterans to lead by example and to take charge when coaches are not present. What this means is these athletes are to be teachers on and off the track. In this way, many of the "rules" (written and unwritten) are taught.

One of the best pieces of advice I can give to young coaches is to talk with your athletes before, during and after practice about track and field and all the aspects of it. Kids love to hear stories of past athletes and meets; use these to teach your athletes about the sport and its logistics. During the pre-season and especially during the first few meets of the year, be sure to discuss all rules that apply to your athletes. In track and field, rules vary from event to event, so this process takes a tremendous amount of time and patience. As a coach you need to have some one-on-one time with individual athletes or athletes in small groups according to events. Some rules apply to all—like the uniform and jewelry rules, so take the time to discuss them with your entire team. Be sure to inform athletes that the rules apply to the whole team, so each member should help police his/her teammates. Be an active

monitor of the rules yourself. At meets, have a team meeting and remind athletes of those rules and be sure to point out any infractions you see. Reminding athletes of these rules multiple times during the pre-season and before, and during those meets at the beginning of the year creates routines that last a career.

When the time comes for championship meets, the stress on athletes and coaches soars. One of the best ways to lessen the stress on all is being sure that all within one's control is as completed as it should be. I know that prior to and at championship meets, I have completed all the essentials that need to be done, abided by all the rules and informed my athletes of the logistics of the upcoming competition. Those are the ONLY aspects over which I have control, and by taking care of those well in advance of the meet, I have freed all my energy to deal with the unexpected—which every track and field coach knows will happen.

The time and energy required early in the year to teach one's athletes the rules of the sport will be repaid several times over at the end of the year when a coach doesn't have to worry about abiding by rules because that has become habitual; rather, he/she can focus on all the unexpected hurdles that come.

Fundamentals of Coaching

Track and Field

www.nfhslearn.com

The NFHS, in partnership with USA Track and Field, developed this course to teach the fundamentals of running, jumping and throwing, the importance of sound mechanics, and how to teach these basic skills. For only \$75, join decorated Olympic athletes Dan O'Brien and Hyleas Fountain in learning techniques and skills to become a better coach or official!



Fundamentals of Coaching Track And Field

Expanding Our View, Twisting Our Lens, Redefining Our Purpose

Important Questions to Consider

With the start of another school year, we are provided with a fresh start and an opportunity to provide great experiences for the students we coach. As we begin this new year and reflect on this opportunity please take a moment and ask yourself the following simple question - "Why Do I Coach?"

Why Do I Coach?

To positively impact the students who participate on our teams, we must start with and identify our coaching purpose. In doing so, we purposefully identify the road we want to take, to get to the place we want to be, instead of ending up down an unintentional path, wondering how we got there. We spend a considerable amount of time on the technical and tactical aspects of the sports we coach, but there is so much more to consider. Joe Ehrmann, author of *InSideOut Coaching*, states, "Coaching shouldn't start with the X's and O's but with the Y's. This WHY should be a clear and concise statement defining the impact we are trying to make in our players' lives. WHY directs the expenditures of our time, energy, and effort and provides a final destination. Answering the question 'Why do I coach?' can help a coach identify selfish agendas and develop a purpose that transcends personal, vocational, financial or ego-driven needs. WHY prompts us to answer the questions of when and how to use the power of coaching to affect players for their lifetime."

A clear coaching purpose will assist us in focusing on the students we are entrusted with rather than on the X's and O's and winning and losing, and will make us aware of the true value that comes from coaching opportunities. We have to get intentional, twist the lens and focus on the WHYS of what we do.

Why Do I Coach the Way I Do?

Coaches have an incredible opportunity to dramatically influence their students' lives. Take a moment and think back: How did your high school coaches impact you? We can all name the coaches that we couldn't wait to spend time with and those whose practices dragged on; those who were heroes in our lives and those we despised. Why do you coach the way you do? How have the coaches in your past impacted the way that you coach today? Look in the mirror. Good or bad, how much of how you coach is based on what you learned from them?

Ehrmann defines the coach who strips away fun as a Transactional Coach, one who uses questionable tactics, manipula-



tion and threats to achieve their goals. "When players perform well, they are rewarded. When they don't perform well, some kind of punishment is inflicted, be it yelling or the withholding of praise, playing time, or participation."

The coaches we aspire to be are Transformational Coaches. Ehrmann defines these coaches as those who inspire, motivate and produce positive change in their student-athletes. They understand the needs of young people and "offer individual support and encouragement for each player and have a clear vision for the desired impact on their players' lives. And not surprisingly, a Transformational Coach, even in organized athletics, allows and encourages young people to simply play." Spend a few moments and think about the coaches you played for and identify the experience. Was it a Transactional one in which you only got something when you proved your value and worth, or was it Transformational, an experience from which you consistently grew? Now that you are the coach, what type of experience are you providing the students who play for you?

What Does It Feel Like To Be Coached By You?

Identifying whether we are Transactional or Transformational will determine how it feels to be coached by us. Students who have played on a team will remember the time spent with their coach and have stories and memories of their experiences. Through every experience and interaction, we are creating pathways in our students for future responses, solutions and attitudes. Positively or negatively, we will forever be a part of each person's life that we have had the privilege of coaching. We are modeling how to interact, how to treat others, how to deal with conflict, how to help others succeed, how to show appreciation, how to do our best, how to do things we don't want to do and how to work with other people. We are leaving our imprint on the students we interact with for a lifetime. What will our coaching legacy be with the

students who played for us? Will it be a legacy of Transaction or Transformation? Will it be defined only by the outcome on the scoreboard or more intentionally by the process and the path that we experienced together? Much of this is determined by defining success.

How Do You Define Success?

Success can be determined in many ways. Unfortunately in our culture, it is most often defined by the outcome on the scoreboard. Our job as educators is to make students aware of additional possibilities. Ehrmann urges us to "define success before we measure it. If we measure ourselves against ourselves, we can determine if we are truly successful. This is especially important in our 'win at all cost' sports culture where success is defined only by winning and in the vast majority of situations, we are left to feel that we didn't measure up." Focus your definition of success on the aspects of coaching we can control: improvement in performance rather than our record; providing a fun environment for participation; and making our students better people, not just better athletes.

Twisting the Lens on the Question

'How'd Ya Do?'

Teaching students to answer the question 'How'd Ya Do?' with more than "we won" or "we lost" is the first step to creating awareness in them on how to define success. By focusing on the following WHY values as the outcome and a new way to answer the 'How'd Ya Do?' question, we teach them the true purpose of participation:

1. To have fun
2. To learn
3. To help others succeed
4. To improve
5. To conduct yourself well
6. To appreciate the opponent
7. To do your best
8. To learn life skills (Star Qualities)
9. To learn from both winning and losing

Redefining Our Focus

As coaches, we know there are important lessons to be learned through participation in high school athletics programs. By expanding our view, twisting our lens and redefining our purpose, we can provide a positive learning experience that will influence the students on our teams for a lifetime. Face it – with less than three percent of our students going on to play college or professional sports, we are not providing these opportunities to help them get scholarships or professional careers. A greater and more important purpose of our programs is to provide opportunities to make ethical, caring and empathetic people. It is an incredible opportunity and responsibility, one that we, as coaches, need to approach with conscious intent. We have the power over young people to either do a tremendous amount of good or a tremendous amount of harm.

- If students who played for us can define winning and losing as an *outcome* of the WHY and not the *purpose* of the WHY, then we, as coaches, have been successful.
- The key is being intentional, utilizing teachable moments and holding ourselves as coaches accountable to the WHYS.

Choose intentionally, define your purpose, reflect on how it feels to be coached by you, and why you coach the way you do. Commit to making success about the WHY values and not the final score. Give students the positive experience we, as coaches, longed for as young people involved in high school athletics.

The resources in this article are from InSideOut Coaching, by Joe Ehrmann and How'd Ya Do, a Top 20 Training Concept.

Outdoor track and field is the second-most popular sport for boys, with 580,672 participants, and most popular sport for girls, with

472,939 participants, as the high school level, according to the 2012-13 NFHS Athletics Participation Survey.

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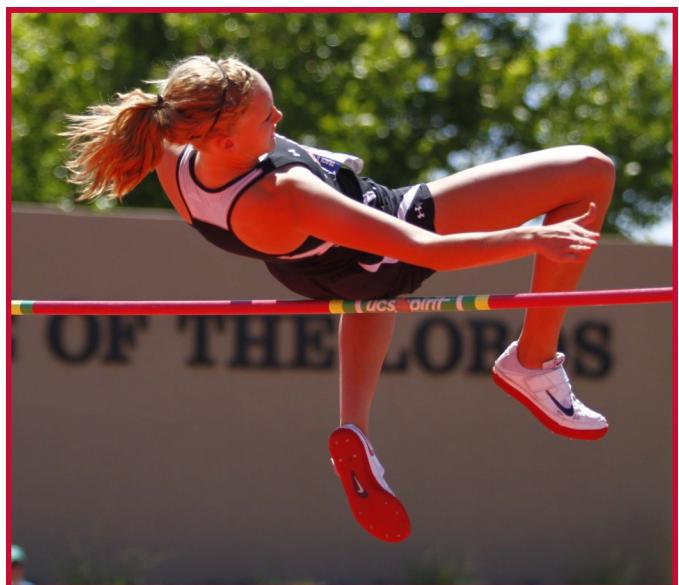
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Communicating “Pass” in the Field Events



Passing is an option for a competitor when called up for a given trial in a field event. By indicating a “pass,” the competitor is stating that he/she will forgo, or not take or attempt, that “trial,” leaving open the option to continue in the next round. Passing a trial does not count as a foul for the competitor and can be communicated one round at a time throughout the competition. When a competitor “passes” a trial, the result is he/she will have one fewer trial in the preliminaries or finals of the horizontals and throwing events, or at a given height in the vertical jumps.

There are many varied circumstances in which a competitor would choose to “pass” for a given trial. One example is the competitor who has just returned from a running event who chooses to “pass” to allow for more recovery time. Another example would be for an injured or fatigued competitor who wishes to conserve energy. Passing can be employed as a strategy when utilized correctly and within the confines of the rules.

Let us review a situation in the Case Book:

7.2.11 Situation B: A competitor has taken three running approaches at the high jump. Realizing he/she will not be able to initiate another approach within the one-minute time limit, the competitor yells “Pass” to the event judge. **Ruling:** An unsuccessful trial is recorded for the competitor.

In the comment for this Case Book Situation, it states that a pass must be communicated to the event judge before the start of the clock. The rationale behind this rule is that the



athlete cannot circumvent the time limit rule by making one or more approaches to the bar and then deciding to pass at that height. In effect, this athlete would have an unfair advantage over those athletes who made one of more approaches and failed in their attempts to clear the bar. Once an athlete is called up, he or she is committed in making an attempt.

A “pass” will not be granted if the clock has already started and the clock will continue to run.

This situation can be applied to all of the field events with adjustments for the various time limits per trial. Once an athlete is committed to an attempt, then he/she must complete the jump or throw within the prescribed time limits. Failing to initiate a trial within these limits is considered an unsuccessful attempt.

In the field events, the common practice is to call the next three competitors in the competition order. Announcing the next three athletes is done as soon as the previous trial is completed: “up” the first competitor; “on deck” for the next competitor; and “on hold” for the last in the group of three. As soon as the field event venue is ready for the next competitor, that competitor is called “up” a second time, and then the time limit for that trial begins. **Failure to take a trial within the prescribed time limit will result in an unsuccessful trial.** During subsequent rounds, if a competitor knows in advance that they will be “passing” a trial, then this pass, again, must be communicated to the official announcing the athletes, any time before they are called up for a trial a second time.

Clerking of the Relays

The clerk of the course is first official relay teams encounter at a track and field meet, and is responsible for checking the athletes in and providing the procedures and protocols for their event. Besides the general pre-race clerk functions, when the relays arrive, additional duties present themselves.

For Relays Run in Lanes

At most high school meets, there are only one or two clerks as well as one or two starters. To maximize the efficiency of these officials, it is imperative that relay runners be provided with all necessary information for their exchange zones, so that they are self-reliant and self-sufficient. It is critical that each athlete understands the rules, zone markings and their meanings.

Clerk's Pre-Race Duties:

- Check-in and scratch teams
- Ensure the legality of uniforms and undergarments
- Check or hand out batons
- Explain acceptable marking material for the track

Clerk's Instructions:

1. Have participating teams line up in their assigned lane.
2. Have participating teams line up in the order that they are running.
3. Line up heats separately.
4. Advise runners as to what they should do after handing off the baton.
5. Explain starting procedures to first runner and provide color of their start line.
6. Explain exchange zone color/markings to runners #2, #3 and #4.
7. Explain acceleration zone color/markings to runners #2, #3 and #4.
8. Define to runners #2, #3 and #4 where they can stand to receive the baton.
9. Review lane assignments.
10. Ask if there are any questions.

It is imperative that the clerk only give general rules about the zone and exchanges. Only the coach is responsible for telling athletes how to place their marks.

Competitors are now ready for their relay race so the clerk will:

- Direct the first runner to his/her start line;
- Direct the #2, #3 and #4 runners to their respective exchange zones;
- Inform line clerk/finish line coordinator/announcer of final list of starters/deliver heat sheets to them;
- Inspect the position of the competitors in their respective zones for correct lanes and appropriate positioning.

For Relays Using a Sliding Pass

The clerk's pre-race duties remain the same and the clerk's instructions #1 - #6 are identical. However, in these types of relays, the remaining instructions are different:

Clerk's Instructions:

7. Advise that no acceleration zone is allowed.
8. Advise that all outgoing runners must position themselves within the exchange zone.
9. Explain how to line up when a teammate is approaching.
10. Explain what to do after you receive the baton.

One variation to the relay exchanges is the second runner in the 4x400 relay. This runner must receive the baton in his/her lane, without the use of the acceleration zone, and must remain in his/her lane throughout the first turn. He/She may break for the lead after crossing the "break line" at the end of the first turn. This second runner will be positioned on the track, in his/her assigned lane at the start of the race.

The clerk makes a meet function smoothly, and his/her roles and responsibilities are many and varied. Meet management, clerk(s) and starter(s) will generally have a pre-meet meeting to develop an understanding as to who communicates the instructions, positioning and administration of the relay exchanges and sliding hand-offs.



Tips to Mentoring New Track & Field Officials

The NFHS Track and Field Rules Committee has identified a need to assure all officials working at high school and middle school meets are knowledgeable of the current rules and aware of risk minimization issues for athletes, spectators and officials. Many of the meet officials are volunteers, coaches and parents, as well as certified officials. The need to know the rules, the intent of the rules and the application of the rules is paramount. Mentoring officials new to the high school setting is a simple method to provide necessary support to advancing officials through hands-on experience, resources, skills, and enthusiasm. Mentoring is used to enhance professional development and the success of new officials.

The mentoring of new track and field officials will:

- improve an official's overall productivity and professionalism;
- promote individual growth and development; and
- improve the retention of new officials.

Both the sport and individual officials benefit by having those with knowledge and skills passing them along to those who desire to learn. Mentoring matches a mentor and protégé. The mentor and protégé discuss a mentoring goal and a timeframe for the mentoring relationship—this timeframe should not exceed six months. The mentor and protégé enter into a "mentoring agreement," stating the goal and timeframe. The mentoring goal will determine how and how often the mentor and protégé communicate and work together to accomplish it.

At the end of the mentoring relationship, and based upon the progress of the mentoring goal, the mentor mentoring and protégé may:

- decide to end the mentor relationship;
- renew the mentoring goal; or
- enter into a new mentoring goal.

A mentor is a trusted counselor or guide. Someone who teaches and gives advise to the less experienced official and provides him/her the opportunity for growth and development.

Mentors should exhibit:

- good personal judgment and communication skills;
- the ability to empathize, to put themselves in the place of the new official;
- the ability to recognize the needs of a new official;
- knowledge, skills and insights into the track and field rules and procedures;
- networking skills to assist in the advancement of the protégé; and
- the ability provide hands-on training while continuing to run an efficient meet or event.

Mentoring is a unique experience for every new official and should adapt to that person's needs and desires. A beginning official without any experience requires defined opportunities tailored to their expressed goal(s). Depending on geographical differences and other commitments, mentors and protégés may communicate face-to-face, by e-mail, or by phone. They may only meet in-person when working at a track meet or they may meet together outside of meets.

Properly Filling Out “Field Event Record Sheets”

When completing event record sheets in field events, it is critical that the official is clear, concise and consistent. Writing clearly is perhaps the most important part of completing the form. All numbers should be legible and concise, and should be written consistently. It is best to initial erasures so that if there is a question, you can answer what was the intent of what was written.

Before the Event Begins:

1. Check that you have all the pages of the scoresheet for the event.
 2. As the athletes arrive for the event, check them in by placing a single check mark next to their name or competitor number (if used) to indicate that they are present.
 3. If a competitor is also in another event, make note of the other event next to their name. (*If they check out to go to the other event, make note of the time that they leave next to the event.*)
 4. If the athlete does not appear, or is scratched from the event, draw a single line through his/her name, as well as a line through the "best mark" and "place" boxes on the right side of the scoresheet.
 5. In the vertical jumping events, after the warmup period has ended, ask each competitor what height he/she will be entering the competition at and notate that next to his/her name on the scoresheet. Follow the procedures listed below for indicating the heights that he/she will be passing.
 6. After the warmup period has ended, note the start time of the event at the top of the scoresheet.

Throws and Horizontal Jumps Recording:

In the throwing events and horizontal jumping events, recording the results of each effort is very straight-forward. Each valid ("fair") attempt is to be measured and recorded on the scoresheet. There can only be one recorded attempt per round.

When reading the measurement, it should be in feet and inches (imperial measurement). All

measurements should be recorded to the nearest lesser quarter inch (1/4"), or to the nearest lesser centimeter, in all events except the javelin throw and discus throw. In these two events, all measurements should be recorded to the nearest lesser full inch or even centimeter.

When recording the measurements on the sheet, pick one consistent, clear style of writing the numerals and distances. For example, pick a consistent way of indicating a 4, 5, 7 and 0. When indicating the full distance, use a consistent format. For example, if the distance to be recorded is fifty-one feet, eight and three-quarter inches, you can express that as 51'8 3/4", or 51' 8-3/4 or 51-8-3/4 or any other style that is consistent and clearly indicates the distance.

If the throw is a foul, a single "F" should be entered in the box. If the athlete passes the attempt, a single "P" should be entered.

Interscholastic Officiating

www.nfhsofficials.com

This course provides an introduction to the skills and concepts used by officials. Taking just 30-45 minutes to complete, it is ideal for brand new officials and those in the first few years of officiating. Topics include the basics of becoming and staying an official, science and art of officiating and how to combine these skills for successful officiating. The course is free for NFHS



Pole Vault "Round Up"



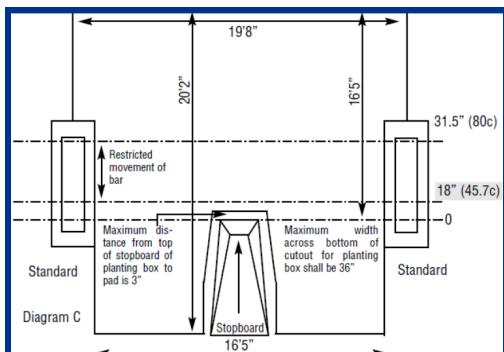
Padding

Proper padding for the pole vault venue is essential for a safe competition. Padding includes the landing area, front buns, padding over any hard or unyielding surfaces, and, beginning with the 2014-2015 track season, a box collar with wings to provide padding around the planting box that meets the ASTM Specification Standards. The collar is available from several track and field equipment manufacturers.

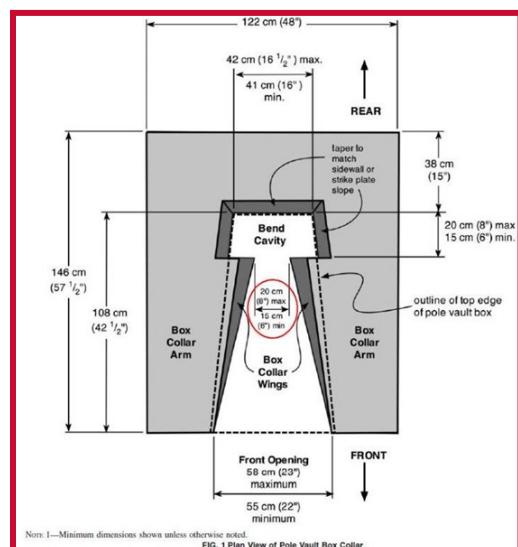
Landing System

The pole vault landing system shall be a minimum of 19 feet, 8 inches (6 m) wide by 20 feet, 2 inches deep, configured as shown in the diagram below. The landing surface measured beyond the back of the standard bases shall be a minimum of 19 feet, 8 inches (6 m) wide. The dimension of the landing surface from the back of the vaulting box to the back of the landing system shall be 16 feet, 5 inches (5 m) deep. The material in the system shall be high enough and of a composition that will decelerate the landing.

When the landing system is made up of two or more sections, the landing surface shall include a common cover or pad extending over all sections. The front sections of the landing system, known as front



buns, shall be a minimum of 16 feet, 5 inches (5 m) wide so as to cover the entire area around the plant box to the inside edges of the standard bases up to the front edge of the plant box. The maximum cut-out for the planting box shall be 36 inches (914 mm) in width, measured across the bottom of the cutout. The edges of the front of the landing system immediately behind the planting box shall not be placed more than 3 inches (76 mm) from the top of the back of the planting



Notes: 1—Minimum dimensions shown unless otherwise noted.

FIG. 1 Plan View of Pole Vault Box Collar

box. The front pad shall be attached to the main landing pad or encased in a common cover.

Box Collar

A box collar with wings shall be placed around the planting box as shown in the diagrams.

Inspection and Safety Concerns

Beginning this season, it will be the responsibility of the field referee, head field judge or assigned inspector of implements to inspect each pole to

Pole Vault: Successful Skill Development Course

Course Objectives:

- Starting a beginner—teaching proper standing grip height, width of hands on pole and position of hands on pole.
- How to instruct beginning-level pole vaulters through skill development drills and build confidence.
- Maintaining a safe practice and competition environment—proper pad placement and securing of vault mat pads.

Course Introduction

- Welcome and Introduction
- Learning Objectives

Unit 1: Starting a Beginner

- Unit Introduction
- Standing Grip Height
- Positions of Hand on Pole
- Balanced Pole Carry
- Working with Straight Pole
- Pop Quiz
- Fun Fact!

Unit 2: Basic Laws of Physics

- Unit Learning Objectives
- Unit Introduction
- Focus Through the Top Arm
- Keep Head and Eyes Up

- Jump Off the Ground
- Putting it All Together
- Fun Fact!

Unit 3: Drills & Coaching Techniques

- Unit Introduction
- Unit Learning Objectives
- Drill Progressions & Coaching Techniques
- NFHS Rules

Unit 4: Problem Solving

- Resources Reminder

Unit 5: Equipment and Facility

- Unit Introduction
- Learning Objectives
- Zero Point
- Standard Base Pads
- Preferred Landing Zone

Unit 6: Interactive Exercise

- The Science Involved

Unit 7: Conclusion

- Final Remarks
- Course Test
- Congratulations!

Resources

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Pole Vault: Successful Skill Development

Standing grip height:

To establish this position the athlete holds a pole by their side and reaches up with their top hand as high as they can on pole while standing.

CONTINUE >>



(Continued from page 17)

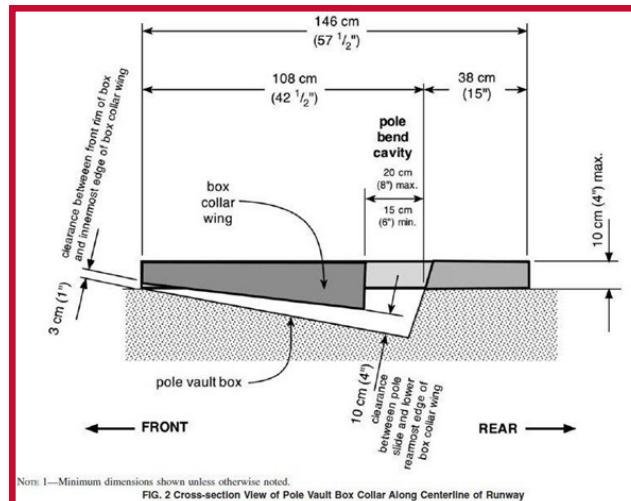
be used in the competition prior to warm-ups to verify that the poles are legal equipment, per Rule 7-5-3. Prior to the competition officials must check that:

1. the pole vault landing area meets padding requirements;
2. the competitor's weight is at or below the manufacturer's pole rating;
3. the pole rating is marked with a minimum $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch contrasting color (*located with or above the top handheld position*);
4. there is a 1-inch circular band indicating the maximum top handheld position; and
5. the proper binding of adhesive tape of uniform thickness is used (*The manufacturer must include items #2 and #3 on each pole*).

Also, prior to the warmup period, the coach must verify that all of the

school's pole vaulters and poles meet these requirements.

During the competition, officials must ensure that the padding remains properly installed and positioned for each attempt (e.g., mats do not separate to create a hole in the landing area). The positioning of the planting box collar should be confirmed before each attempt.



Time Limits

Competitors, coaches and officials must also be aware of the change to the time limit for initiating an attempt. The time limit for determining the time allocated for a given attempt is determined by the number of competitors in the competition at the beginning of a bar height. Beginning this season, **the time limit for initiating an attempt is:**

- **1 minute for the pole vault** (*decreased from 1 ½ minutes in prior years*) when there are more than 3 competitors
- **3 minutes** (*decreased from 4 minutes*) when there are three or fewer competitors
- **5 minutes** (*decreased from 6 minutes*) when a single competitor who has won the competition and remains in competition.

Three minutes are still afforded to a competitor making consecutive trials.

Competition Concern

Officials should be aware that in recent use of the

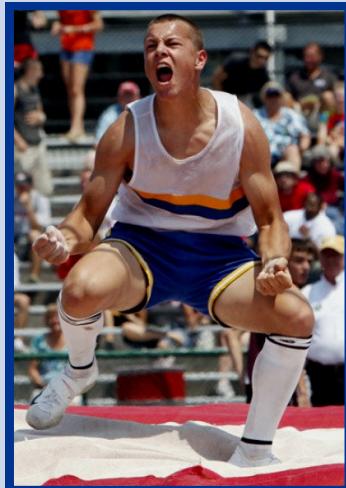
new collar, there have been reports of the collar causing the pole to bounce back and knock into the bar even though the pole had been pushed back toward the runway by an athlete. This could be a problem and potentially a basis for a protest. Bar judges and flaggers should carefully watch for this and be prepared to make the appropriate call.

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USA Track and Field

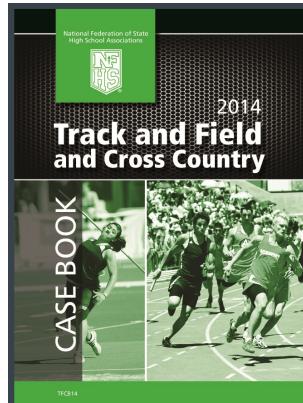
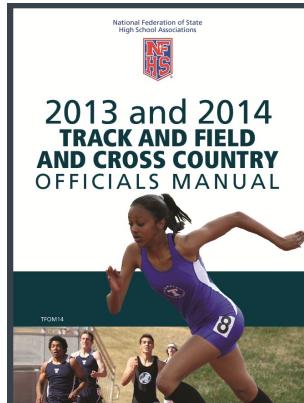
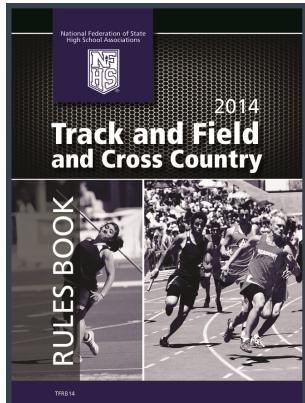
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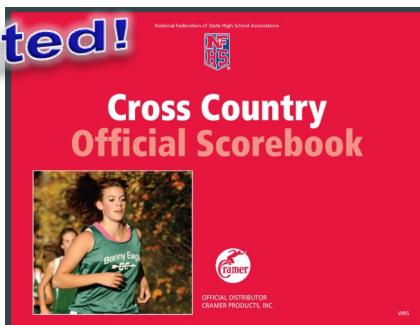
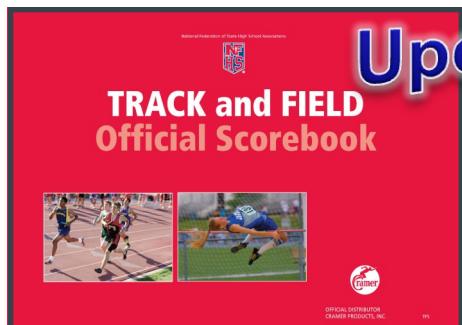
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