



# 20 Track and Field Pre-Meet Notes 18



## Rules Change Highlights

- Clarification of uniform rules
- Length of pole vault crossbar consistent with length of high jump crossbar
- Expanded the professional positions that are qualified to survey and measure a track
- Added penalty to prohibited competitors' actions

# National Federation of State High School Associations

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## Review of 2018-19 Rule Changes

### 2018 Rule Changes

#### 4-3-1, 4-3-1b, 4-3-1c

Clarifies that for a track and field, as well as a cross country, uniform to be considered legal, the singlet and bottom or one-piece uniform shall be school-issued or school-approved. This change for school approval addresses the need for athletes to purchase a part of their uniform, but such individual apparel shall be approved by the school coach to be certain it meets all rule requirements.

Rationale: Clarifies that the school may issue or approve an individually purchased item as part of the official school uniform.

#### 6-2-14 PENALTY (NEW), 6-2-10, 6-2-13

Several prohibitions regarding competitors' actions were included but had no associated penalty should the rule not be followed which created confusion for enforcement. The appropriate penalty of disqualification from the event has been added.

Rationale: This rule was absent the necessary penalty.

#### 6-5-11

The requirements for the length of the pole vault crossbar has become more flexible as it can now be within a range in length like the high jump.

Rationale: Creates consistency in establishing a range for the length of the crossbar in pole vault. Provides flexibility in the length of the crossbar, like the high jump crossbar.

#### 8-6-1 (NEW), 4-3

Duplicate language regarding the uniform has been removed from Rule 8, Cross Country, and all rules regarding the uniform for individuals, relay team members and cross country teams are now all contained in one rule, Rule 4.

Rationale: Eliminates duplicate language. These two rules are identical except for the rule on the soles of the shoes allowing for one-inch spikes in cross country.

### 2018 Major Editorial Changes

#### 4-6-1 Note; 2-3-1 Note

Clarifies the referee has the sole authority for ruling on irregularities not covered within the rules.

#### 5-3-1

Provides greater flexibility by expanding the professional positions which are qualified to survey and measure a track.

#### 6-7-2

Corrects clerical error in maximum diameter for the boys indoor shot put.

#### 6-8-9

Removes duplicate language which is covered in Rule 6-2-10 regarding broken javelin.

#### 6-9-8

Removes duplicate language which is covered in Rule 6-2-3 regarding excused competitors.

## Points of Emphasis

### 1. Uniforms—Waistbands, Trim, Accents and Compliance

More than one million student-athletes representing 16,000 high schools participate in track and field programs that follow NFHS Track and Field and Cross Country rules. The NFHS Track and Field Rules Committee is charged with the responsibility to codify rules that allow the flexibility for high schools to properly equip their athletes in the type of uniform design that best suits their program vision, are in compliance with the rules requirements and provide meet officials the opportunity to clearly and accurately identify the represented school when required.

The NFHS Track and Field Rules Committee's task has become more difficult given the increasing number of programs nationwide that are allowing individual team members the option of independently purchasing either part or all of their team uniform. The nature of the competitive event may lend itself to a different style uniform rather than one style for all. In addition, some styles of



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## Points of Emphasis

uniform bottoms are more personal and not redistributed from season to season. This, combined with variations in product lines from manufacturers from year to year, leads to the potential for unlimited combinations of uniform configurations that “almost” match but might vary slightly in design, accents or color. However, these uniforms are, on many occasions, labeled and distributed under a brand and model number that has been available in previous years. These factors have played a role in making it increasingly more difficult for the school to purchase and issue or approve uniforms that are fully compliant by the strict interpretation of the rules.

Uniforms can fade over time and pantone color can vary slightly when ordering replacements. When evaluating color of uniforms, slight variations in shade of the color should not be considered an automatic violation of Rule 4-3-2. The color should be identifiable as the same color such as navy blue to navy blue, even though fading may prohibit the shade to be the same.

Variations to accent and/or trim on the uniform bottom often are



at the core of Rule 4-3-2 issues. Adding or modifying these attributes can lead to vastly different designs. However, in many cases these changes are subtle and do not negatively impact a meet official’s ability to identify the correct school if required for reporting a potential violation. Examples of uniform attribute design changes that may not necessarily be considered rule violations could include differing number of stripes (all placed in the same direction), the addition of small accent trim or reflective pattern due to the newer types of material.

It is expected that all relay team members or cross country team members can be clearly identified as representing the same school. The degree of variation, if any, allowed in the examples above is dependent upon the respective state high school association and collective consensus of those meet officials responsible for uniform compliance.

As emphasized on numerous occasions, multiple, visible manufacturer’s logos on the uniform item make the item non-compliant with the rules. When competitors wear a uniform item that displays the

multiple logos, such as on the leg and around a visible waistband, during competition the uniform is non-compliant.

### 2. Providing Fluids to Competitors at Cross Country Competitions

Considering the negative outcomes associated with dehydration, it is important that athletic administrators, appropriate health-care professionals and coaches work together to educate parents and student-athletes about developing a season-long hydration plan. Properly hydrating will have a positive impact on performance and minimize the risk of heat illness during the season.

Coaches should ensure that student-athletes have access to water prior to, during and after practice and encourage all to hydrate whenever they feel it is necessary. Various factors have a direct impact on hydration, therefore, implementing systems to monitor athletes during the season will ensure that they are maintaining proper levels.

NFHS Track and Field Rule 3-2-4u grants the Games Committee the authority to provide liquids during a competition. Event organizers are encouraged to work with meet officials to develop a plan to ensure all participants have access to water during events. Participating schools should expect the availability of water unless meet organizers have specified otherwise in advance. In that case, the burden of providing access to water or other types of fluid replacements rests with authorized school personnel. Rule 3-2-4u does not exclude coaches from providing water to their athletes during events given they follow established guidelines set forth in the meet administrative information. It is the desired goal that the host school and games committee have provided ample access to fluids to minimize the need for individual coaches to hydrate the athletes. However, each coach knows his or her athletes the best.

When creating an event hydration plan, meet organizers should consider the potential impact of heat on not only the athletes, but meet officials and others in support roles working the event. The goal is to promote appropriate hydration for all involved.

### 3. Entry Limits for Individual Contestants

Under Rule 4-2, Participation and Entry Limitations, a contestant shall not compete in more than four events, including relays. If a contestant is entered in four individual events, he/she may not be listed for any relay as the contestant has already met the participation limit with the four individual entries. If a

contestant is entered in three or fewer individual events, he/she may also be listed in one or more relays. (See chart below) A contestant exceeds the participation limit whenever he/she reports to the clerk of the course, or the field event judge, in the excess event. The contestant may be listed on relay teams(s) but is not a competitor until he/she reports to the clerk of the course. When the meet director, prior to the start of competition, recognizes the contestant is entered in more than four events, he/she shall scratch the athlete from the excess event starting from the bottom of the order of events and working upward. If the excess event is a field event, the athlete should be scratched from the last occurring field event in which he/she is entered.



**Contestants may officially enter:**

**Four Individual Events: No relays allowed.**

**Three Individual Events: May be listed on any number of relays but compete in only one relay.**

**Two Individual Events: May be listed on any number of relays, but compete in only two relays.**

**One Individual Event: May be listed on any number of relays, but compete in only three relays.**

**Zero Individual Events: May be listed on any number of relays and may compete in four relays.**

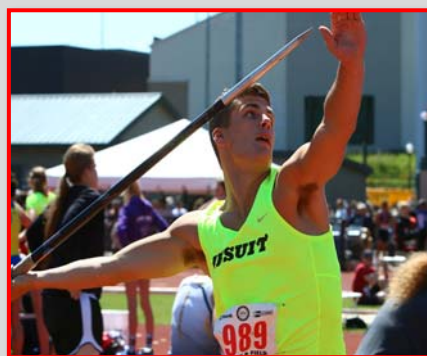
**4. Officials Safety and Recommendations in the Long Throws**

Anytime objects are thrown and flying through the air danger exists. This is especially true with the throwing field events. Risk minimization in the throwing events begins with proper and effective event management – the way the event venue is set-up, the monitor-

-ing of the warm-up and competition periods, and the manner in which the event is conducted. Each of these factors must be properly and carefully addressed and is essential to conducting a safe, efficient and athlete-centered competition.

The venue for each throwing event should always be laid out with safety and risk minimization as the primary concerns. When possible, the events should be staged away from other events, and away from any obstructions that may interfere with the safety of athletes, officials and spectators. The use of pennants or other physical barriers to prevent persons from straying into the impact area is a must. Signage noting the dangers is suggested for participants, coaches and officials as well as spectators.

Monitoring warm-up throws, and keeping competitors from entering the impact area/safety zone is a very important aspect of maintaining a safe warm-up and competition period. Only those marking the attempts and retrieving the implements should be inside the safety zone. Implements should always be carried back to the competition area, and never thrown back. Some schools only allow adults in the impact area as they tend to pay more attention to the thrower.



The head event judge should review with his/her crew how each person's task shall be accomplished and again emphasize the importance of always being alert for his/her own actions and the actions of others during the event's competition and associated warm-ups. All competitors should also be instructed on the conduct of the event, their responsibilities to follow all safety rules.

Don't allow the next competitor to initiate an attempt until all eyes are paying attention to the competitor, and the attempt can be execut-

-ed safely. Many times, an orange cone is placed in the circle or approach to signify the venue is closed until all are ready for the next competitor's performance. All eyes must be on the competitor during competition as well as during warm-ups. This applies to officials and coaches as well as spectators that may wander into a restricted area.

By using common sense, being vigilant and attentive to the conditions during the warm-up and competition, and controlling the flow and pace of competition, any throwing event can be conducted safely.



**Starters Duties in Officiating the 4x400 and 4x800 Relays**

At a high school track meet, the most labor intensive races for the officials are the 4x400 and the 4x800 Relays. In these races, the starters have extensive pre race, starting the race, during the race, and post race duties, to ensure a smooth, safe, and efficient competition.

Most high school meets have two (2) officials, and sometimes just one (1) official, starting these races and thus these races are a series of non-stop duties, which require many and varied officiating mechanics and expertise. The availability of knowledgeable and capable volunteers and officials is a major factor in

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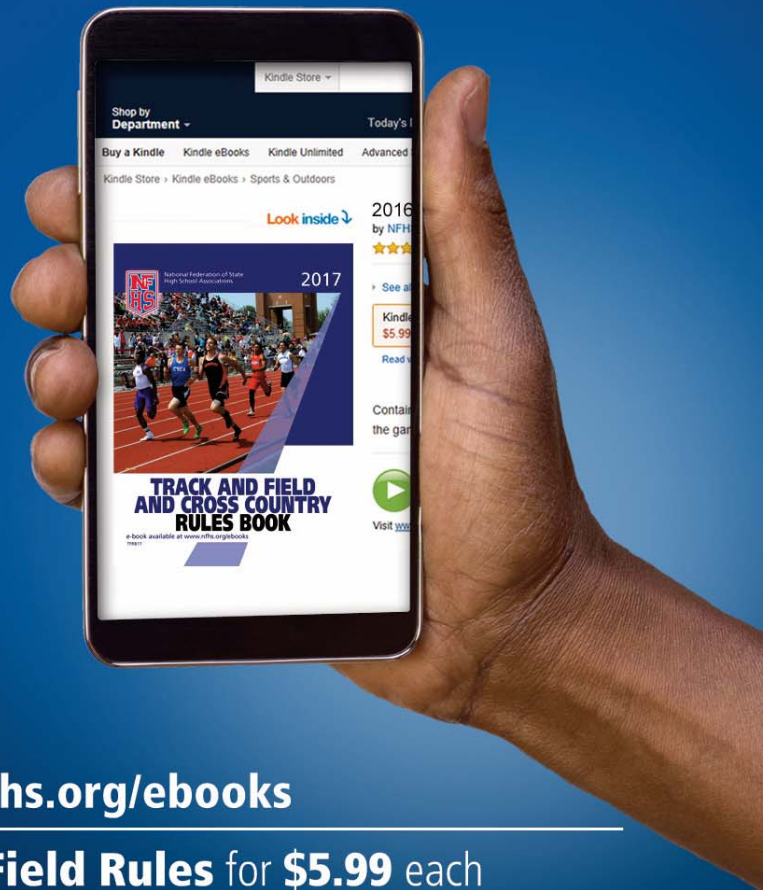


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these races and it is the responsibility of the starters to assess and determine their availability and level of their contribution.

### Pre-Race

Before the race is run, the following tasks should be assigned.

1. What type of start should utilize—lanes, alleys or waterfall?
  - Determined by:
    - Level of competition.
    - Number of teams.
    - Number of heats.
  - Speaker placement.
  - Starting stand placement.
  - Starters positioning.
2. Will the Clerk provide instructions or should the Starter(s) do so?
  - Provide brief and concise set of instructions.
  - Line up the runners in start lanes & in order to ensure they know their handoff partner.
3. Who will judge the break line and place cones in place?
  - Placement of cones varies with they type of start.
  - Availability of flags if needed.
  - Who is umpiring the exchange zones and break lines?
4. Who will provide instructions and placement to competitors?
  - Runner #1.
  - Runner #2.
  - Runners #3 & #4.
5. Who will oversee the feed of Runners #3 & #4 and what is their placement while waiting—inside or outside?
6. Who will judge the end of the zone?  
Who is calling out lap times, if utilized, or the number of laps remaining to run?
7. Who is calling out lap time, if utilized, or the number of laps remaining to run?

### Starting the Race

Now that we are prepared to start the race, several additional factors come into play. Each of these should be quickly assessed and placed into action in a calm manner.

1. Ensure that each Runner #1 has a baton,
2. Assign the correct starting line,
3. Position the recall starter(s),
4. Determine proper starting commands to utilize.

- Based upon the distance run by each runner.
  - 800 meter 1st leg—2 command start—
  - 400 meter 1st leg—3 command start
- 5. Give the command to remove warm-ups (when all competitors are ready).

### During the Race

In most races, after the report of the gun, the duties and responsibilities of the starters become minimal. However, the start of these relays only signals a transition to new roles and responsibilities.

1. Overseeing the athletes feed themselves into the exchange zone.
2. Umpiring the exchange zone.
  - After passing the baton, the relieved competitor should stand still or jog straight ahead and step off the track when clear (Rule 5-10-8).



3. Counting laps and keeping track of lapped teams.
4. Signaling the last lap (Rule 3-6-1) - not required in relays, but allowed.
5. Eliminating interference and assistance at the finish line.
  - Ensuring the finishing competitors do not interfere.
  - Preventing non-participants or spectators from pacing along the final straightaway.

It should be noted that Rule 5-10-11 clearly defines that it is the responsibility of the outgoing runner to ensure they are in the proper position on the exchange. *The official who is there at the exchange zone is there in an advisory capacity only, but with less experienced competitors, this becomes more of a teaching role.*

### Post-Race

Even though the race has concluded, as the competitors have crossed the finish line, the duties of the starter continue.

1. Serve as a finish line judge ensuring:
  - Proper placement of finishers.
  - Correct timing of finishers.
2. Umpiring the handling of batons.

### Indoor Competition

When these relay races are run indoors, all of these procedures remain in place. However, on the smaller tracks the speed or pace of the activities is greatly increased. Starters must additionally ensure that:

1. Proper start line is utilized:
  - Type of staggered start.
    - 1 turn.
    - 2 turn.
  - Proper 2 turn start line is utilized, not 200-meter start line on a 200-meter track.
2. The track is clear and no activity on the interior of the track is interfering.

Relays such as the 4x400 and the 4x800 are exciting to compete in and exciting to watch. The knowledgeable and professional official must utilize all of his/her skill and expertise to make the excitement smooth, safe and efficient.

## Voice Amplification at the Start Line—Do's & Don'ts

Any starter at a track meet, for any period of time, quickly appreciates the value of a device that amplifies the volume of the starter's voice. The competitors will also appreciate the value of a voice amplification system as they will all hear the commands from the starter clearly and in a calm voice. A voice amplification system can vastly improve the effectiveness and quality of a track meet.

One obvious advantage of an amplified voice is that it preserves the starter's vocal cords throughout the length of the meet. It also allows all athletes a fair opportunity to hear the starter's commands and instructions, without the starter needing to strain, and the starter is able to communicate with non-competitors such as other officials, volunteers and spectators, if and when a need arises. The starter's command should be heard simultaneously and clearly by all competitors. No competitor at the start line should be allo-

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-wed to gain an unfair advantage, and no competitor should suffer an unfair disadvantage.

Ideally, a voice amplification system should have enough speakers around the initial curve of the track to ensure that all runners hear the commands equally. Voice amplification can be achieved through many different methods including:

- a simple plastic megaphone (like cheerleaders, or stadium spectators use).
- an electronic bullhorn.
- a small electronic speaker that clips to your belt or hangs around your neck.
- larger electronic speakers sitting on tripods in fixed positions linked to a wired – or preferably wireless mic, carried around by the starter.

Another common system is a wireless mic connected to the stadium's PA system. There are also speaker systems that attach directly to each set of starting blocks so each athlete can hear the starter's



instructions equally and clearly. These systems are commonly utilized at large meets like the World Championships or Olympic Games and often times the sound of an electronic starting gun is transmitted through those same speakers.

When utilizing voice amplification, there are some general DO's and DON'Ts all starters should follow. Following these guidelines will help maintain safety, fairness, equipment upkeep, and the integrity of each event and the competition.

### Do's

1. Make sure you and the meet announcer are in agreement on when each will stay silent during the start.
2. In your pre-meet preparations:
  - a. Ensure the system is fully charged or operational.
  - b. Perform thorough tests of the system at all parts of the track where races will be started to check for interference.
  - c. Determine the proper sound volume.

3. Each time you move to a different area of the track, perform a quick test of the system prior to giving your first command.

4. For staggered races especially, test to make sure lane 1 and lane 8 (or the highest lane) can hear you clearly, as these lanes are subject to the most distractions.

5. Make sure the microphone is ON before you start your commands.

6. Mute, or turn off, your microphone after every start.

7. Unless your system is waterproof always have rain protection for the system available.

8. Have spare batteries for the device or microphone.

9. Make sure the speaker is not in the "line of sight" where it will hide one of the competitors at the start line.

When using voice amplification, use only for "Start Procedures" or "Start Commands". Talk in a normal voice utilizing the proper voice inflection. Don't yell loudly or speak too quietly into the mic. The purpose of amplified sound is that you can speak normally and comfortably, which means a more relaxed and calm starting area, and therefore more relaxed and calm competitors.

### DON'T's

1. DON'T leave the mic active after each start (or canceled start). Mute it, or turn it off, and confirm that it is off. You want to avoid the danger of accidentally saying or doing something into the microphone that you didn't want others to hear.
2. DON'T begin your commands until you are sure the microphone is fully active. With a wireless system, there is oftentimes a 1 to 4 second delay between when you turn the microphone on and when the microphone signal is actually picked up by the speaker.
3. DON'T have the microphone too close to the speaker when you turn it on, or your (and everybody else's) ears will suffer a piercing shrill.
4. DON'T blow a whistle if you have the microphone on.
5. DON'T place speakers in high-traffic areas, or areas where many spectators or competitors have access to it, as this creates a safety concern for the people and the equipment.
6. DON'T leave the speaker or microphone out in the sun or rain any longer than necessary. Heat and moisture is generally not a friend to circuits and diodes.
7. DON'T be afraid to ask others' input on how you sound.
  - a. Are you hard to hear?
  - b. Are you too loud?
  - c. Are you breathing too heavily into the mic while waiting to give your next command?

Voice amplification is a tool of a competent and effective starter and when utilized properly, following the DO's and DON'Ts, effectively contributes to the overall professionalism, quality, and efficiency of the starts and the start line area.

# Training Volunteers for Meets

A challenge to any meet director is securing the services of volunteers who are very important to running a smooth meet. The training of these individuals should involve a detailed understanding of safety for themselves, spectators, officials and athletes. Following is a brief explanation of areas where volunteers are traditionally assigned and training points for each area.

## General Guidelines

As safety is the most important point of emphasis for volunteers, Head Event Judges shall address that appropriately for their venue. In addition:

1. Arrive at the event site, or venue, not later than one (1) hour prior to the start of the event and honor the full time of your shift.
2. All wireless communication devices (i.e., cell phones, pagers, etc.) shall be turned off—not in vibrate mode or pause—but off
3. While at the event, keep discussions to a minimum, to avoid distraction

If you cannot be there for the whole time, then let your Head Event Judge know as early as possible.

Often, arrangements can be made to account for a volunteer's absence before the event begins or, even better, prior to meet beginning.

Whether assigned to a track or field event, when crossing the track, volunteers should make sure to look for any on-coming runners. As a further suggestion, these helpers can cross the track where any umpire is located once permission is given. With so many events running simultaneously, it's a good rule of thumb for all volunteers to keep "heads up" when in and around the track.

## Field Events

The most critical time for the volunteers is during the warm-up, jumps, throws and vaults all come at a more rapid pace than the actual competition thus the need to prevent any collision between volunteer and athlete or volunteer and implement (discus, shot put, hammer or javelin). Overall, for any field event on the inside of the track, it is imperative that the volunteers maintain their focus – this is especially true when track events are occurring and even more so for any indoor meet where the volume, in the facility, can get quite loud.

Brief all volunteers on how the field event is organized—for example:

1. There will be a general warm-up period for all athletes for 15 minutes.

2. This is followed by a flight-specific warm-up for 15 minutes.
3. First flight will then have their three (3) preliminary attempts.
4. Then the second flight will have their warm-ups for 15 minutes.
5. Second flight will then have their three (3) preliminary attempts.
6. The top competitors from all flights will advance to the finals.
7. All competitors tying for the last position shall be finalist.
8. A maximum of 15 minutes will be used to warm up for the finals.
9. Check with State Association on warm-up time for finalists.



## High Jump

For the high jump, all volunteers are often required to put the cross bar up after each failed attempt. To ensure uniformity for each attempt, the cross bar end pieces must be placed on the standards extensions completely flat. This alignment often involves hand twisting the end pieces, of the cross bar, to ensure that one or both are level. In addition, the distance between the cross bar ends and the standard should be uniform and no more than 2 cm or a distance roughly a finger's width. Volunteers also should watch the pit to make sure it does not contact the standards. Avoiding contact between pit and the standard will prevent the crossbar from potentially falling when the athlete lands in the pit. These adjustments generally are made at a height change, but can be made any time it appears that the pit may contact the standards. Also, those assisting with the high jump, should check the standards after each failed attempt to make sure the cross bar is still at the correct height.

## Pole Vault

There are special challenges involved in assisting the pole vault, but like all field events, the emphasis should be put on safety. Volunteers should always be aware of a falling pole and/or cross bar. However, should a falling pole pose no danger to anyone or any one



object, then simply let it fall. The standards, or uprights, used to support the cross bar, should be adjusted for distance from the zero point prior to raising the bar to the correct height and not vice versa. If assigned to lift the cross bar after each attempt, make sure to center it, place it on the peg snug against the cantilever and steady the bar to prevent any movement prior to the next vault. No adjustments should be made to the cross bar until the official has raised the white or red flag indicating a fair or foul attempt. Also, as a volunteer to an impartial officiating crew, no cheering should occur nor should any coaching be rendered to the athletes.

## Horizontal Jumps

For many high school meets, a fiberglass tape will be used to determine the distance. For accuracy, make sure the tape is pulled perpendicular to the take-off board. Also, if no certified official is available to mark in the pit, take measurements for any two marks that appear indistinguishable in terms of distance from take-off board. Helpers assigned to rake the pit are responsible for keeping the sand level with the take-off board so that each measurement is consistent from attempt to attempt. Those volunteers assigned to rake should immediately begin to level the pit as soon as the athlete exits the pit but leave the mark closest to the take-off board untouched until the distance is announced.

## Throws

For javelin, discus, hammer, and shot put, volunteers will invariably be asked to retrieve the





implements back to the throwing circle or runway. The “golden rule” is to always keep an eye on the ring or runway at all times whether picking up or walking the implement back. Volunteers are restricted to the side of (or adjacent to) the throwing sector as an extra added measure of safety. Make sure to review each volunteer’s task and emphasize the importance of always being alert during warm-ups and the events.



### Hurdle Crew

Those assigned to hurdle crews should make sure the hurdles have been placed on the correct mark and set to the correct heights. Most tracks have markings indicating proper placement of hurdles, (often small triangles with the base of the triangle nearest the approaching hurdler, and opposing point of the triangle in the direction of the finish of the race). Volunteers should make sure the edge of the hurdle bar nearest the approaching hurdler coincides with the edge of the marking nearest the approaching hurdler (or base of the triangle marking). For any straightaway race, setters must place the hurdles so that the top bars of the hurdles do not contact each other.

### Timers

For any high school track that does not use fully automatic timing (FAT), then volunteers should be assigned to hand or manually time.

1. Timers should be assigned to pick up place and not by lane.
2. Stopwatches should start with the appearance of smoke from the starter’s pistol and not the sound.
3. Timing ends with the runner’s torso (not legs, arms, neck or head) crossing the finish line.
4. Timing should be recorded as next highest tenth of a second (9.81 seconds as 9.9 seconds, 9.85 seconds as 9.9 seconds).
5. The stopwatch should not be reset for the next race until all of the times for each runner have been recorded.

If the stopwatch fails to start, the volunteer hand timer should be immediately inform the head timer so that person may cover that place’s timing responsibility.

### UMPIRES

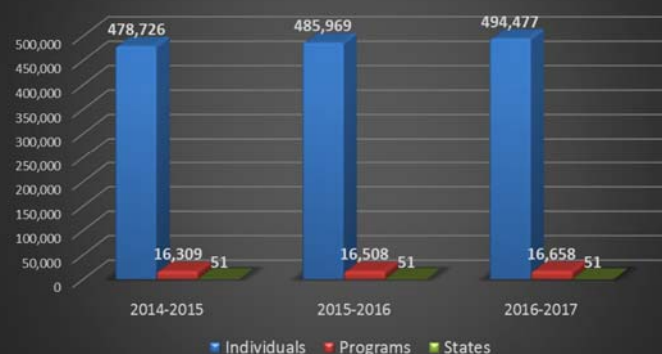
Those helping with umpiring the relay races need to monitor the exchange zones to ensure that the baton is transferred from the incoming to the outgoing runner within these 20-meter sections of the track. Focus should be placed

## NFHS High School Participation Survey Results

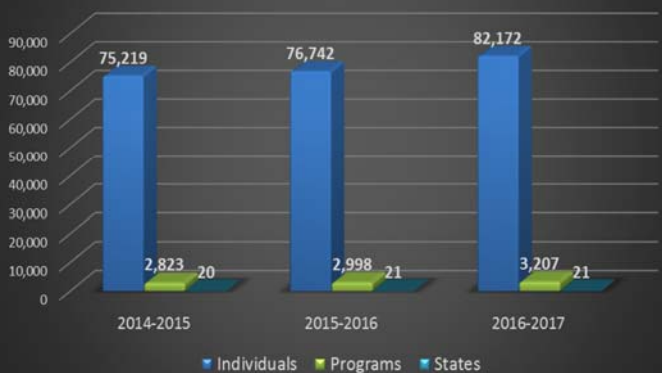
Boys Outdoor Track & Field Participation Data 2014-2017



Girls Outdoor Track & Field Participation Data 2014-2017



Boys Indoor Track & Field Participation Data 2014-2017



Girls Indoor Track & Field Participation Data 2014-2017



on the position of the baton and not the position of the runner when the exchange is made. The exchange zones for the 4 x 100 and 4 x 200 races should not be confused with the 10-meter acceleration zones where the baton should not be exchanged. Volunteer umpires should be assigned at the start and finish of each exchange zone with the ideal number of helpers being eight (two for the inside and two for the outside lanes at entrance to zone and the same number for the exit to the zone).

Volunteers make a track & field meet function smoothly and efficiently. It is imperative that meet directors make the time to provide volunteers with adequate pre-meet instructions and training.

## The Games Committee — Who It Is & What It Does

Veteran coaches and experienced officials recognize that the easiest meets to attend and work are the ones with the most advanced preparation. Who makes these pre-meet decisions? Who is responsible for the pre-meet preparation and communication?

The Games Committee for a Track & Field or Cross Country meet bears the responsibility for a smooth event, and accomplishes that task through careful planning and decision-making focused on that meet's function. According to Rule 3-2, the games committee shall have general supervision of the meet and shall determine the administrative procedures, terms and conditions that will govern the competition. A state or conference championship, a dual meet and an invitational meet all have different purposes, and each demands a different approach by the Games Committee.

Rule 3-1 defines the Games Committee as

1. An individual (meet director or referee) in dual meets.
2. State Association appointed individuals for qualifying and state final meets.
3. Selected individuals for large invitational meets.

The pre-meet decisions of the games committee (or Meet Director if the meet is small) should be published in the meet information and then used by the referees and head officials as supplemental information to the Rules and Case books. Early dissemination of this information also helps coaches make purposeful decisions regarding how to enter student-athletes and prepare them for that meet. In addition, to ensure safety of all participants in all events, the games committee now bears the responsibility for providing liquids to athletes (Rule 3-2-4u) during cross country meets and ensuring athletes have access to water at each venue throughout a track competition.

As outlined in Rules 3-3 & 3-4, 3-2 & 4, the Games Committee has nearly forty (40) duties and responsibilities. Some of the important, but often overlooked, responsibilities of the games committee include:

1. Determining if any special events (per Rule 7) shall be contested.
2. Establishing and marking all restricted areas and coaches' boxes.
3. Determining the starting height.
4. Designating the warm up area(s).
5. Hiring timing company.
6. Time limit procedure when athletes are excused.
7. Specify the number of throws, jumps and the distances to be measured.

Although most of the Games Committee's responsibilities involve meet planning, it also shares responsibility with the Referee for suspending the meet for reasons like weather, power failure or other events beyond administrative control. Should the suspension require the rescheduling of any events, as the administrative body for the meet, the Games Committee must take an active part (Rule 3-2-5).

The Games Committee uses experience, common sense and a familiarity with Track & Field to identify the likely problems or questions, that could be foreseen or encountered, at a meet. By addressing these issues and all basic meet information in the meet information packer, the Games Committee proactively facilitates the smooth operation of the meet.

- **By 2020, every high school sporting event in America will be streamed live.**
- **The NFHS Network will be THE DESTINATION for fans to view**



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# Jury of Appeals—Role, Duties, Formation & Authority

National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) rules are written to maintain the sound tradition of the sport, encourage sportsmanship, and minimize the inherent risk of injury. Each state high school association makes decisions regarding compliance with or modification of these playing rules for the student athlete in their state. The state high school association is the sole and exclusive source of binding rules interpretations. In track and field, the Jury of Appeals (Jury), if appointed, shall serve as the final board of appeals in a meet.

## Role & Duties

The Jury is the final board of appeal, for a coach, when they feel that the referee has misapplied or misinterpreted the rule(s), or the terms and conditions of competition that have been established (Rule 3-5-1). Once a Jury reaches a decision, that brings the matter to a close. At no time does the Jury have the authority to set aside, modify, or change defined NFHS Track & Field Rules or state high school association adaptations.

## Formation

One of the many varied duties of the Games Committee, or the Meet Director when there is not a Games Committee, is to act as, or appoint a Jury of Appeals (Rule 3-1-2). The composition of the Jury varies, depending upon the level, size, and importance of the competition. Conferences or large invitational meets may have established procedures to select members of the Jury. Each state association also makes provisions, defines, or makes recommendations for its composition. The Jury of Appeals could consist of:

1. An individual (Meet Director or Referee) in dual meets.
2. State association appointed individuals for qualifying and final state meets.
3. Selected individuals for large individual meets.
4. The Games Committee.

If the Jury of Appeals is not the Games Committee, then it is most often comprised of:

1. An odd number of participants.
2. The starters.
3. Coaches from different schools.
4. The host Athletic Director or Meet Director.

An odd number of participants to the Jury guarantees a resolution to any matters that come before it. If the coach of the school appealing a decision is part of the Jury, they will be replaced with an alternate coach, so as

not to create a conflict of interest.

## Authority

The Jury of Appeals authority and responsibilities include, but are not limited to (Rule 3-5-3):

1. Misapplication of the rules which must be filed within 30 minutes by the Games Committee or Meet Director.
2. Correction of clerical or team scoring errors which may be corrected up to 48 hours after the end of the meet, unless another time period is specified in advance by the Games Committee or Meet Director.
3. Correction of meet results involving an ineligible participant which may be made at any time when discovered.
4. Failure to follow a procedure contained in the terms and conditions of competition announced in advance by the games committee or meet director. This would include such items as the time schedule, the number of qualifiers to advance, number of trials, etc.

By Rule 3-5-4, the Jury of Appeals has no authority to rule on:

1. Judgement decisions pertaining violations or alleged violations of rules.
2. A decision made by a judge or timer that does not involve misapplication of a rule or the terms and conditions of competition.
3. Whether a start is fair and legal.

To maintain the equity, integrity, and checks and balances of a Track & Field meet, the composition of the Jury of Appeals should always be included on any printed meet information that is sent to all participating schools.

## Throwing Event Safety

During the preseason and before each meet, a review of proper throws safety protocols should be done by the coach, officials and those who will be responsible for the management of the throwing events. The purpose of this review is to minimize the exposure to potentially dangerous situations that could occur during warm-up and competition. These safety recommendations should be implemented at all practices as well.

While these recommendations are geared toward competition, the same general recommendations and protocol should be implemented during practice sessions.

We will review three key areas of throws safety: the throwing venue, a protocol for safety, and the throwing implements.

## The Throwing Venue

The venue for each throwing event should be regulated, and set up in a fashion that provides for adequate safety for competitors,



officials and spectators. An essential part of this is to establish a “safety zone” for each throwing event. Flagging should be used to indicate the safety zone. This flagging should enclose the throwing area, with flags/rope being placed a minimum of 10 feet from the edge of the sector line and end of the implement landing area.

Spectator areas should always be placed behind the circle or runway, or along the runway in the javelin event. Spectators should never be allowed along the sector lines or the safety zone lines, and should not be permitted forward of the center of the circle or the javelin arc. When setting up the spectator areas, also take in to account the method of getting to and from the venue. Any pathway that takes the spectator close to another potentially dangerous area should be avoided. If that cannot be done, then the flow of persons into and out of the venue must be regulated. It is important to realize that even though the safety zone sector has been marked as a danger area, it is not the only area where danger exists. It is simply the most dangerous area. Keep in mind that the discus and javelin may not always follow a straight path.

## A Protocol for Safety

There are several general rules that should be taught, and re-enforced throughout the preseason and into the regular season.

1. The cardinal rule is to never turn your back to the circle or runaway, regardless of your distance from the circle or runway, and regardless of whether or not there is a cage in place. Most incidents occur when competitors,

officials and spectators are inattentive. Keeping eyes on the circle or runway can avert most incidents since it increases the time to react to an errant throw.

2. Implements should always be carried back and never thrown back in the direction of the circle or runway.

3. The javelin should always be carried vertically, with the point facing downward.

4. Competitors should never be in the impact area during warm-up or competition. If there is insufficient help to return the implements during the warm-up period, then after five or six throws, close the venue and allow competitors to retrieve the implements.

5. In the javelin event, competitors may wish to “pick” as part of their warm-up. In this case, the group should be monitored by an official, and they should all pick and move as a group.

6. When competition begins, implements should be gathered in a “corral” so that a competitor is not tempted to “practice” with an implement outside the competition area. This prevents accidents from happening when a competitor chooses to warm-up with an implement outside the circle or runway. When a competitor is in the “on deck” position, they can obtain an implement from the corral for their next attempt.

7. When competition is concluded, it is best to place a cone in the middle of the circle to indicate that the venue is closed and that the event is concluded. Implements should be removed from the area and secured.

8. Practice should never be allowed after the competition is concluded, regardless of whether or not a coach is present to supervise that practice. If the discus venue has a cage with doors, those doors should be closed (and preferably secured).

### The Throwing Implements

Implements should be inspected at the beginning of each season to make sure that they are in compliance with the rules, but also to make sure that they are not damaged in any way that may cause them to break during an attempt, or that may cause harm or injury to the competitor while they are using the implement. In addition, any implement that has come in contact with a cage or other hard surface, should always be inspected for damage before it is returned to use.



Implements with sharp edges, cracked or loose plates on a discus, and cracked or bent javelins are all examples of implements that could be potentially harmful to the competitor or others. When any defect or damage is found, the implement should be immediately removed from use and impounded. If there is not an implement inspector for a meet, the official should check each implement visually for any potential safety issues.

By necessity, throws safety should be something that is taught, reviewed and re-enforced not only during the preseason, but throughout the season by coaches, officials and competitors. All due diligence should be utilized to reduce or minimize the potential for accidents that result in injury. It is important that everyone involved in the coaching and conduct of the throwing events be aware of potential dangers, and be willing to speak up and address situations where there is potential for harm.

For more information about implement inspection, visit the USATF Officials Best Practices website at <https://my.usatfofficials.com/resources/tag/implement->

## Proper Flagging & Marking of a XC Course

Competitors in a cross country race are guided by course markings to ensure they run the proper distance, stay on the course, and do not gain an advantage or be disadvantaged in completing the race. It is the responsibility of meet management to properly set up and mark the course to eliminate any ambiguity the course may present. The NFHS Rule Book provides guidance and direction for meet management, coaches and competitors to maintain a standard of uniformity (Rule 8-1).

There are three (3) areas of concern when preparing a cross country course for competition; the start area, the course itself, and finish line area. Let us examine each.

### Start Area

Rule 8-1 provides clarification for the construction of the start line, the numbering of the boxes and the size of the boxes.

1. A 2-inch wide starting line (Note: All lines should be marked with a material not injurious to the eyes of skin).
2. The line, and the start area, should be wide enough to accommodate all the teams entered and allow for individual entries as well i.e. a width of the number of teams entered multiplied by 6ft.



Some type of visual marker, flags or cones, should be placed at the 100-meter mark of the course, to indicate to the competitor the recall area (Rule 8-4-4a-b). These markings should be placed exterior to the course, so as not to interfere with the running of the race.

To facilitate the timely start of each race, it helps to have a line as long as and parallel to the start line placed behind the box area. Officials can direct non-competitors (bystanders, coaches, teammates, etc.) to stand behind this line prior to each start so it is clear who is participating. It also assists in providing the competitors a better opportunity to focus, at the start line, before the race.

### Race Course



At present the NFHS Rule Book provides three required options for the markings of the race course (8-1-1).

1. A wide line marked with material not injurious to the eyes or skin, or
2. Large signposts with directional arrows where the course turns, or
3. One-foot square flags mounted on stakes which hold them 6 feet or more above the ground and visible for 100 feet. The color coding and meanings of the flags are as follows:
  - A. A red flag indicated a turn to the left.
  - B. A yellow flag indicates a turn to the right.
  - C. A blue flag indicated a course straight ahead.

In the event of a discrepancy in the course

markings, directional flag markings take precedence over any other course markings (8-1-2).

Other course features may include:

1. Guidelines marked on the course.
2. Painted boundary lines (inside and outside) and the use of natural or artificial boundary markers.
3. Small survey flags of the appropriate color may be used in lieu of painted lines or survey chalk.

When utilizing any of these options, directional flags take precedence over any other course markings.

There are times when the radius of a turn is not clear (due to various path possibilities) or there may be a nearby obstruction (e.g. a Frisbee golf hole or tee) close to the path. It is appropriate to mark the approach and grass to a directional flag with survey flags, cones or banner ropes to aid the competitors to follow the desired path.

For the safety of the competitors it is advisable and a proactive safety measure to indicate areas on the course that could possibly cause a competitor to lose their footing, balance, and to prevent possible injury. Small holes, indentations or protrusions from the ground could be identified for the competitors to avoid. A common practice is to place cones in the holes, indentations and protrusions. Likewise, wooded areas with roots protruding from the ground could be spray painted, with bright colors, to make the competitors aware of the uneven footing.

### Finish Line

At the end of the course the finish line should be 15 feet wide (after a straightaway of at least 150 yards), visible to the competitors and marked with flags or cones. It is advisable to rope off the area preceding the finish line to ensure the competitors safety and to maintain the integrity of the competition.

On race day the competitors focus should be on maximizing their performance and performing at their best. Meet management contributes to each competitor's individual success by properly marking and flagging the start area, course, and finish line area. By following the NFHS Rule Book, all efforts will have been made to ensure an equitable, safe, secure, and competitive competition.



## Horizontal Jumps Competition: Open Pit vs Trials & Finals

Coordination of running and field events requires Meet Management and Field Events crews to accommodate overlapping activities. In examining the NFHS Order of Events (Rule 1-2 - 4), you will see that the 100/110-meter hurdles, 100 meters, 4x100 or 4x200 relays and long/triple jump all occur, almost simultaneously, in the early portion of a meet. Therefore, the horizontal jumps can be one of the most time-consuming events at a Track & Field meet. To assist in the management of the meet and to better allow the competitors to compete in both the horizontal jumps and running events, the NFHS Rule Book provides options, to conduct the horizontal jumps.

In the horizontal jumps, there are two procedures which are generally utilized to conduct competition. Typically, the "Trials & Finals" procedure is most often utilized. In this procedure, competitors know when they need to start warming up, don't have to worry about people stepping on the runway in front of them and normally have just enough time between jumps to recover.

### Trials and Finals Procedure: (Rule 6-2-15-19)

1. Each competitor shall be allowed three (3) preliminary trial.
2. Trials are taken in flights of no less than five (5).
3. Competitors are called for a trial in the order listed for competition.
4. One (1) or more competitors than there are scoring places shall qualify for the finals.
5. All competitors tying for the last position shall be finalist.
6. To be eligible to participate in the finals, a competitor shall have at least one (1) legal jump or throw in the preliminaries.
7. The order of competition in the finals shall be the reverse of the best performance in the preliminaries. *The competitor having the best preliminary performance shall be last in order.*
8. Each qualifier is allowed three (3) additional trials in the finals.

9. Competitors shall be credited with their best performance regardless of whether it occurs in the preliminaries or finals.

The Games Committee will determine the procedure to conduct competition based on the entries, the venue, and type of meet (Rule 3-2-4f). In meets with limited entries, the games committee may allow each competitor just four (4) trials, replacing the "Trials & Finals" (Rule 6-2-7). This four(4) trial procedure is generally referred to as "Open Pit" and is utilized where competitors are given a pre-determined time framework and the number of attempts that must be completed before the time framework concluded. This method eliminates the need to call names in order and for athletes to check in and out of these events to participate in another event.

### Open Pit Procedure

1. Competitors are given a defined period of time in which to complete their four (4) trials.
2. This defined time period has a beginning and an exact ending time.
3. Competitors line up and take their trial, in any order, within the defined time period.
4. Competitors shall be credited with their best performance of the four (4) trials.

At some competitions a combination of these two formats is utilized. Competition in the preliminaries is conducted utilizing the "Open Pit", but with only three (3) preliminary trials. When the defined time period for preliminaries has concluded, then the "Trials & Finals" procedure is followed to determine the qualifiers for the finals and the finals are conducted utilizing the "Trials & Finals" procedure.

Each state high school association adopting NFHS rules is the sole and exclusive source of binding rules interpretations for contests involving its member schools. Questions regarding procedures for conducting flights should be directed to your state high school association.





## National High School Sports-Related Injury Surveillance 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 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 9th year of track and field exposure and injury data.

High School RIO™ data shows that both boys' and girls' track and field have among the lowest injury rates of the 24 sports under surveillance. Boys' and girls' track and field injuries have remained relatively stable over time. During the 2015/16

academic year, hip/thigh/upper leg sprains/strains were by far the most common injury in track and field representing 32.5% of all boys' and 31.6% of all girls' injuries.



Injury patterns differ by event. For example, pole vaulting accounted for 5.3% of all track and field injuries.

However, 5 of the 15 (33.3%) concussions sustained in track and field occurred while pole vaulting.

Understanding such patterns of injury is one important tool when considering a new rule change and keeping risk minimization 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> summary reports.

### 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](mailto:highschool-rio@nationwidechildrens.org)

## Coaches Education Opportunities



### Course Objectives

- ◆ Types of races – sprint and endurance
- ◆ Running form – proper posture, arm movement, and leg movement
- ◆ Start and Drive phase – block and standing start
- ◆ Types of jumps – horizontal and vertical
- ◆ Jump elements – approach, take off, flight and landing
- ◆ Throwing – basic skills for each event type
- ◆ How to teach skills for correct form
- ◆ Teaching progressions to combine skills into full movement

### Units

- ◆ Running
- ◆ Jumping
- ◆ Throwing

- Coaching Track and Field, developed by USA Track and Field and the NFHS is hosted by decorated Olympic athletes Dan O'Brien and Hyleas Fountain.
- The course presents the fundamentals of running, jumping and throwing, as well as the importance of sound mechanics and how to teach these basic skills.
- After taking this course, you will be able to identify key points or stages of a skill, and use visual demonstrations with verbal cues to help athletes execute a particular technique or skill.
- Members of USA Track and Field will receive a \$15 discount as an added benefit.
- Course participants have unlimited access to course & resources for one year from date of purchase.
- This course can be used as an elective to fulfill AIC or CIC certification requirements.
- Approved by NFHS for 5 course clock hours.

- This course, developed by USA Track and Field, the NCAA and NFHS has been designed to help both coaches and athletes.



### Course Objectives

- ◆ Starting a beginner—teaching proper standing grip height, width of hands on pole and position 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 vault mat pads

### Units

- ◆ Stating a Beginner
- ◆ Basic Laws of Physics
- ◆ Drills and Teaching Techniques
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Equipment and Facility
- ◆ Interactive Exercise

- Coaches will learn to develop and teach the introductory skills of pole vaulting to his/her athletes.
- After completing this course, each participant will have a better understanding of the fundamentals of pole vaulting, as well as the best practices and techniques that will help educate and promote safety in the sport.
- Course participants have unlimited access to the course & resources for one year from date of course delivery.
- This course can be used as an elective to fulfill CIC certification requirements.
- The course is approved by NFHS for 3 course clock hours.

More Information at [nfhslearn.com](http://nfhslearn.com)!

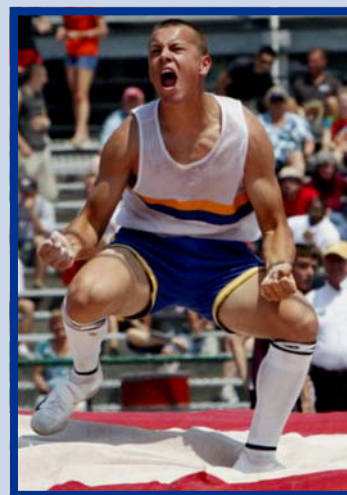
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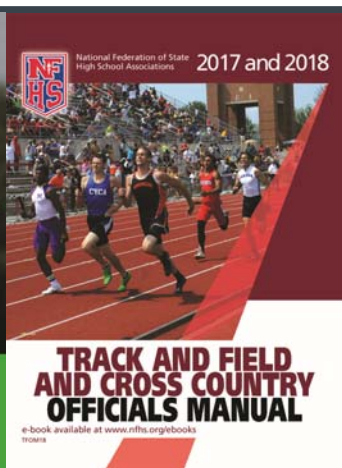
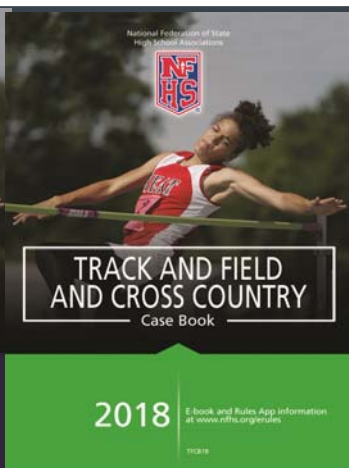
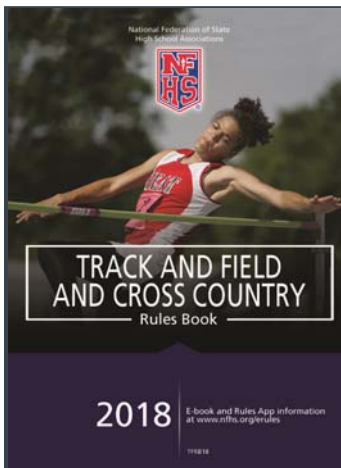
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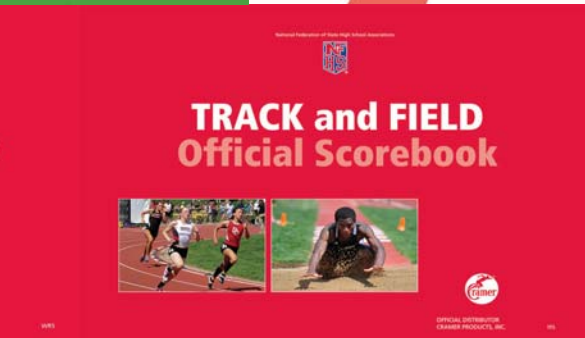
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