



# 2025 NFHS TRACK AND FIELD AND CROSS COUNTRY RULES CHANGES



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Rules Changes  
Editorial Changes  
Points of Emphasis

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# NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

- NFHS (located in Indianapolis, IN – Est. 1920):
  - National leader and advocate for high school athletics and performing arts programs.
  - Serves 51 state associations, 19,500 high schools and 12 million student participants.
  - Writes playing rules for 17 high school sports for boys and girls.
  - Offers online education courses for high school coaches, officials, parents, students and others.
  - Ensures that students have opportunity to enjoy healthy participation, achievement and good sportsmanship in education-based athletics.





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- The NFHS Rules Review Committee is chaired by the chief operating officer and composed of all rules editors. After each committee concludes its deliberations and has adopted its recommended changes for the subsequent year, such revisions will be evaluated by the Rules Review Committee.



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Chief Operating  
Officer



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Lacrosse and  
Volleyball



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Medicine



Sandy Searcy  
Softball, Swimming &  
Diving and Water Polo



Elliot Hopkins  
Baseball and  
Wrestling



Julie Cochran  
Cross Country, Soccer and  
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James Weaver  
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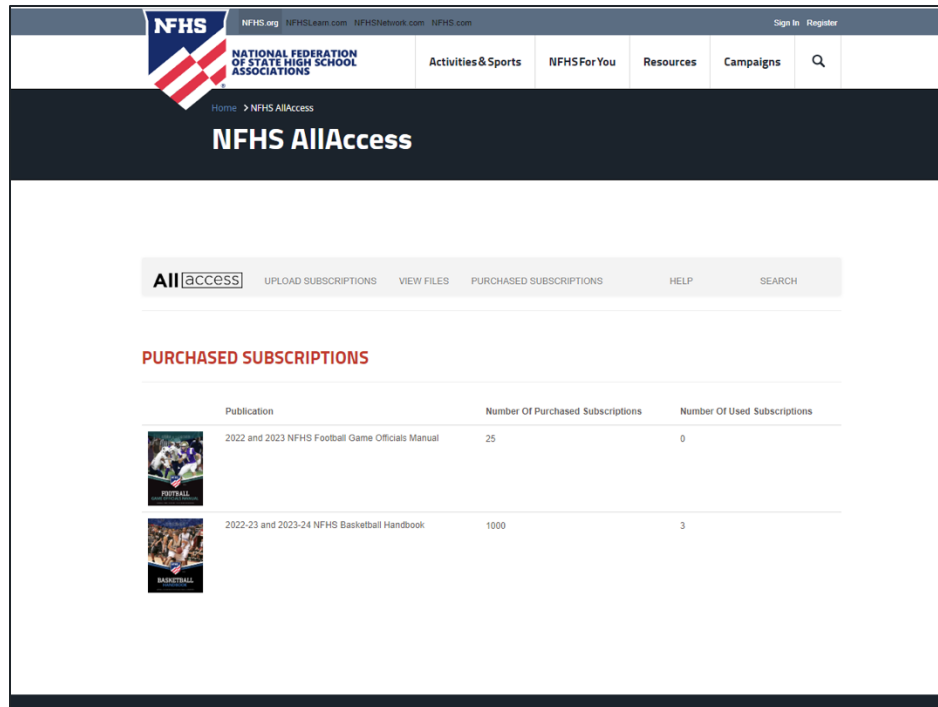
# NFHS PUBLICATIONS

- The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level.
  - Publishes 4 million pieces of materials annually.





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# NFHS AllAccess – WEBSITE

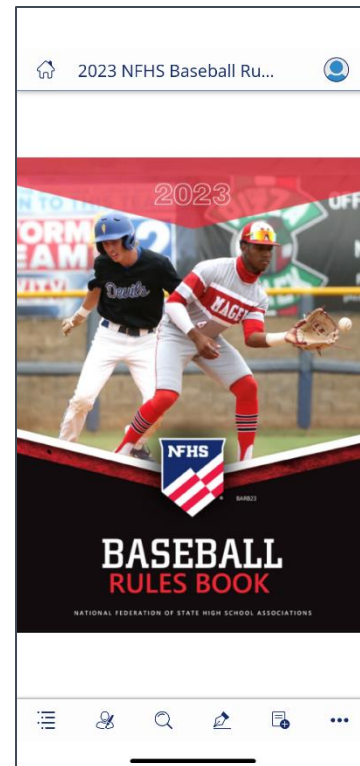
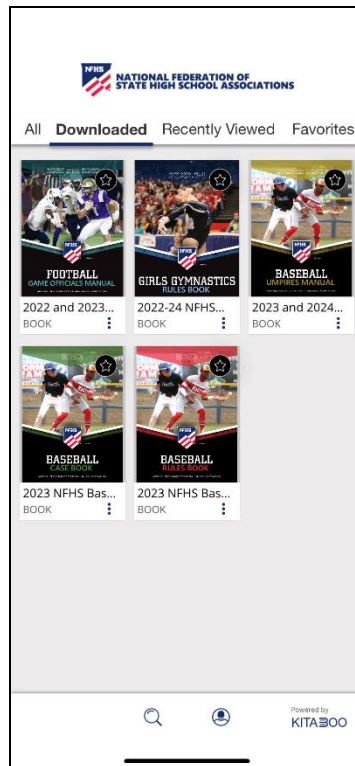


The screenshot displays the NFHS AllAccess website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the NFHS logo and the text "NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS". Below this, there are links for "Activities & Sports", "NFHS For You", "Resources", and "Campaigns", along with a search icon. The main header area features the "NFHS AllAccess" title. Below the header, there is a secondary navigation bar with "AllAccess" and links for "UPLOAD SUBSCRIPTIONS", "VIEW FILES", "PURCHASED SUBSCRIPTIONS", "HELP", and "SEARCH". The main content area is titled "PURCHASED SUBSCRIPTIONS" and contains a table with the following data:

Publication	Number Of Purchased Subscriptions	Number Of Used Subscriptions
 2022 and 2023 NFHS Football Game Officials Manual	25	0
 2022-23 and 2023-24 NFHS Basketball Handbook	1000	3

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# 2025 RULES CHANGES



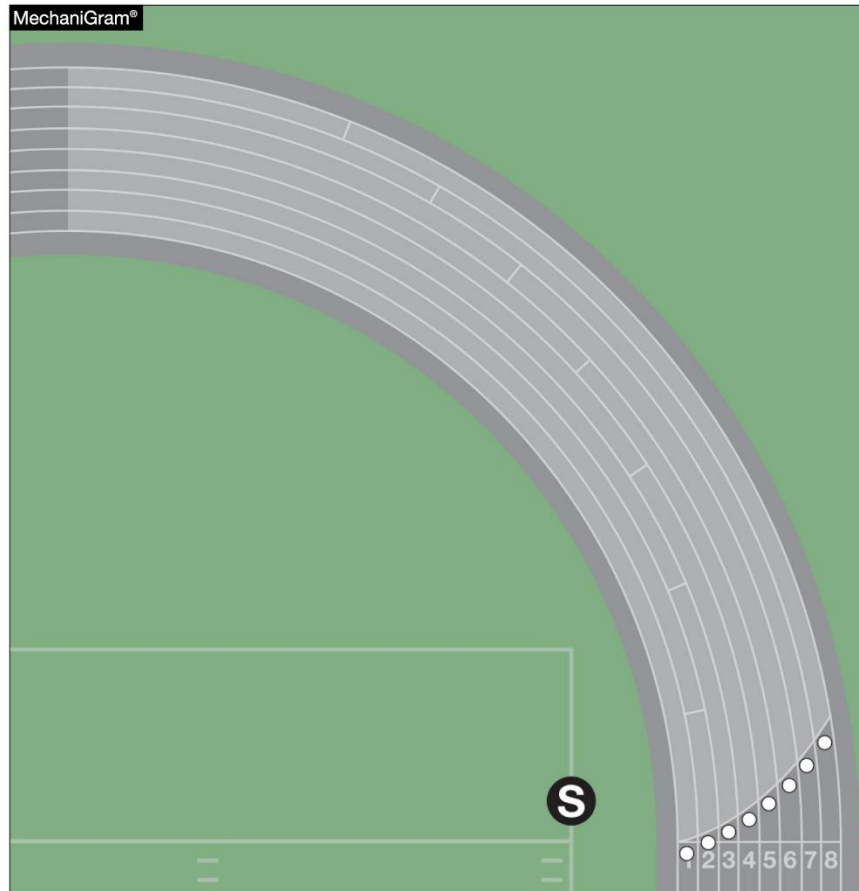
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# RECALL DISTANCE IN DISTANCE RACES

## 3-6-3, 5-7-6

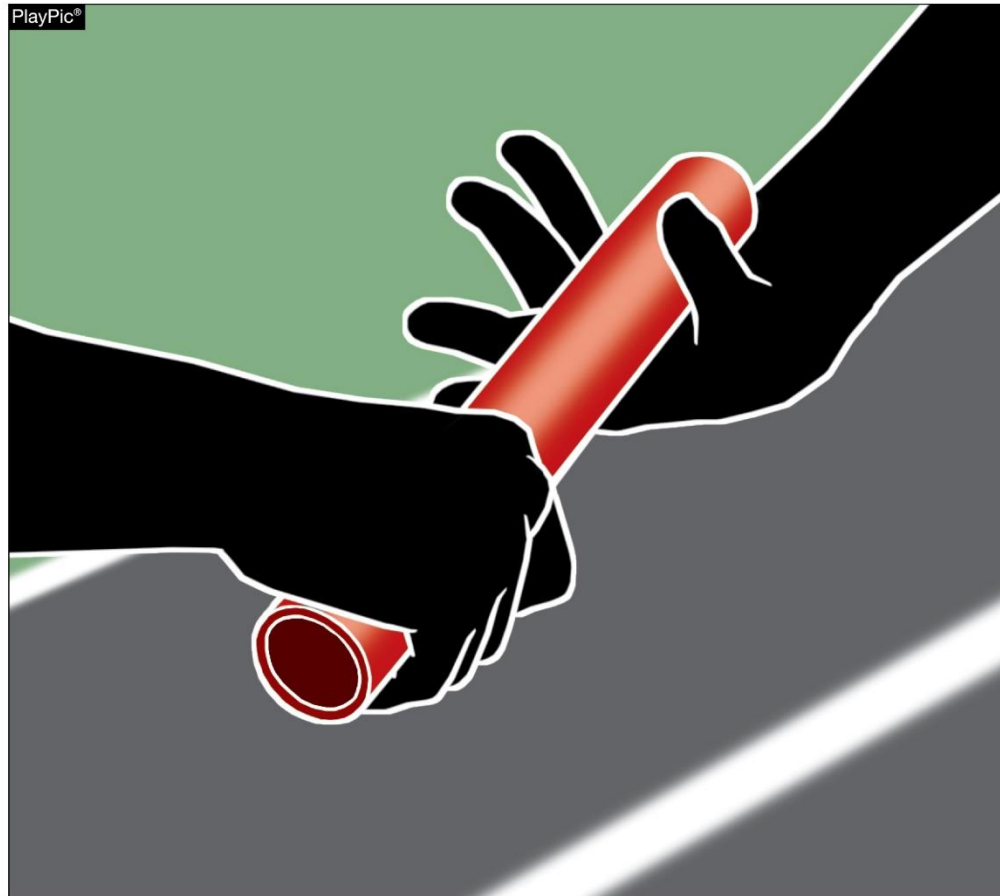


If a competitor falls due to contact with another competitor in the first 50 meters of a distance race, the race shall be recalled. Previously, the distance was 100 meters. Fifty meters is sufficient in calling a fair start. Athletes are accelerate and often up to speed racing well before 100 meters.



# RELAYS

## 5-10, 5-11



Sections 10 and 11 have concerning relay races and infractions have been reorganized. All infractions are now located in section 11 for ease of use by officials.



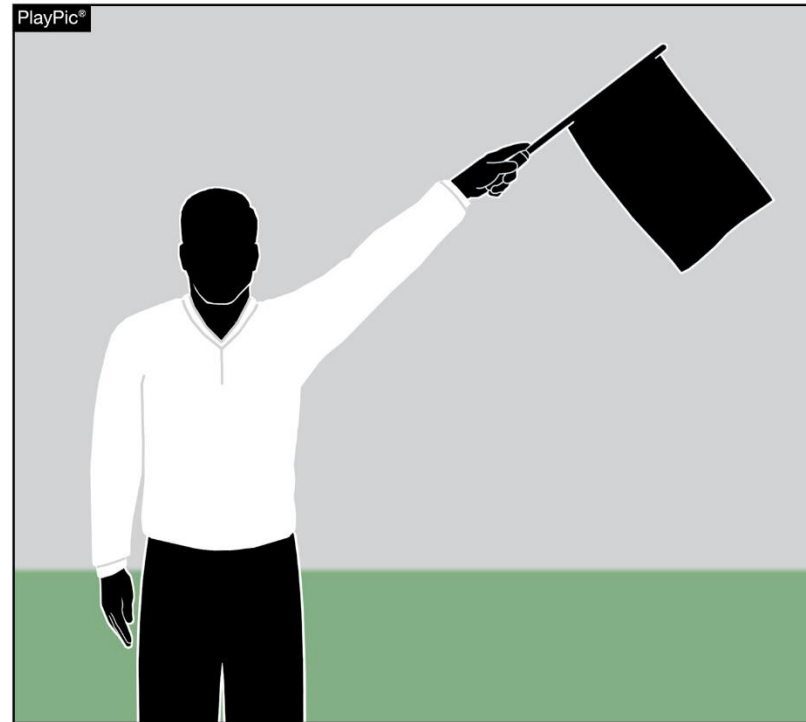
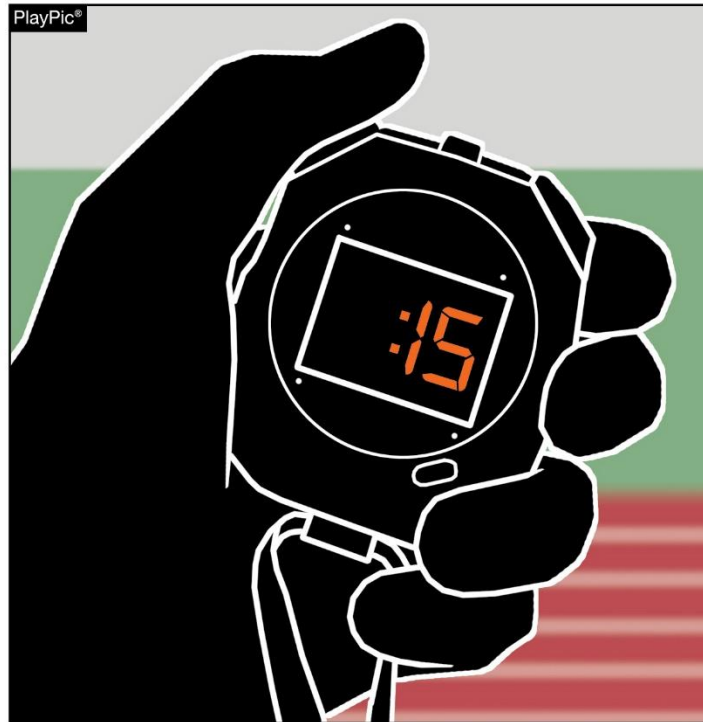
# INFRACTIONS FOR RACES NOT RUN IN LANES

## 5-13-1



Any competitor shall not deliberately run on or inside the track curb (or painted line), and thereby gain a meaningful advantage including but not limited to improving positioning or shortening the course. This change provides guidance to the meet referee when an athlete leaves the track on a straightaway or whether or not a competitor should be disqualified.

# TIME LIMIT TO COMPETE IN FIELD EVENTS 6-2-2f (NEW)



Rule 6-2-2f states that “the competitor shall be warned either verbally or by signal when 15 seconds remain in the time allowed.”

# GENERAL RULES FOR FIELD EVENTS

## 6-2-2 CHART

Athletes remaining in the competition at the start of a round or bar height.	Individual Events			Combined Events		
	HJ	PV	OTHER FE	HJ	PV	OTHER FE
First attempt of a competitor in the competition	1	1	1	1	1	1
More than 3	1	1	1	1	1	1
2 or 3 remaining	3	3	1	3	3	1
1 remaining ( <u>winner</u> )	5	5	1	5	5	1
Consecutive Trials	2	3	2	2	3	2

Changes to the table and notes clarify the time limits for all competitors throughout the entire competition in field events.

Athletes remaining in the competition at the start of a round or bar height.



# GENERAL RULES FOR FIELD EVENTS

## 6-2-2 CHART

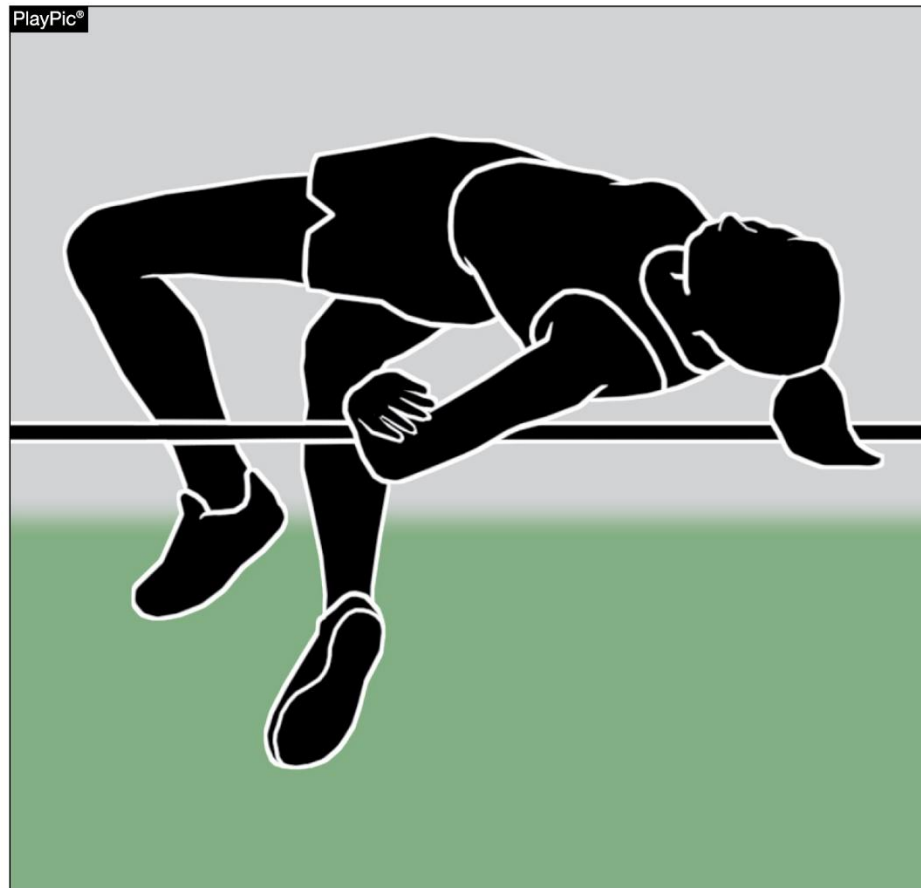


NOTE 1: At any given bar height, the time for all competitors remains the same until the next bar height is established.

NOTE 2: Regardless of the number of competitors remaining, the first attempt of a competitor entering the competition at any height is one minute.

# BREAKING TIES

## 6-3-2 NOTES 1



When breaking a tie, the jump-off shall commence at the next height in the original progression, after the tying height.

The language aligns the rulebook with current situations and interpretations.

# VERTICAL JUMPS

## 6-8-2



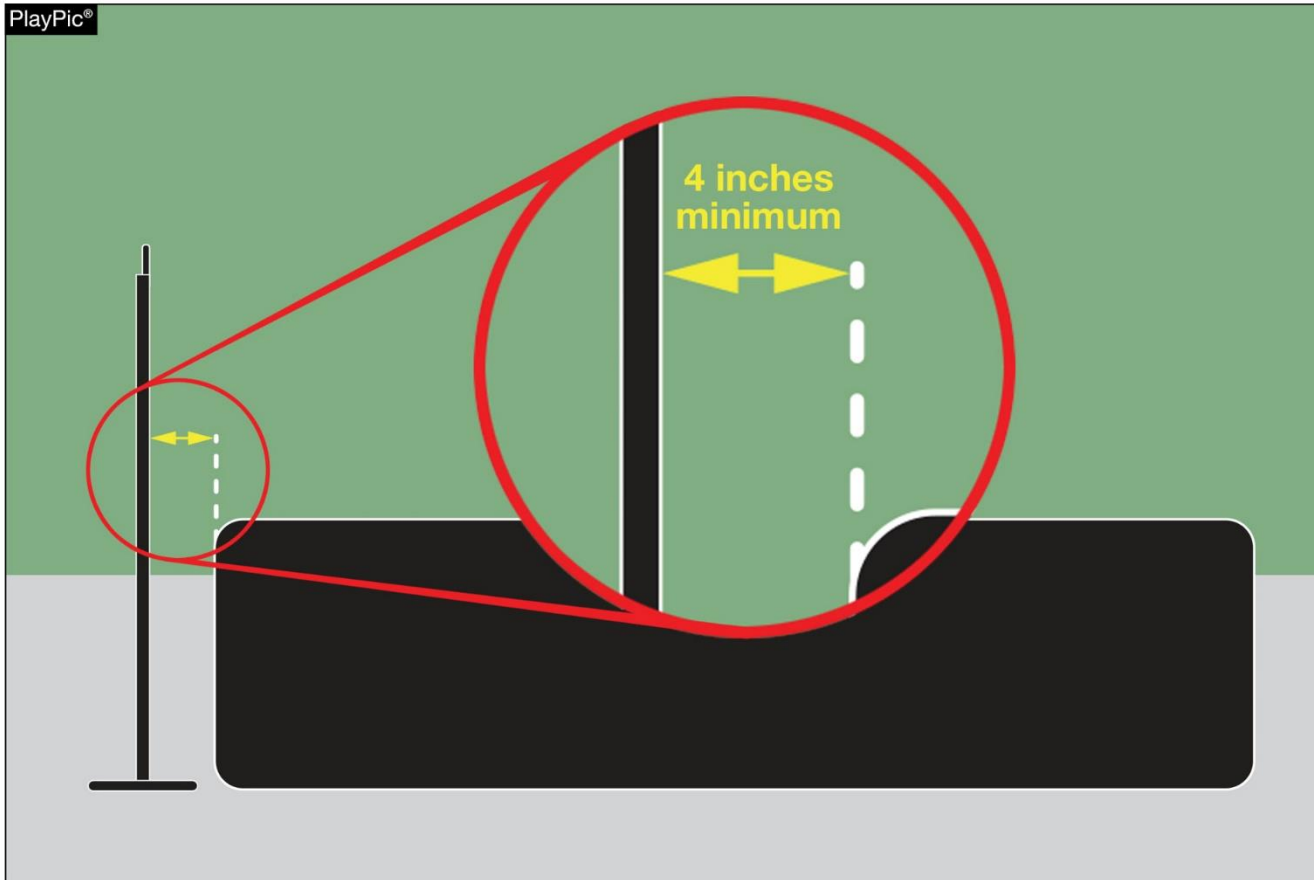
The definition of active flight (five-alive) and continuing flight (straight through) for vertical jump competitions was clarified.

When the number of entries dictates, the games committee may assign competitors to active flights (five alive) of no less than five competitors or may conduct the event in continuing flights (straight through).



# VENUE SPECIFICATIONS (HIGH JUMP)

## 6-9-22



The plane of the cross bar shall not be less than 4 inches from the landing pad.

This change creates a standard distance for the placement of the high jump crossbar and standards.



# 2025 EDITORIAL CHANGES



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# MEET OFFICIALS

## 3-1-1C



An outdated usage of the term head field judge has been replaced with field referee.



# THE GAMES COMMITTEE

## 3-2-7

Video replay or television monitoring equipment, other than the official finish line equipment approved by the games committee prior to the start of competition, shall not be used to make decisions related to the meet. Use of wireless communication devices by officials is allowed.



# THE GAMES COMMITTEE

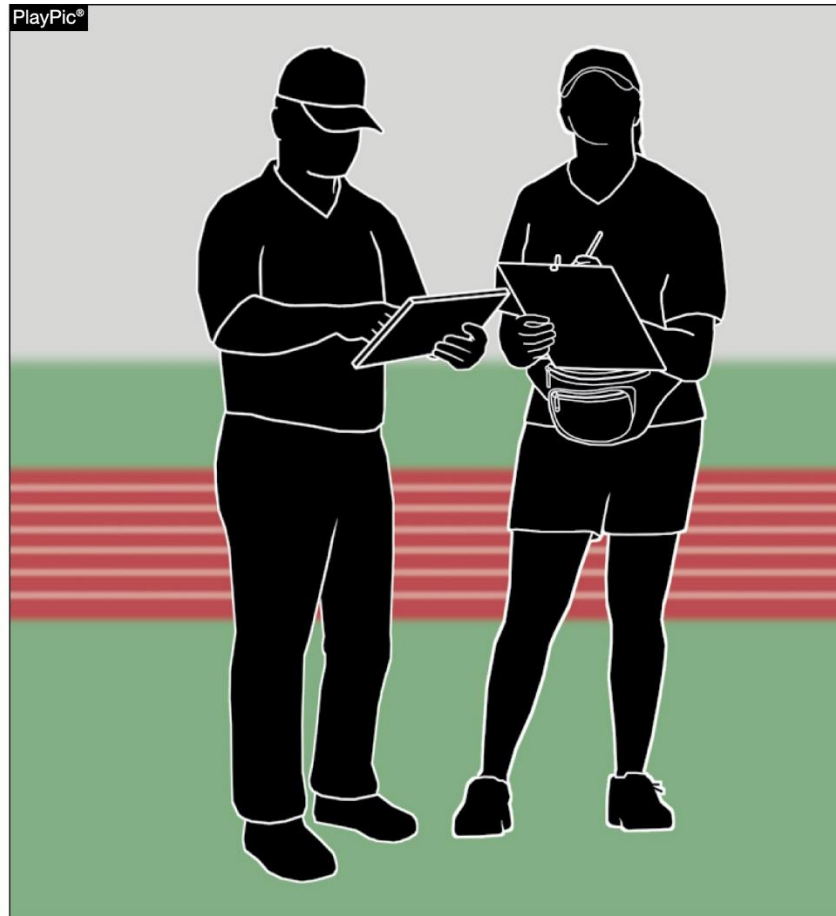
## 3-2-8

Language related to electronic devices was moved to the conduct section of the rules book —new rule 4-6-6  
Competitors and Competition Selection Disqualification  
Conduct.





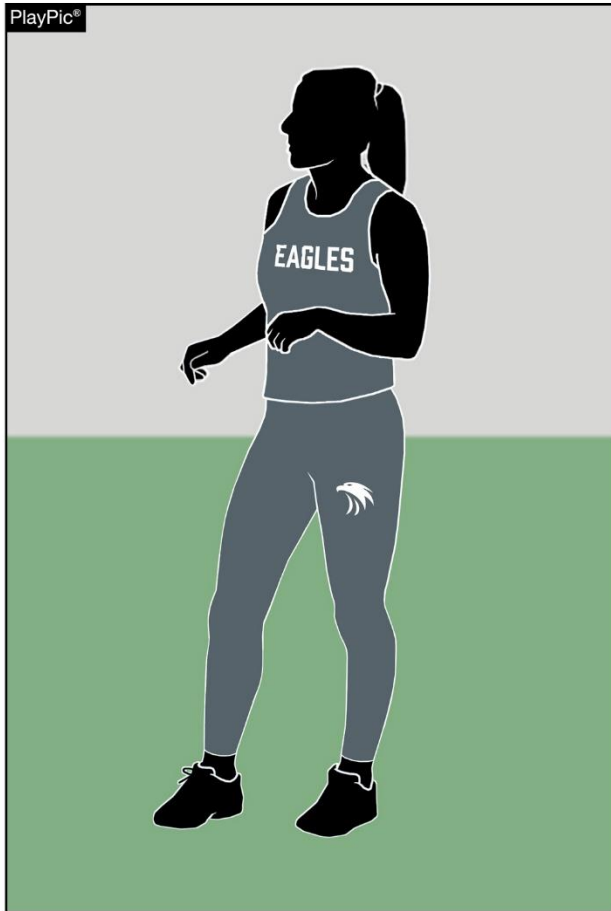
# REFEREE 3-4-2



The referee retains authority over the contest through competition of any reports, including those imposing disqualifications, that are responsive to actions occurring while the referee had jurisdiction. The word clerical was removed to better reflect the scope and authority of the referee.

# COMPETITOR'S UNIFORM IN TRACK AND FIELD AND CROSS COUNTRY

## 4-3-1B



The term track top and track bottom were removed as the top and bottom are not required to be a traditional track uniform top or bottom.



# IMPLEMENT SPECIFICATIONS 6-10-6



The javelin shall meet all World Athletics specifications. This change removed an outdated reference to IAAF, which has changed its name to World Athletics.

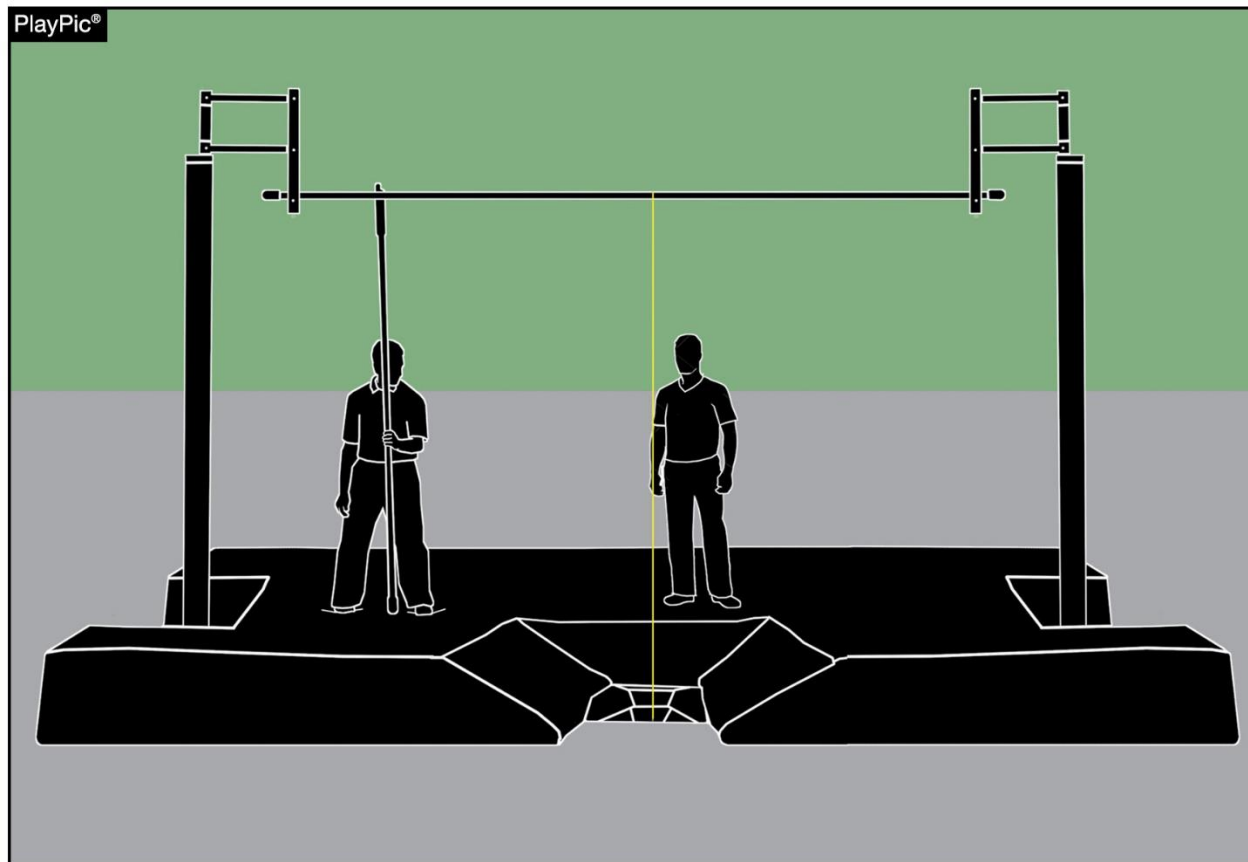


# 2025 POINTS OF EMPHASIS



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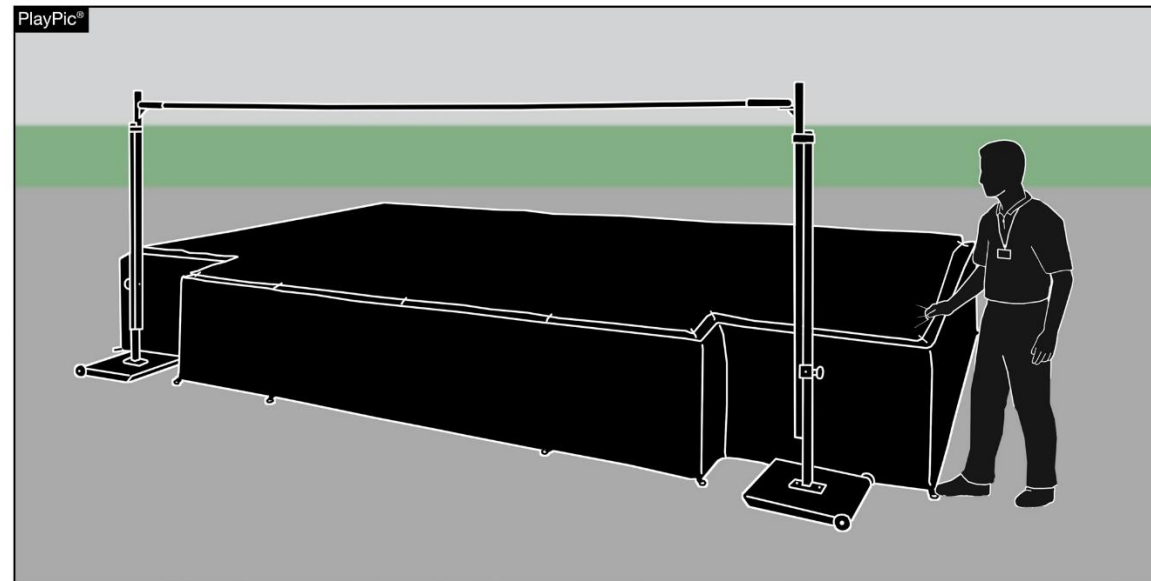
# MANAGING VERTICAL JUMP LANDING SYSTEMS



The high jump and pole vault events demand attention to their landing systems to ensure athlete safety and event integrity. Officials overseeing these events must be knowledgeable about the setup, maintenance, and management of landing areas.

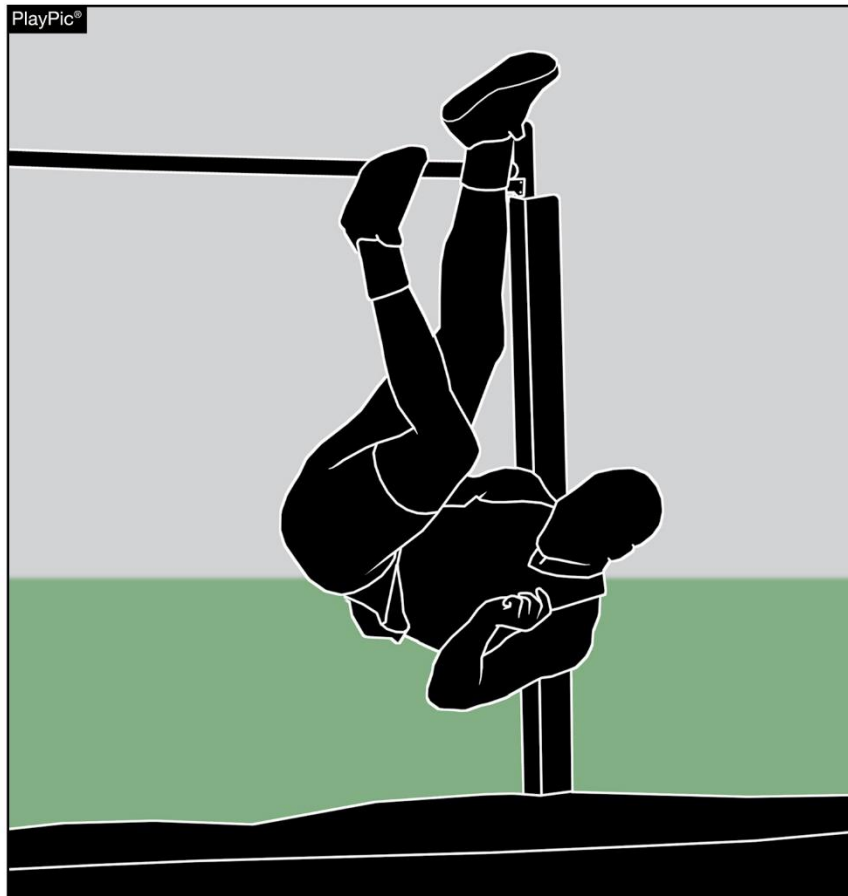


# MANAGING VERTICAL JUMP LANDING SYSTEMS



Prior to any meet, officials should check the landing mats for wear and tear, ensuring the mats are in good condition, free of rips, and have adequate cushioning. Officials also need to verify that the landing system is on a level surface and all padding around the uprights and other hard surfaces is securely attached and sufficient to prevent injuries. The mats need to be secured and properly aligned to cover the designated landing area. The surrounding area within the event needs to be clear of obstacles and other hazards.

# MANAGING VERTICAL JUMP LANDING SYSTEMS



During the event, monitoring the landing system is critical. Regularly checking the landing mats between attempts for any displacement or damage and making immediate adjustments if the mats do shift or if any padding becomes dislodged provides a safe environment for all competitors.

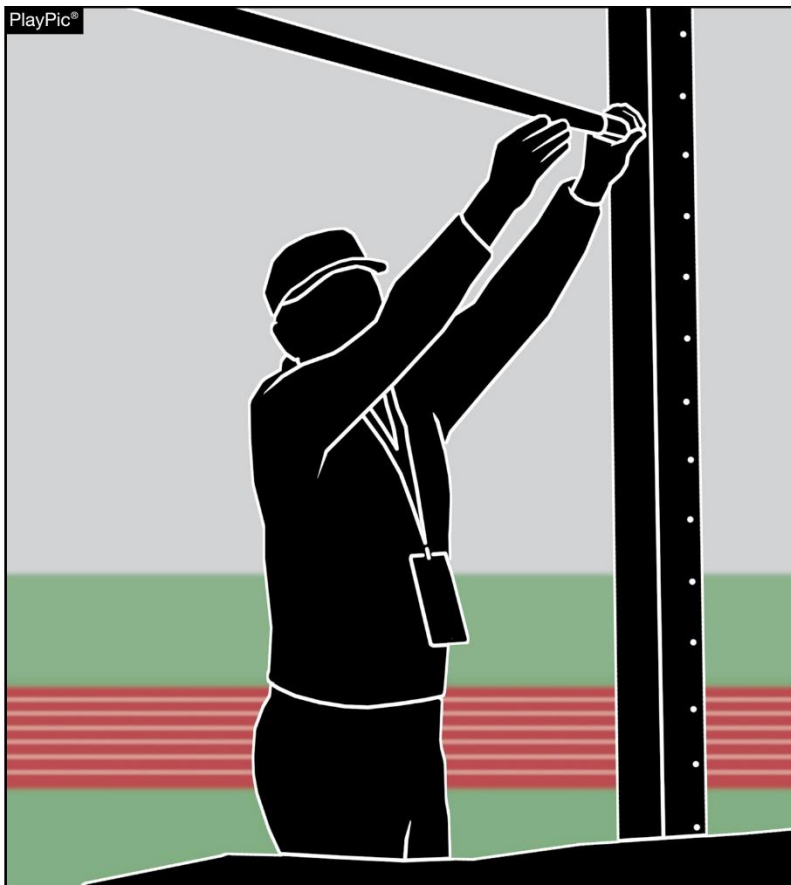


## EXCUSED ATHLETES



Current NFHS rules allow an athlete to be excused to compete in another event. Time limits for competitors excused to compete in another event shall be determined by the games committee for each meet. Due to the various locations of field event venues across the country, those time limits will vary from site to site.

## EXCUSED ATHLETES



While excused to compete in another event, a competitor will not be called for a trial during that time, and in the vertical jumps, the games committee needs to decide whether or not they will raise the crossbar to a succeeding height until the time limit expires. The games committee also needs to determine the protocol to use if an athlete does not report back to the event prior to the expiration of the excused time limit.



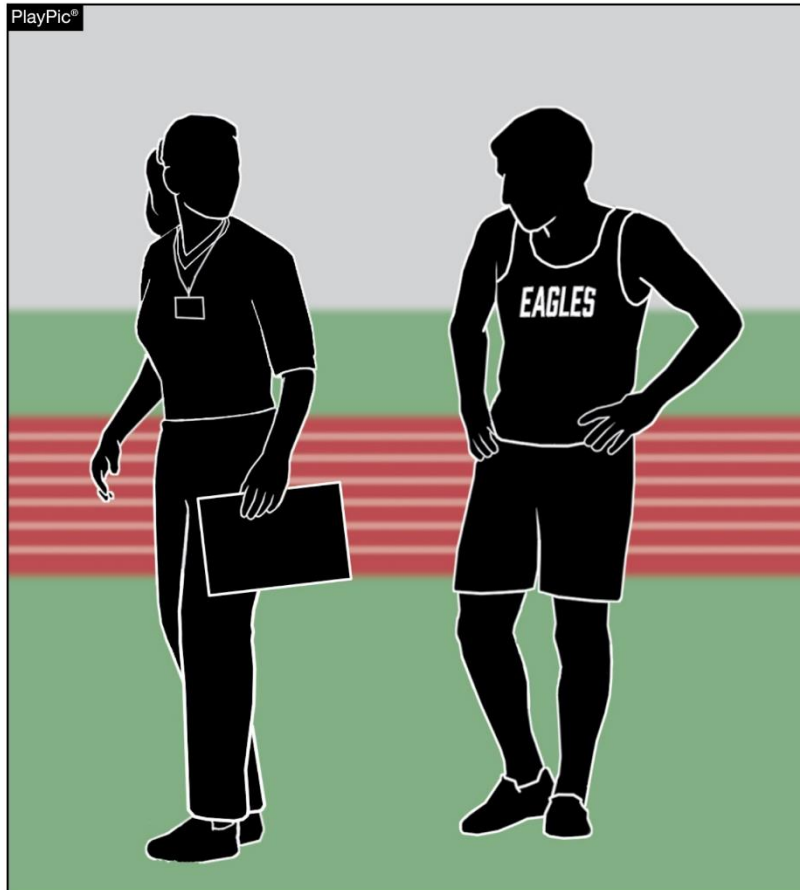
## EXCUSED ATHLETES



If a competitor must be excused during the final round of competition, the competitor with the best mark in the preliminaries has earned the right to make the last attempt of the competition and may choose to wait until after any excused competitors have taken all their trials.



## EXCUSED ATHLETES



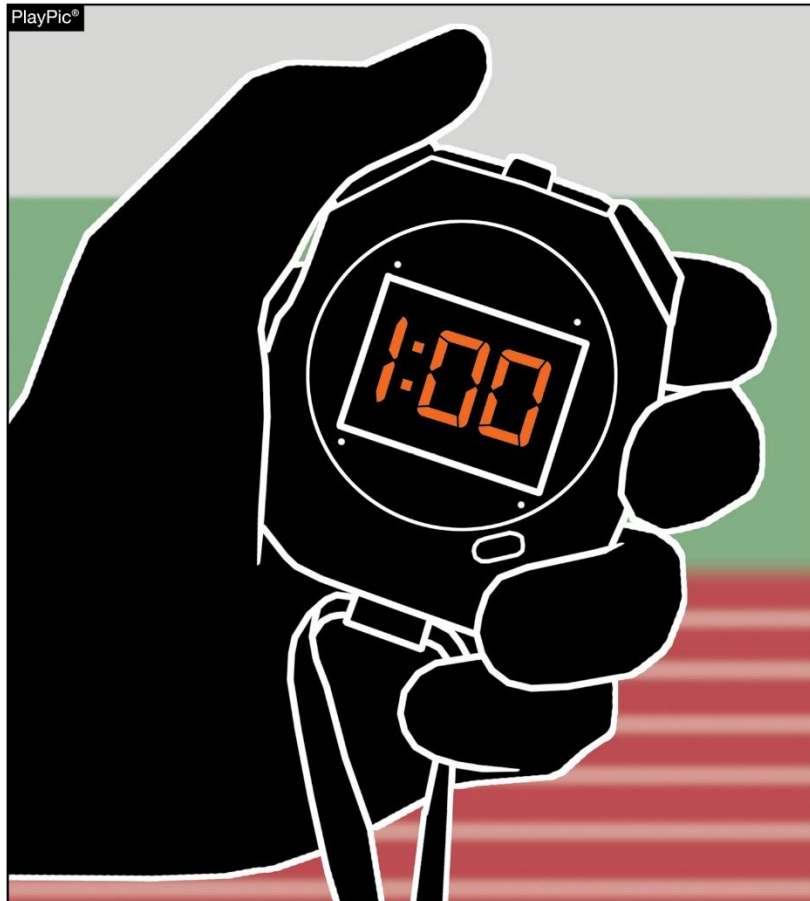
Ultimately coaches need to know the event schedule and what possible conflicts could arise within the meet prior to submitting meet entries. The athlete is responsible for going to the head event judge to inform the official of the event conflict and to receive permission to be excused from the event. If the athlete fails to notify the head event judge, the athlete is not afforded the same excused protocol and is subject to being called up to compete in the event and being timed out of one or multiple trials.

# TIME LIMITS IN VERTICAL JUMPS

Athletes remaining in the competition at the start of a round or bar height.	Individual Events			Combined Events		
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More than 3	1	1	1	1	1	1
2 or 3 remaining	3	3	1	3	3	1
1 remaining (winner)	5	5	1	5	5	1
Consecutive Trials	2	3	2	2	3	2

In field events, all competitors must initiate their attempts within a standard time limit. The event time timetable within the rules book has been updated to help officials navigate these different times.

## TIME LIMITS IN VERTICAL JUMPS



Regardless of when a competitor enters the competition or the number of competitors left in the competition, those entering for their first time have one minute to begin their attempt. If the competitor misses their first attempt and will take consecutive attempts, they are granted two minutes in high jump and three minutes in pole vault for the subsequent attempt.

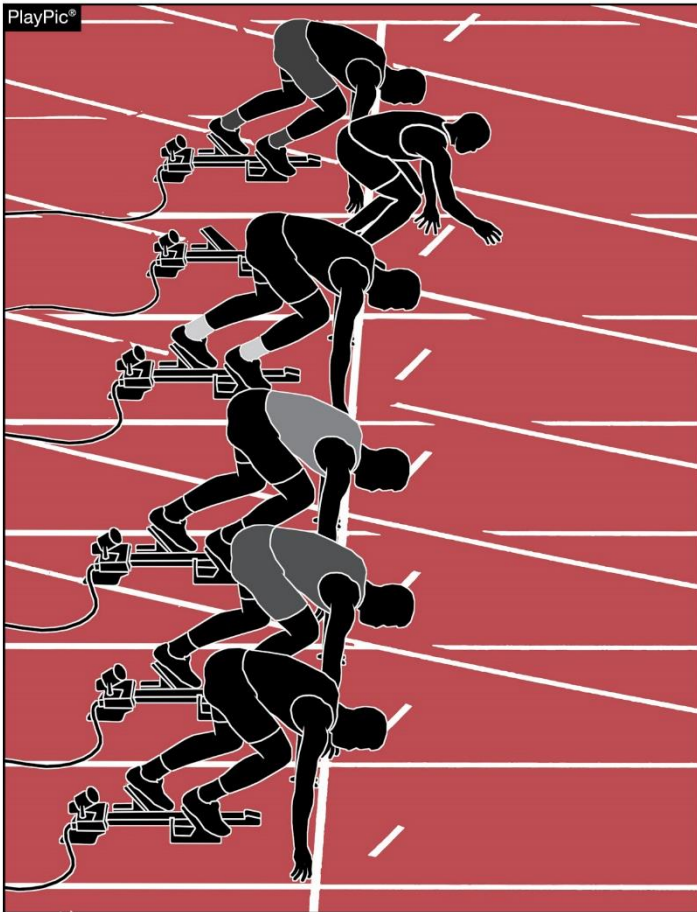


## TIME LIMITS IN VERTICAL JUMPS



If the athlete becomes the final competitor after clearing the bar, they have won the competition. If the competitor wishes to continue jumping for a record or personal best, they are granted five minutes for attempts at subsequent heights.

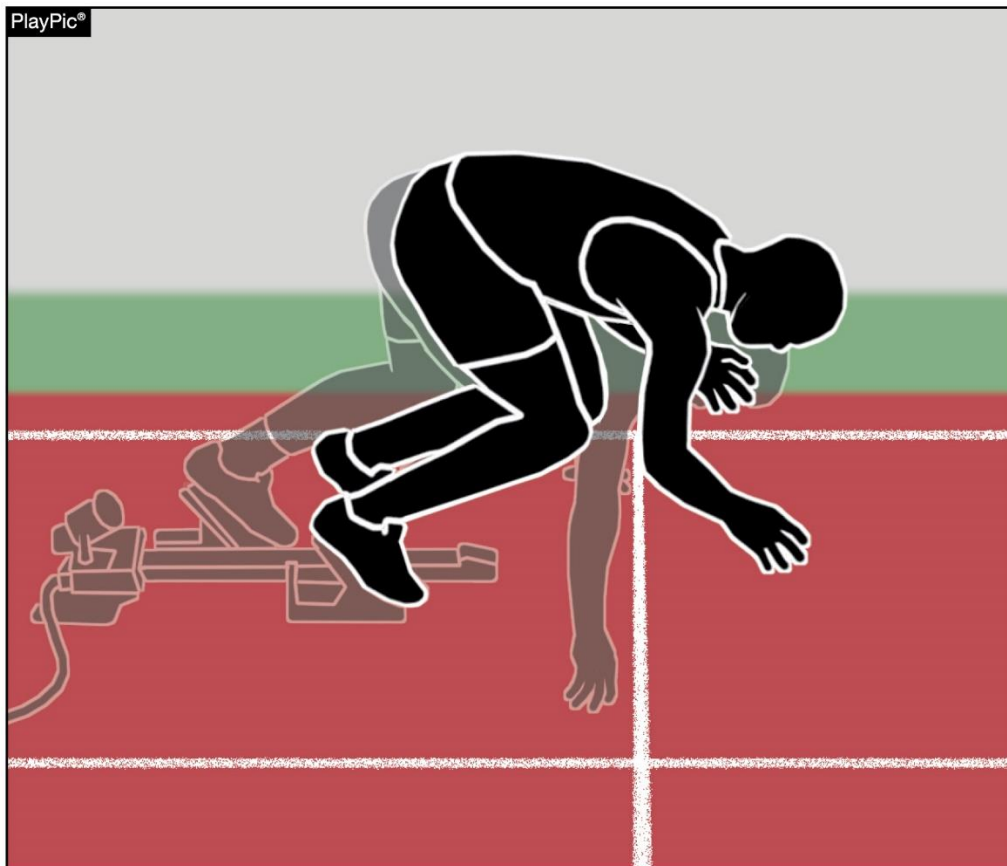
## FALSE STARTS



Fair starts are crucial to the success of any track event. It is the ultimate responsibility of the starter to provide fair starts and enforce the rules governing the start. Inevitably false starts will happen, and the penalty for them is immediate disqualification. Because of this severe penalty, in 2024 the NFHS revised the definition of a false start to eliminate many false start disqualifications that were made because of incidental/extraneous motions that did not result in anyone leaving their marks.



## FALSE STARTS



Nothing else changed with this revision of the rule. Any forward motion noted before the start signal that is not attempted to be halted that inevitably results in the competitor leaving their mark as the signal happens (frequently referred to as a “rolling start”) has always been a false start and is still a false start.



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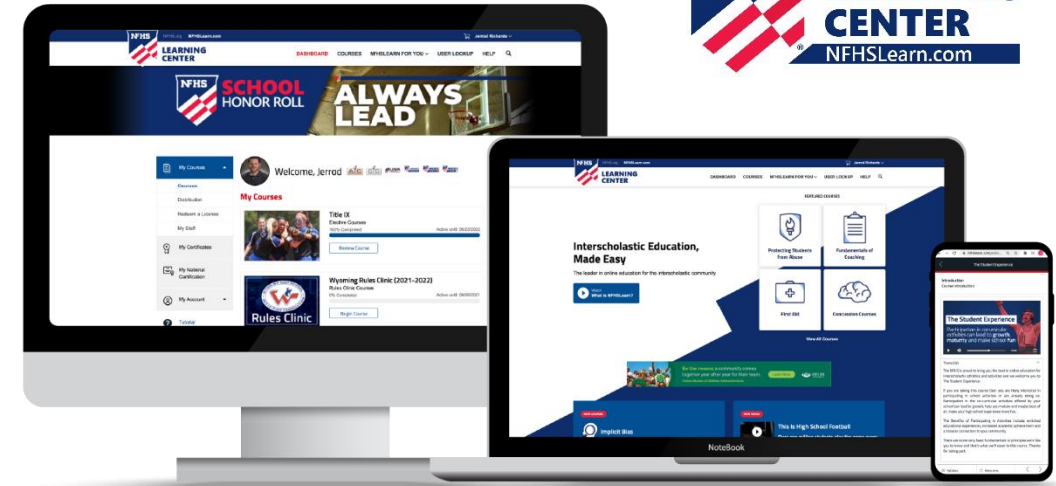


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