POLE VAULT RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Rule Change affecting Pole Vault: Run backs are not allowed during warm-up or competition! Rule 6-2, Article 6.

MEET DIRECTORS/MANAGERS: Legal and safety issues
Prior to warm-up, the head field judge, meet director/manager, host coach and the head field event judge shall inspect each venue to ensure it is safe and legal for competition. Meet directors/managers are required to supply event officials with proper forms for attesting to and verifying compliance with NFHS pole vaulting rules. CHSAA has provided a sample verification/inspection form for event judges (attached to this bulletin), however, any form may be used to note the above expectations. Such forms will have a place for the referee or head field event judge (a certified official) to sign verifying that the athletes have been weighed and all poles have been inspected before competition. If a certified scale is not available, the pole vault event will not be conducted. Following the competition, meet management shall keep all forms on file with the meet results.

Minimum equipment that meet management needs to provide pole vault officials:
Compliant landing pad, standards, base pads and ASTM box collar
100’ tape measure
25’ steel tape measure
Certified scale
Two Bar lifters (to raise crossbars)
Two Standard extenders (to jump at lower heights)
Three Pole vault crossbars (they will break)
Accurate vertical measuring device (to measure beyond 17’)
Stopwatch
Clip board and pencils
Flags (red, white and yellow)
Broom
Bungee

COACHES: Emphasize safety
Prior to practices and competitions:
-- Landing pads must be legal and properly maintained. Pads that are too soft need to be repaired or replaced.
-- The standards must be checked for proper placement, condition and padding.
-- Adequate padding must cover hard surfaces surrounding the landing pad, including the vaulting box and the standards.
-- The ASTM F2949-18 box collar is mandatory and must be anchored to the ground or inner walls of the plant box.
-- Poles must be checked regularly for cracks and scratches and to ensure they are legal, which includes a legible manufacturer’s top handhold numerical weight rating. The tape at the top of the pole must be uniform.
-- Proper supervision must be provided at all times. Vaulters should not be allowed to vault without a coach present.
-- Make sure the vaulters land in the Preferred Landing Zone (PLZ) and under control.

Coaches are required to verify each vaulter’s weight, the weight rating of the poles being used and the legality of the poles to be used for both warm-up and competition throughout the season (NFHS Rule 6-5, Article 2, 3, 4, 5). Altered poles -- poles that have been cut or are improperly marked -- are illegal. Occasionally, the markings on the top handhold band are not legible rendering the pole to be illegal. Handwritten weight ratings do not meet the requirement of the rules (See Case Book 6.5.2, 6.5.3 A & B, 6.5.4 A & B). Recommend measuring the length of each pole to verify that it has not been cut. Verify that the etchings/engravings/embedded information at either the top or bottom of each pole matches the weight rating on or above the top hand hold band. Replacement labels are available from most manufacturers. Some companies may recertify a pole for a nominal fee.

EVENT JUDGES: Provide a safe and fair competition

Updated 2/6/2020
Prior to every track meet, the Head Field Referee and the Head Pole Vault Judge will inspect the venue to ensure it is safe. Items to be inspected include: pit dimensions, standards (padded, aligned correctly, and anchored), the ASTM F2949-18 approved box collar in place, hard surfaces padded around the landing pad, the planting box is level with or below the runway surface and all objects (chairs, benches, and poles) are moved at least ten feet from the landing area. Refer to Pole Vault Safety Considerations on page 1. (See NFHS Rule 6-5 Articles 9, 14, 22) Visit the USATF.org website for detailed pole vault information (Click on the following links: Programs, select Officials, select Resources and Best Practices, select Field, scroll to Pole Vault, Select the Pole Vault logo for a detailed list of Pole Vault Best Practices).

Ensure that the landing pad meets at least the minimum dimensions and all hard surfaces surrounding the pit are covered with padding. The ASTM F2949-18 box collar is mandatory and must be anchored to the ground or inner walls of the plant box. Identify the zero line and align the standards with the zero line. The distance between the pegs (shall be between 13’8” to 14’8”). Will the crossbar remain on the pegs for all heights and standards settings with the end pieces in the correct position? If the crossbar does not remain on the pegs through the range of motion, either the pit and standards are not set up properly or you have incompatible equipment (mixing manufacturers’ equipment). It is not appropriate to tape the end pieces to the crossbar or to slide the end pieces in or out to fit on the pegs. (See NFHS Rule 6-5 Articles 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 22, 25, 26)

Confirm that the crossbar is level. The ground on one side of the pit may be higher/lower than the other side, so the indications on the pole vault standards may be inaccurate. So, it is extremely important that pole vault officials make precise measurements (a) before the competition begins, (b) each time a crossbar is broken and subsequently replaced, and (c) when the bar is raised to a new height. Resting a pole against the crossbar is not an accurate measuring device.

Prior to warm-up and competition, the Event Judge will weigh each athlete (with their shoes) on a certified scale. If a certified scale is not available, the pole vault event will not be conducted.

The Event Judge will inspect each pole to be used in the competition to verify that the poles are legal equipment (NFHS Rule 6-5, Article 5 and Rule 3-10 Article 1).

1. Every pole has a safe handhold zone, which is located at the very top of the pole (Gill, Essx, and Altius) to about six inches from the top of the pole (UCS Spirit). Look for the correct placement of the manufacturer’s one-inch circular top handhold band (NFHS Rule 6-5, Article 3).

2. The manufacturer’s weight rating on each pole shall be a minimum of ¾ inch numbers in contrasting colors located either within or above the top handhold band. The weight rating numbers must be legible and verified with the etchings/engravings/embedded information and labels on each pole. Etchings, engravings or embedded information, although containing pole characteristics for the manufacturer, shall not replace the requirement for the manufacturer’s weight rating label. Sometimes the top handhold weight rating labels are not readable which will render the pole illegal. Coaches may order replacement labels from the manufacturers. Be aware that replacement labels have been placed on the wrong pole. If there is a discrepancy between the numbers on the etchings/engravings/embedded information, labels or the top handhold band, the pole will be illegal, unless a letter from the manufacturer explains the discrepancy. Homemade marks placed on the pole are not acceptable. (NFHS Rule 6-5, Articles 3 & 4).

3. The length of each pole must be verified by using a tape measure to compare the pole length with the etchings/engravings/embedded information and labels (NFHS Rule 6-5, Article 4).

4. The tape at the top of the pole must be of uniform thickness (NFHS Rule 6-5, Article 2).
Once the poles have been verified by the official as being legal equipment, it is the responsibility of the coach, vaulter, and the event judge to ensure that only a properly rated pole is used. During warm-up and competition, a designated official will verify that a legal pole will be used for each attempt and that the athlete’s weight is below the pole’s rating. Officials may mark the poles so that it is obvious that they have been verified for this meet. *When marking poles, do not cover up any etchings or labels with tape which could slow down pole inspections at subsequent events.* Warming up without the contestant’s coach or event official could result in a disqualification.

**Officials’ Personal Equipment (minimum):**

- 25’ Steel tape measure
- Pole inspection marking supplies (sharpies and tape)
- Stop watch
- Duct tape and athletic tape
- Pencils and clip board
- Current NFHS Rule Book and Case Book
- Metric conversion chart for pole inspections
- Plumb bob with line
- Level
- Suggested Tools (wrenches, shims, WD-40, clamps)