2020

TRACK AND FIELD PRE-MEET NOTES

Rules Change Highlights

01 **Exchange Zones**

Exchange zones will be 30 meters long for incoming competitors running 200 meters or less.

02 **Assisting Other Competitors**

A competitor should not be penalized for helping another competitor who is distressed or injured when no advantage is gained by the competitor who is assisting.

03 **Long & Triple Jump Pits**

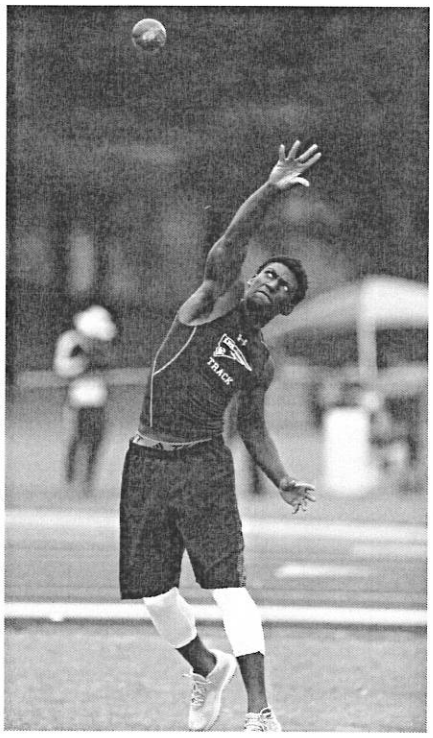
For pits constructed after 2019, the length of the pit shall be at least 23 feet (7 meters).

04 **Runways**

It is illegal to run backward or in the opposite direction (non-legal direction) on a horizontal jump, pole vault or javelin runway.

In This Issue:

1. RULES CHANGE HIGHLIGHTS
2. POINTS OF EMPHASIS
5. EXPANDED SPRINT RELAY EXCHANGE ZONES
6. PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO COMPETITORS IN CROSS COUNTRY RACES
7. STANDARDIZED PIT SIZE IN THE HORIZONTAL JUMPS
8. ESTABLISHING TAKE OFF MARKS IN THE HORIZONTAL JUMPS, POLE VAULT AND JAVELIN
8. GAMES COMMITTEE DUTIES AND ROLES
9. ELECTRONIC DISTANCE MEASURE - BEST PRACTICES
11. MEET ADMINISTRATION - THE LITTLE THINGS
13. THE JURY OF APPEALS - WHAT IT IS AND HOW IF FUNCTIONS
15. CORRECT PLACEMENT OF THE HURDLES
17. CROSS COUNTRY COURSE LAY OUT - THE BASICS
19. HOW TO CORRECTLY UTILIZE COURSE MARKINGS IN CROSS COUNTRY
21. RIO INJURY REPORT
22. PARTICIPATION DATA
23. COACHES EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES



2020 POINTS OF EMPHASIS

1. Meet Administration

Providing a quality experience to track and field athletes, coaches, and spectators does not happen by accident. Many months of pre-planning and execution have occurred before the event is finalized and the first event begins.

Most standardized checklists include foundational topics such as: establishing entry limitations and substitution deadlines, securing meet personnel, developing a meet schedule, and preparing the facility to host the event. Quality meet administrators know and understand that while covering these essential items is certainly necessary and appropriate, the ability to drill down to the smallest details is equally important and critical for ensuring success.

While not included on most checklists, pay special attention to the following items as they can dictate the success or failure of your event:

- **NFHS Rule 3-1-1** gives authority to the meet director to establish a custodian of awards. Double check prior to your event that the appropriate awards have been ordered and are available. This critical step will save you embarrassment in the moments and time after the event.
- **NFHS Rule 3-4-7** allows the meet referee the authority to delegate the responsibility of counting laps for any race of two laps or more. Whomever is assigned to this duty must be confident and knowledgeable regarding counting laps and the likelihood of dealing with the potential for lapped runners. This is not a duty for a novice official or volunteer.

- **NFHS Rule 3-5-3** outlines the situations that are eligible to protest/appeal. It is imperative that coaches understand the appeal structure and its available options. Having a clear and concise protocol that is delineated to coaches prior to the start of the event will pay benefits.
- **NFHS Rule 3-18-3** designates the responsibility for ensuring that each flight of hurdles is set at proper height and prescribed point prior to each race. While moving hurdles on-and-off the track efficiently is essential, the system used to double check height and placement is also critical.
- **NFHS Rule 3-18-4** outlines the responsibilities of the block chief. Assigning an individual(s) responsible to ensure that starting blocks are in good working order, are located at the starting line of each race, and removed after the start is one less responsibility usually placed on the starter or assistant starter.
- **NFHS Rule 5-11-1** requires that in any relay race, a team must start and end the race with the same baton. Meet administrators should consider a system (color, number,etc.) that, if necessary, can assist officials in determining that the correct baton has been used by any team finishing a race.
- **NFHS Rule 6-5-3** dictates that state associations determine their own procedures regarding verification that a pole vaulter participates on a legal pole. For those states that use some type of on-site weigh-in procedure for this verification process, it is important that the scale used to determine body weight is certified as accurate considering it will determine which pole(s) the athlete is eligible to use during the competition.

Putting on a quality track and field event is not easy. Do not let addressing the most obvious elements overshadow the less obvious during your planning.

2. Exchange Zones

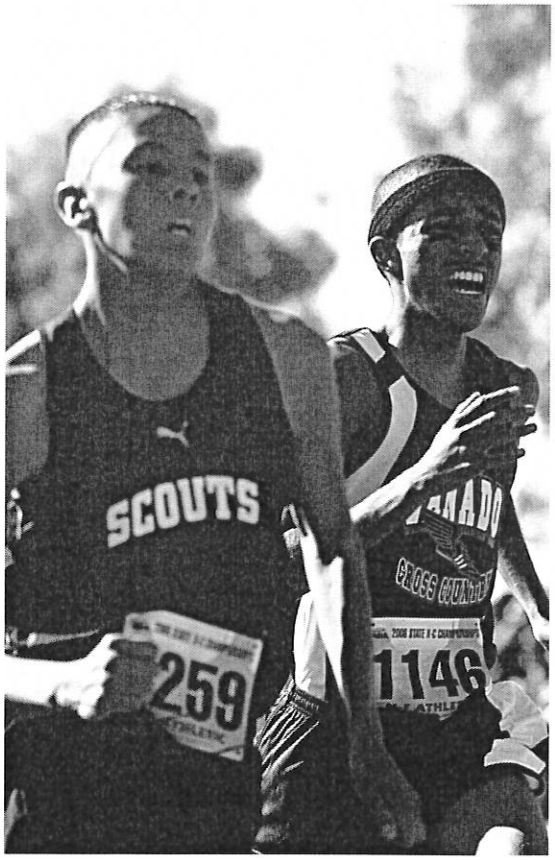
Recent changes within multiple track and field rules codes regarding the definition of relay exchange zones prompted the rules committee to adjust NFHS exchange zone rules.

The rule change does not require that tracks be repainted or resurfaced in order to be in compliance with NFHS rules. There is no immediate cost to schools as the current track markings can be utilized with minor modifications.

The acceleration zone is now incorporated into the exchange zone, thus creating a 30-meter exchange zone. Existing acceleration zone markings (triangles, squares) or colored tape placed at that location, may be used to denote the beginning of the exchange zones on a track.

In sprint relays such as the 4x100 meter and 4x200 meter, and other relays with legs of 200 meters or less, the outgoing runner, while waiting for the baton, must be positioned entirely inside the 30-meter exchange zone.

The exchange zones for relay races with legs more than 200 meters are not impacted by this rule change.



3. Assisting Injured Athletes

NFHS rules in track and field and cross country outline that it is an unfair act when a competitor receives any assistance.

Previous changes to NFHS cross country rules created the exception that allows a competitor to assist an injured or ill competitor without being disqualified when medical staff is not present at the event because, in a clear majority of these types of situations, the action is intended to be an act of good sportsmanship and not an attempt to circumvent the rules. This same rule now applies to both sports and has been modified to include those situations in which medical assistance may be at the event but is not readily available to assist the injured or ill competitor.

The competitor who receives aid will be disqualified, but when no advantage is gained the competitor assisting should not be penalized for exhibiting good sportsmanship.

The final decision in these situations rests with the meet referee who has sole authority to rule on infractions, irregularities and disqualifications in a meet. The competitor who receives aid will be disqualified, but when no advantage is gained the competitor assisting should not be penalized for exhibiting good sportsmanship.

EXPANDED SPRINT RELAY EXCHANGE ZONES

Let us examine the differences from what the exchange zone used to be and how to deal with the new exchange zone.

For relays in which the incoming runner is running 200 meters or less, the zone is now 30 meters instead of the 20 meters it used to be, Rule 5-3-3, page 31. The extra 10 meters now incorporates the old acceleration zone. If the incoming runner is running longer than 200 meters the exchange zone will be 20 meters. There is no longer an acceleration zone for any relay exchange.

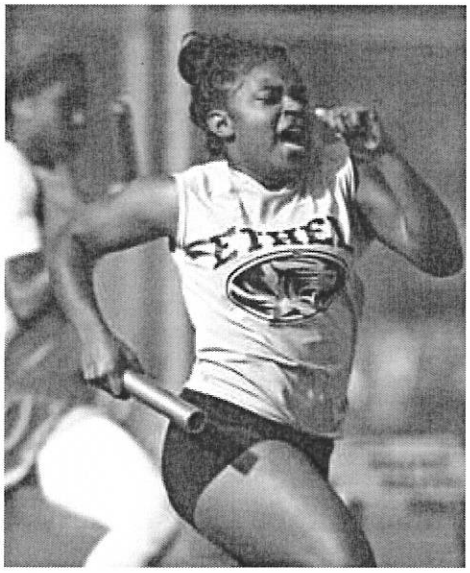
All exchanges for the 4 X 100m relay, the 4 X 200m relay and the 800m (100-100-200-400) medley relay are 30 meters in length. All exchanges for the 4 x 400m relay and the 4 X 800m relay are 20 meters in length. The first two (2) exchanges for the 1600m (200-200-400-800) medley are 30 meters in length and the third exchange is 20 meters in length.

While most states utilize a 4-turn stagger for the 4 X 200m relay, some states use a 3-turn stagger. Some states use a 2-turn stagger for the medley relays, and some use a 3-turn stagger. Therefore, the specific start stagger that is used by a state will determine the exact location of the exchange zones and which exchange zones can be shared in different relay races. Most states will retain a 20-meter exchange zone at the common finish, but some states will need a 30-meter common exchange zone as well.

The 30-meter exchange zones will not require that tracks be repainted or resurfaced in order to be in compliance with the NFHS rules. Schools are encouraged to utilize the acceleration zone marks for all exchange zones until the next time they update and/or re-paint their track. Some meet managers that currently have small triangles to mark their acceleration zones are planning to simply paint or tape a 2" wide line of the same color across the base of the small triangle, extending across the entire lane. This will make it easier for both the athletes and the officials to locate and identify the boundaries of the exchange zones.

Problems can be reduced and sometimes completely eliminated through use of standardized color markings on a track for alleys, start and finish lines, and exchange zones. All schools are encouraged to adhere to the NFHS Recommended Standardized color markings, found in rule 5-2-4, of the 2020 NFHS Track & Field Rule Book, for their tracks.

PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO COMPETITORS DURING COMPETITION



What is the true meaning of sportsmanship? Sportsmanship can be defined as ethical, appropriate, polite, generous, and fair behavior or treatment of others while participating in a sporting contest. When a competitor plays by the rules, is fair to opponents and is gracious during loses, that competitor exhibits good sportsmanship.

"The NFHS believes in and promotes good sportsmanship."

Providing assistance to competitors in a cross country race or track and field meet has, at times, created a degree of confusion relating to which competitors are to be penalized/disqualified. The revised language of Rule 4-6-5g, page 26 and 8-6-1e, page 70 provide clarification and demonstrate the importance of conveying that message to the competitors. *If an appropriate health-care professional is not readily available, a competitor who provides assistance to an injured or ill competitor should not be disqualified if neither the individual competitor providing the assistance, nor his/her team, gains an advantage, as a result of providing the assistance.*

In looking at the letter of the rule, any assistance to a competitor shall result in a disqualification of the competitor receiving aid. However, keeping the two most important concepts in mind, impedance to others and unfair advantage gained, it is clear that one runner helping another to their feet or even assisting them physically to continue and cross the finish line, that neither of these concepts are violated. In fact, stopping during the race to assist another athlete will only slow down the assisting runner resulting in a slower time and a higher finish place. The final decision rests with the meet referee who has sole authority to rule on infractions, irregularities and disqualifications in any meet.

The NFHS rules committee believes that helping a fellow competitor who has fallen or is unable to continue due to injury or illness is an act of good sportsmanship and should not result in a penalty to the competitor doing the assisting.

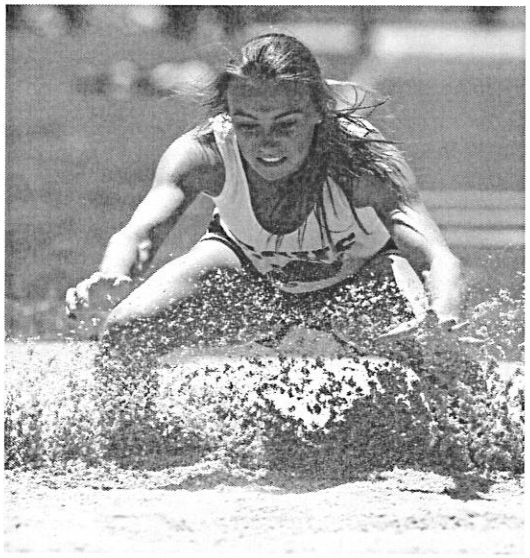
STANDARDIZED PIT SIZE IN THE HORIZONTAL JUMPS

In 2019 Rule 6-9-5 of the NFHS Rule Book was reorganized to provide direction in the standardization of the size of Horizontal Jumps Pits.

New in the 2020 NFHS Rule Book, Rule 6-9-5 simplifies the requirements for all concerned. It is now presented in simple language and applies to all Horizontal Jump Pits currently in use and all installed after 2019.

Rule 6-9-5, page 61, The landing pit shall have a minimum width of 9 feet (2.75 meters) and should meet a minimum length of 23 feet (7 meters).
NOTE: For long jump and triple jump pits constructed after 2019, the length of the pit shall be at least 23 feet (7 meters).

This note may seem repetitious, but is very definitive and vastly important, as it clearly defines the expectation for the legality of a Horizontal Jumps Pit. State associations may require adherence to the legal standard when assigning tournament series Track & Field Meets.



QUESTION: How do we determine where the Foul Line is located?

ANSWER: Rule 6-9-5a, page 61, In the long jump and triple jump, the foul line shall be located by measuring from the nearer edge of the landing pit to the front of the foul line.

Distance from the foul line or takeoff board may be adjusted to accommodate different levels of competition. Competitors may change on which foul line or takeoff board they are using during competition but only with the prior notification and confirmation of the event judge. In lower levels of competition, you may have painted lines instead of boards closer than the suggested distances, rule 6-9-5 note in the NFHS rules book.

Suggested Distances Are:

	Boys	Girls
Long Jump:	12 feet (3.7m)	8 feet (2.5m)
Triple Jump:	32 feet (9.8m)	24 feet (7.3m)

These rule changes defining Horizontal Jumps Pit size align the NFHS Rule Book with the rules books of other governing bodies (IAAF, USATF, NCAA), for the sport of Track & Field.

ESTABLISHING TAKE OFF MARKS IN THE HORIZONTAL JUMPS, POLE VAULT AND JAVELIN

In the horizontal jumps, pole vault, and javelin, competitors are allowed a running start before they jump, vault, or throw. The length of their running start is not legislated, rather it is determined by the athletes age, size, speed, and strength as determined by repetitions of the running start in practice.

While many athletes simply measure the distance between their "starting mark" and their "take-off mark" on the runway

at practice and then transfer that measurement to the runway at the meet, some do not. Some competitors are coached to utilize their practice regimen of running back their approach from the take-off mark away from the pit or throwing area and towards their starting mark. Having athletes running in both directions, during warm-ups presents a safety concern at meets, interferes with the normal flow of warmups, and creates a liability issue.

In 2020, the NFHS Rule Book rectifies these safety and liability issues with an addition to Rule 6-2-6, page 42 - It is illegal to run backward or in the opposite direction (non-legal direction) on a horizontal jump, pole vault, or javelin runway.

The change in routine will affect some athletes; however, the simple solution of laying out a tape measure in practice so that the athletes can get used to establishing their starting point or take off mark on a measured number instead of a foot strike at e end of "run-back" will reduce that concern and lead to a more organized, safe, and efficient warm-up period during meets.

GAMES COMMITTEE - ROLES & DUTIES

With over a million student athletes participating in High School Track & Field Meets each year and around 500,000 students participating in cross country meets, the NFHS has made the determination that there must be an entity responsible for proper conduct of a track and field or cross country meet. This entity is called the Games Committee and its powers to produce the best meet possible are broad ranging.

Role

The games committee has the responsibility of supervising preparations for each meet, managing the meet, and coordinating post-meet activities. There are many crucial decisions that need to be determined and communicated before the meet begins. Regardless of the size of the meet, there are many pieces of the puzzle that need to fit together, and it is the games committee's responsibility for managing a meet to ensure that the meet runs smoothly and efficiently.

Composition

Rule 3-2-1, page 11, the games committee may consist of the following:

- An individual or a meet referee for a dual meet;
- State Association appointed individuals for qualifying and state finals meets;
- Qualified and selected individuals may serve in this capacity for large invitationals meets.

Duties

The games committee determines whether there will be qualifying or entry standards, and if yes, publishes those standards as part of the meet's communications via email or on a web site. In addition, the games committee will state the terms and conditions that will be used for the competition and has the authority to determine who will officiate the

meet. This committee obtains the proper sanction from these governing bodies (i.e., State High School Athletic Associations), establishes the competition venue, determines the schedule events, and publishes the deadline for entries. The games committee ensures that, for track events, no athlete will run more preliminary or semifinal heats than another athlete, to qualify for a final in an event.

Rules 3-2-3 and 3-2-4 of the NFHS rules book outline thirty-six(36) duties that the Games Committee has the authority to determine. A supplemental resource to the NFHS rules book on the games committee's duties can be found in the NFHS Track & Field and Cross Country case book.

The games committee also works closely with the designated meet referees to suspend, postpone, or cancel the meet or selected events should an emergency arise such as hazardous weather conditions (i.e., lightning, flooding). Be aware that the games committee may change the direction of the attempts in the Pole Vault, High Jump, and Horizontal Jumps, once the event has started. This change may be made due to a change in wind direction. If possible, the change should be made in fairness to all the competitors, such as at the beginning of a height, in the verticals, or at the end of a round, in the horizontals. This may not always be possible, though, if the meet is suspended based upon weather conditions and may be necessary to resume competition in the middle of a round or height (Situation 3-2-3 in NFHS case book).

It is the responsibility of the Games Committee and the meet management to work together before, during, and after the meet to ensure a fair, balanced, and safe competition. With proper planning and addressing of common questions, the coaches and athletes will come to a meet with less stress and compete with more enjoyment.

"The games committee has the responsibility of supervising preparations for each meet, managing the meet, and coordinating post-meet activities."

ELECTRONIC DISTANCE MEASURE – BEST PRACTICES

The use of "electronic distance measurement" (EDM) has been used exclusively at higher levels of Track & Field competition (IAAF, USATF, NCAA). The availability and cost effectiveness of the various devices now makes it affordable to be utilized at the high school level.

Before one can discuss the usage of electronic distance measurement (EDM), it is essential to understand its purpose.

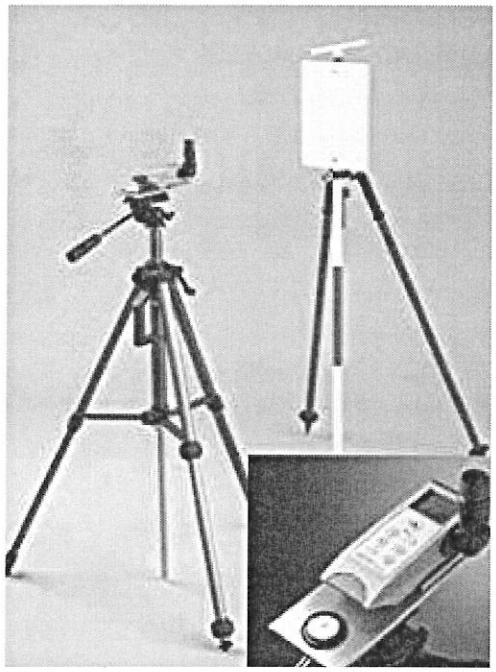
QUESTION: Why utilize electronic distance measurement (EDM) at a high school Track & Field meet?
ANSWER: To:

- **Increase Accuracy** - Fiberglass tape is both temperature and tension sensitive. Therefore, it stretches irregularly. It is also inaccurately marked graphically. Steel tape is also vulnerable to the same effects, except to a lesser extent. Add the factors of uneven terrain and improbability of laying the tape in a true straight line, the length of measurement is irregular with every measurement.

- **Increase Efficiency -** The time to humanly triangulate or directly mark a point of first touch/ landing is consistent between tape and laser systems.The efficiency is realized with the time it takes to shoot a target through a laser viewer, versus the multi-mechanical process of manually aligning, adjusting, reading and then returning the tape to out of the sector or pit.
- **Increase Transparency** - Digital readout of a measurement is instantly verifiable visually, stored and can be instantaneously transmitted to a computer or digital screens.This eliminates the chance of misreading a tape and then transposing the reading verbally to manual recorders.
- **Increase Credibility** - The combination of increased accuracy, efficiency and transparency provide a level of exposure that has made the use of electronic measurement the most reliable method of competition measurement.

BEST PRACTICES

Have adequate power - Regardless of what type of device the EDM operator is using, it is critical that they have adequate power. If the unit uses rechargeable batteries, a second and perhaps a third battery should be readily available, especially if the competition will be a long one. If it's a multi-day meet, make sure to re-charge all batteries overnight. If the device is battery powered, an ample supply of batteries should be on hand, ready to be changed as necessary.



Arrive early - Most of the work that you will need to do should be done prior to the beginning of the warm-up period. Plan on spending at least 30-60 minutes in preparation and setup prior to the posted event start time. This will give you adequate time to accomplish the following best practices.

Verify the accuracy of the device - Before the competition begins, verify the accuracy of the device you will be using. The most efficient way is to use a steel tape to measure at least 3 points in the impact area that would represent the longest, shortest and a mid-range attempt. Positioning the device where it will be used for measurement, and then measuring these three points to verify the accuracy of the device against the tape is the prescribed process. This would be true for either a throwing event or a horizontal jumping event.

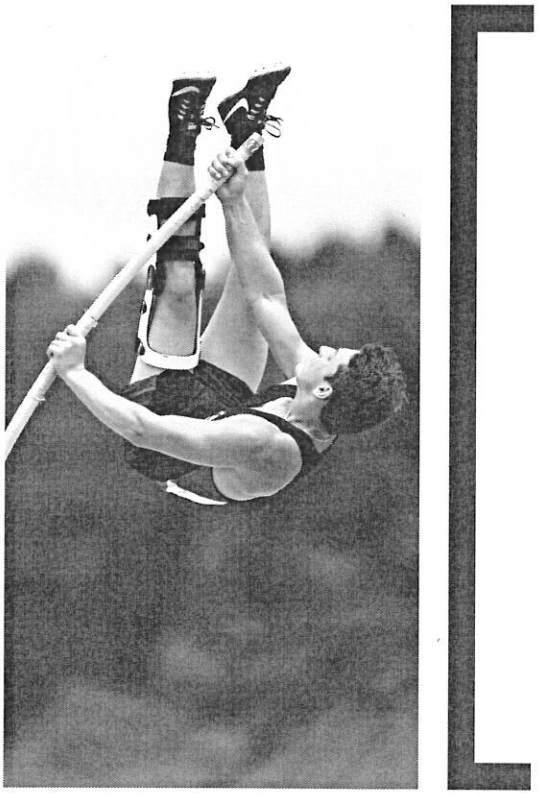
Create a check mark - The check mark is used before, during and after the competition to verify that the measurements taken are accurate. The check mark should be in an area where it cannot be disturbed or bumped. This allows you to recheck your device at any time.

Work with the crew chief - It is critical that the EDM official work in close cooperation with the event crew chief, especially during the selection of the EDM device setup location. Understanding the flow of the event, where the athlete bench/area will be, and where implements will be returned will substantially aide in the efficient use of electronic measurement. Movement into and out of the circle or runway should be as efficient and quick as possible. The judge should be positioned so they can make the measurement and be out of the way for the next attempt.

Track & Field as a sport is constantly evolving and adapting to meet the needs and demands of the sport and the pace of technological progress. Electronic Distance Measurement is just one of these adaptations. Before using EDM, meet management should make sure they have qualified individuals who know how to use the equipment properly.

MEET ADMINISTRATION -THE LITTLE THINGS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Putting on a track and field event is not easy. The responsibility of the meet director is to provide a quality meet for those participating, volunteering, officiating and spectating. Pre-planning is crucial to this success. Whether hosting a dual, invitational, conference, or state qualifying Track & Field Meet, it is essential and crucial for the success of any meet to establish communication, pre-planning with face to face meetings and or conference calls at least 9-12 months in advance of the large meets is crucial. Once a communication plan has been established, successive meetings should occur monthly and weekly as it gets closer to the event.



The key players: school athletic administration, meet director, security personnel, official's coordinator, volunteer coordinator and meet management representatives should identify their roles and obligations once the date(s) for the event has been secured.

In reality there will be hiccups along the way. However, with open lines of communication, proper planning and anticipating outcomes, matters can be resolved much quicker. The ultimate goal for the conclusion of the competition is that athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, vendors, meet personnel and spectators will have had a great experience with a positive and lasting impression.

The administration of the meet is the responsibility of the host school, which shall appoint a meet director. The ability to finalize the smallest to largest details is critical for ensuring success. Rule 3-3-1, page 14, The Meet Director shall serve as the official representative of the host meet management. He/she shall supervise the conduct of the meet and perform such duties to guarantee the competition will run smoothly. Those duties include, but are not limited to the following:

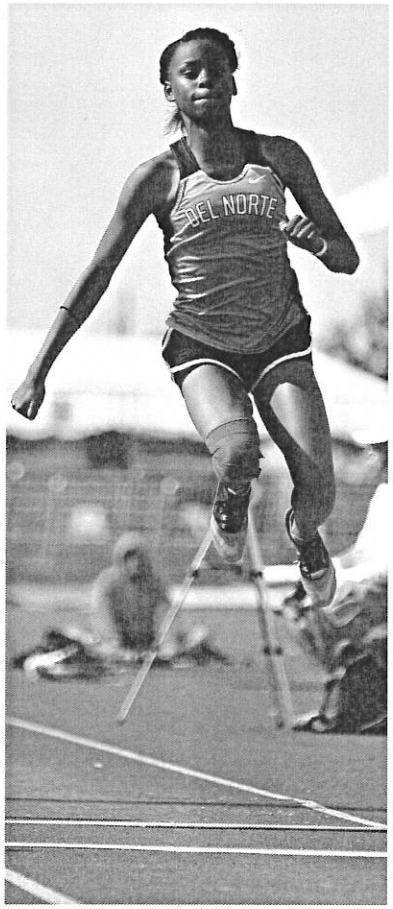
- Ensure the needs of staff, officials, competitors and volunteers are properly planned;
- Assign an officials/volunteer's coordinator or be the officials/volunteers coordinator;
- Inspect the venues and all equipment to make sure it meets standards of rules and any safety hazards;
- Appoint a games committee (review article in this publication on games committee);
- Select a jury of appeals (review article in this publication on jury of appeals);
- Establish custodian of awards.

Advanced Planning (9-12 months prior to the competition)

1.Determine date and location of the competition;
2.Secure facility via contact/permit;
3.Invite teams and provide contracts (include a welcome letter & meet schedule);
- Establish entry limits

4.Contract a timing service or 3-6 officials/volunteer to hand time;
5. Notify Custodial/Maintenance staff;
6. Set up web site to promote meet (if desired);
7. Determine support personnel needs:
- Press steward;
- Volunteers;

- Meet scorer;
- Medical personnel.



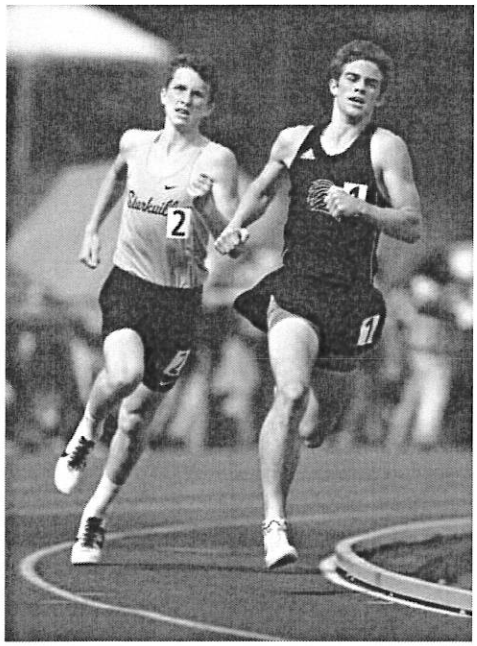
Intermediary Planning (3-6 months prior to the competition)

1. Ensure all necessary sanction/permits/contracts are in place
2. Secure/select officials
3. Secure security and medical staff
4. Order bib numbers, shell, and all other necessary items
5. Verify power source and PA's are available and operational
6. Decide on spectators fees (if applicable)
7. Set up on line entries/fees and ensure functionality
8. Invite/obtain vendors
9. Secure volunteers.

Pre-Meet Planning (2-4 weeks prior to the competition)

1. Send out meet information
   - Meet schedule, parking, warm-up areas, practice areas, venue map, packet pick-up
   - Officials, jury of appeals, coaches meeting time & location
   - Hospitality location for coaches/officials/volunteers
2. Location of hydration stations
3. Inclement weather/emergency evacuation protocol
4. Verify that all field event venues & equipment are in working order
5. Finalize volunteer list and assignments
6. Determine if final meet schedule is rolling or fixed

The above observations should be clearly identified and established depending on the level/type of meet and number competitors. State Association certified officials should always be utilized. Always adhere to the meet schedule and start the meet on time. It is also a good practice to require the submission of "After Meet Action Reporting" to be done by all meet management lead personnel within 5-10 days after the conclusion of the meet. This will provide valuable feedback for future growth and development of the competition.



Remember, "it's the little things that makes the difference".

THE JURY OF APPEALS - WHAT IT IS & HOW IT FUNCTIONS

While everyone involved in a Track & Field Meet wants the meet to run fairly and correctly, sometimes things do go wrong. A Jury of Appeals can be appointed prior to the meet to serve as the final board of appeals (Rule 3-5). The rule empowers meet management to appoint a Jury of Appeals, to hear a coach's protest of a Referee's decision.

Appealable Situations

Situations that are appealable to the Jury, but not limited to, are:

- the misapplication of a rule
- the failure to apply the rules;
- a violation of any of the meet's announced terms & conditions of competition.

Appeal Process

STEP 1 - After the referee renders a decision about an issue. If the coach believes the meet referee has misapplied the rule the coach must first protest to the referee. If the coach still believes the result is not supported by the NFHS rules book or the competition's terms and conditions, they may file a written appeal to the jury of appeals. Some states only require a verbal appeal to convene the jury of appeals. Check with your State Association to determine what is required in your state. That appeal must be made within 30 minutes of the results of the referee's decision, or the announcement of the results if those cannot be reviewed by the meet referee. In the written appeal the coach must cite the specific NFHS rule that If was misapplied or not enforced or quote the meet policy that was not followed. Once completed, the appeal is submitted to the referee.

STEP 2 - The referee must collect all documentation related to their previous ruling, plus the written appeal and submits them to the jury of appeals. The referee provides a brief description of the situation being appealed and provides his/her rationale for their ruling. The coach is then allowed to explain why they are appealing the referee's decision. At that point the jury of appeals can ask questions of both the referee and the appealing head coach.

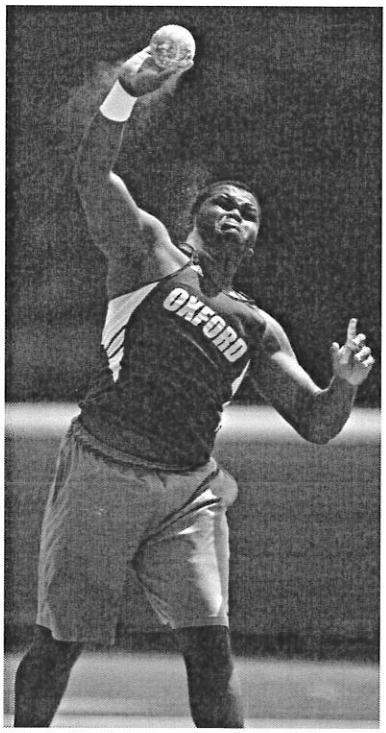
STEP 3 - Once all questions have been exhausted, the referee and coach are excused and the jury of appeals discuss the situation and vote to either uphold the referee's decision or change the referee's decision. Like the referee and all other officials, the jury of appeals does not have the authority to set aside any rule (Rule 3-1-2, page 11), but its members may consider extenuating circumstances. The jury of appeals issue their final decision to the referee and the referee then informs all parties involved, and results or scoring will be adjusted, as necessary. The decision of the jury of appeals is final and not subject to appeal.

Non-Appealable Situations

Situations not appealable to the Jury of Appeals are:

- Any judgment decisions pertaining to violations or alleged violations of the rules;
- Finish judges' and timers' decisions, that does not involve misapplication of a rule or the terms and conditions of competition;
- Whether a start is fair and legal.

A jury of appeals may not accept appeals which address the above (Rules 3-5-4, page 15). Issues related to clerical errors or corrections of team scoring errors typically occur after a meet's conclusions and do not necessarily involve the jury of appeals (Rule 3-5-3b, page 15). These clerical errors can be corrected up to 48 hours after the end of the meet, unless another time period is stipulated in advance by the games committee.



Selecting a Jury of Appeals

Careful composition of the members of the jury of appeals increases the likelihood that decisions are correct, but also seen as unbiased. When appointing a jury of appeals:

- Jury members should be familiar with all aspects of track and field events;
- The jury should contain an odd number of members, usually three to five, to ensure a decision;
- Ideally, the jury of appeals members should not have any other positions at the meet (unless a previous announcement identified the games committee members as the jury of appeals);

• Jury of appeals members should recuse themselves (have alternates available) from any appeal or issue that that could be perceived as involving or affecting a friend, family member, or school representative with which they have a relationship.

The meet referee must assemble the jury of appeals prior to the start of the meet to review their responsibilities. Jury of appeals members also must be reminded that they must be available, for 30 minutes after the 4x400m Relay, in case there is a need for the Jury to convene.

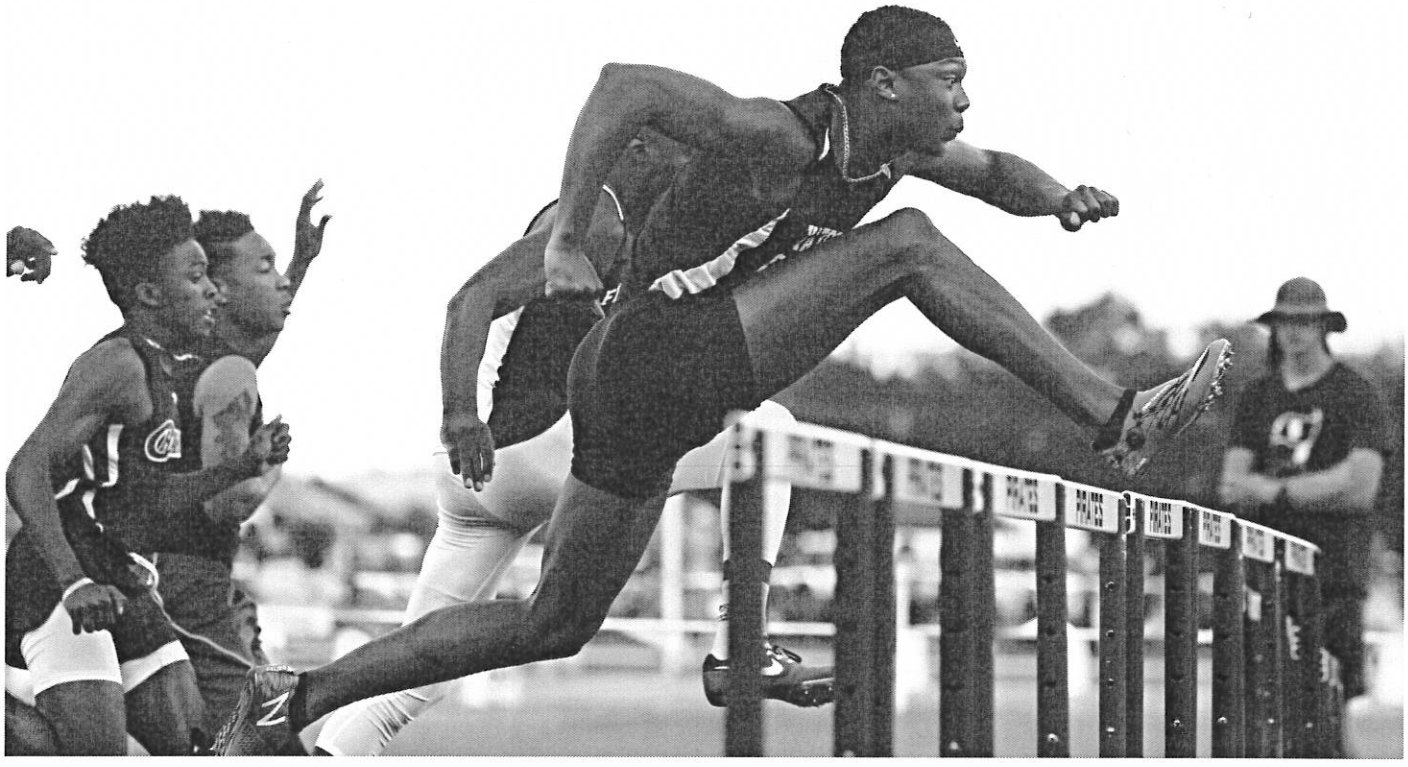
Every major track & field competition should have a jury of appeals appointed. Their existence provides the competition with checks and balances, ensures that the competition is fair, applies the NFHS rules book correctly, and that all of the terms and conditions of the competition are adhered to.

CORRECT PLACEMENT OF THE HURDLES

There is an art to the correct placement of the hurdles on the track for hurdle races. Correct placement involves a series of steps or actions.

1. Place the hurdles on the desired marks;
2. Align the hurdles properly on the marks;
3. Adjust the weights to correspond to the height of the hurdle.

On the track, there is a mark and sometimes two marks where the hurdles need to be placed. These markings can be found just inside the lane markings on the left and right of each lane. Most often the markings are either rectangular or triangular in shape. Placement of the hurdle can be either directly on top of the mark, behind the mark, or in front of the mark, depending upon the type/style of hurdle the school is utilizing. Rule 5-3-7 should be applied by meet management, of the home team, to determine what the correct placement of the hurdles is for their facility, based upon the type/style of hurdle they utilize.



Boys Competition

Distance of Race	No. of Hurdles	Hurdle Height	Starting Line to First Hurdle	Between Hurdles	Last Hurdle to Finish
55 m	5	39 in.	13.72 m (45 ft.)	9.14 m (30 ft.)	4.72 m (15 ft., 5 3/8 in.)
110 m	10	39 in.	13.72 m (45 ft.)	9.14 m (30 ft.)	14.02 m (45 ft., 10 5/8 in.)
300 m	8	36 in.	45 m (147 ft., 7 ½ in.)	35 m (114 ft., 10 in.)	10 m (32 ft., 9 ¾ in.)

Girls Competition

Distance of Race	No. of Hurdles	Hurdle Height	Starting Line to First Hurdle	Between Hurdles	Last Hurdle to Finish
55 m	5	33 in.	13 m (42 ft. 8 in.)	8.5 m (27 ft. 10 ¾ in.)	8 m (26 ft., 3 in.)
100 m	10	33 in.	13 m (42 ft. 8 in.)	8.5 m (27 ft. 10 ¾ in.)	10.5 m (34 ft., 5 ½ in.)
300 m	8	30 in.	45 m (147 ft., 7 ½ in.)	35 m (114 ft., 10 in.)	10 m (32 ft., 9 ¾ in.)

NOTE: *State associations may adopt either the low (30-inch) or high (33-inch) height in the 100-meter hurdle race for girls, but national records are recognized only at the 33-inch height.

The hurdle should be placed on the track so the feet of the hurdles are on the side of the approach by the competitor and the crossbar is directly over the mark on the track. Each hurdle should also be entirely within its own lane. In the 100m and 110m hurdles, hurdles should be positioned so they form a straight line and there is a finger- wide gap between the crossbars of the hurdles in consecutive lanes. Remember, the crossbars of the hurdle cannot overlap.

Over time the hurdles get bent and may not conform to a proper shape. Keep your focus on the crossbar alignment and not that of the feet of the hurdle. Replace and repair any hurdles which are badly bent or have crossbars which are splintered to ensure the safety of the competitors.

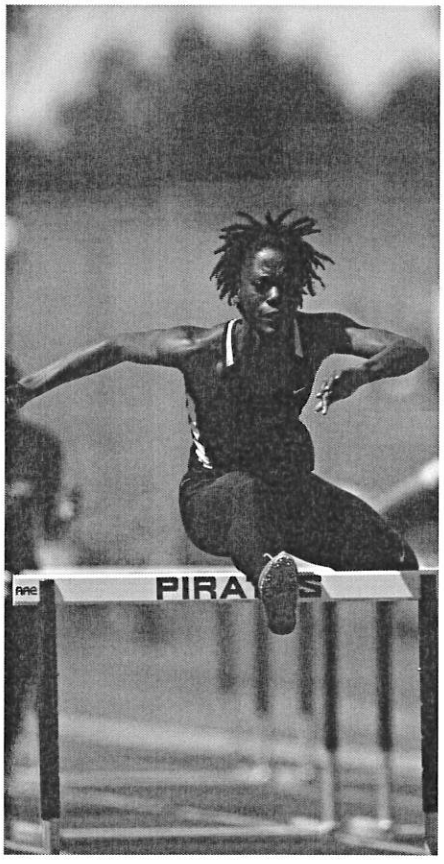
Most high school hurdles have manual weights that must be adjusted and repositioned for the height of the hurdle. Rule 5-4-6, page 33, states that - the hurdles shall be of such weight and balance that it requires a steady pullover force of not less than the following weights at the specified heights as follows:

30 in. = 8 lb.	(3.629 kg)	36 in. = 6 lb.	(2,722 kg).	30 in. = 8 lb.
33 in. = 7 lb.	(3.175 kg)	39 in. = 6 lb.	(2.722 kg)	33 in. = 7 lb.

There are four heights for the high school hurdles: 39", 36", 33", and 30". The manual weights on the feet of these adjustable hurdles should also be marked with these numbers. The weight should bepositioned on the feet at the same number corresponding with the height of the hurdle. As the hurdle gets higher the weight should be moved to a position further away from the base of the hurdle.

Before a hurdle race as the hurdles are placed on the track the hurdle crew should set up the first two or three flights of hurdles closest to the athletes and starting line first. This will allow the competitors warm up opportunities, while the other flights are being positioned. The hurdle crew can then return to adjust the first two or three flights of hurdles prior to the start of a race. The track should be closed while setting up the first two or three flights to avoid any injury to the athletes and the hurdle crew. During this time, the competitors can be setting their starting blocks until the track is safe, for them to warm up going over the hurdles.

Once competition has begun, correct hurdle placement must be inspected prior to each and every race and/or heat of the hurdles. It is the responsibility of the meet referee or his/her designee to perform this inspection. This will ensure a safe, fair, and equitable race for all competitors.



CROSS COUNTRY COURSE LAYOUT - THE BASICS

A cross-country course is run through diverse landscapes and should be laid out both to ensure safety and fair competition for all athletes. The objective is to have a course that an athlete looks forward to running and testing themselves. The course should have a well-defined route, proper carrying capacity, varied terrain, safe footing and adequate space to conduct both the start and finish.

Components that should be taken into consideration when designing a cross-country course:

The Start

- Should have fairly level ground;
- A wide area, with boxes for each competing team, 6ft in width;
- Provides a straightaway of at least 100 meters (400m for large invitationals) before significant turns
- Funnels competitors to the actual course;
- Contains an area where spectators can enjoy the race and cheer for their favorite runner or team.

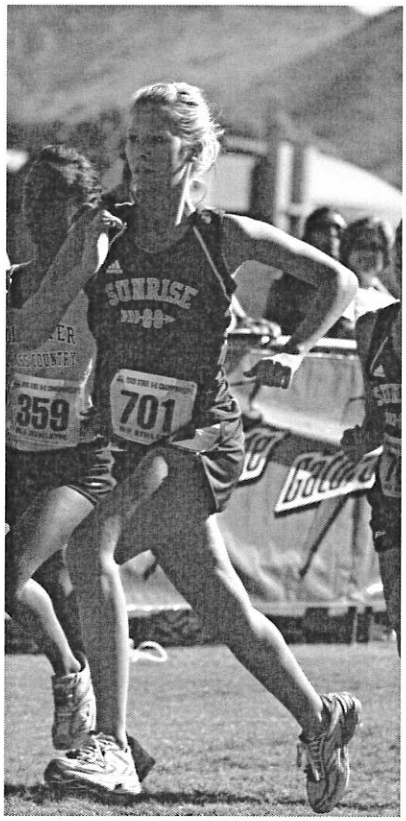
The Course

- Shall be 2500m-5000m measured along the shortest possible route;
- A single wide line or boundary lines both inside and outside, to indicate the measured route;

- Should have room for runners to jockey for position and pass other runners even at its narrowest point;
- The use of artificial or natural boundary markers may also be used, and with directional flags and/or painted lines on the ground to indicate the measured route.

Competitive Aspects

- Avoids lengthy and exceptionally steep slopes, with such inclines or declines interspersed throughout the course, but with limited inclines or declines near the start or finish;
- Where there are inclines or declines try to have a level segment afterwards so athletes can recover from the physical and mental strain which they just completed.
- Where there are hills, the route should be up and down, rather than parallel to the contours of the hills where footing, stride and pace could be affected, and injury could potentially occur;
- Have gradual and sweeping turns (no sharp turns) which will allow runners to run at an even pace and avoid congestion and contact with other runners;
- Avoid long stretches of hard surfaces, such as roads, as most of the runners would likely be wearing spikes, and you would have to have extra volunteers to ensure competitor safety;
- Allow for open stretches along the course, where runners can jockey for positions and assess distances;
- Avoid situations where the runners would cross paths with each other, during the race;
- Provide areas with good crowd control, where spectators can enjoy the race and cheer for their favorite runner or team without interfering with the runners.



The Finish

1. On fairly-level ground, with adequate space for finish chutes, timing equipment and judges, and for athletes to catch their breath, get water, receive medical aid, and to remove chips (if used);
2. Contains a long and straight approach to the finish, with a minimum length of 150 yards, with no turns;
3. Funnels to a finish line, with a minimum of 15 ft in width;
4. Provides an area, with good crowd control, where spectators can enjoy the race and cheer for their favorite runner or team.

Cross country is a sport where the competitor struggles and persists against, not only other competitors, but against nature as well. A well laid out course will provide each and every competitor the opportunity to compete, test themselves, and enjoy the cross country experience.

HOW TO CORRECTLY UTILIZE COURSE MARKINGS IN CROSS COUNTRY

As a competitor in a cross country race it is important to understand the course itself. In Track & Field, a 400 meter track is standard in elevation, distance and the direction of running. Cross country courses on the other hand can vary in all of these areas. The composition of the course is another factor to consider, as the type of ground cover can determine your style of running. Weather can also impact a course. Consider a large invitational: wet conditions can turn a grassy plain into a sloppy mess, especially if you are in the last group to run the course that day.

QUESTION: What should be consistent in running cross country?
ANSWER: Your knowledge of the course markings available to the organizers and meet management, via the NFHS Rule Book, and using the information it provides.

Knowing these markings and what options are available allows you to plan how to run the course during your pre-race walk-through.

Rule 8-1-1: Measurement shall be along the shortest possible route a runner may take on the prescribed course. The course shall be clearly marked using one of the following methods:

- *A single wide line or boundary line (note: this may or may not be the shortest possible route);*
- *The use of natural or artificial boundary markers;*
- *Signposts with large directional arrows whenever the course turns, or flags about 1 foot square and mounted on stakes which hold them 6 feet or more above the ground.*

Note: If a single wide line is used, other methods of marking the course should be used to help identify the course route.

The boundary lines can incorporate painted or chalk lines and natural or artificial boundary markers (including hedges and fences, etc.). The marking material should not be injurious to the eyes or skin. Small surveyor flags or cones at least 12 inches (30cm) high of an appropriate color may be used for marking the course are permitted where the use of painted or chalk lines are not.

A runner can move between lines as needed to run the shortest distance. You should consider terrain that may force you to slow down (e.g. an area that is slick/muddy) or is prone to congestion (such as a sharp turn combined with a change in grade). Note this information when performing the walk through. Information allows you to consider areas where defending a position may be easier and where attacks to pass may make more sense. Information such as this can help you prepare for race and run to your strengths.

Turns on the course can be designated by large directional arrows on the ground or signposts or flags. Signs and flags should be at least 6 feet above the ground and visible for 100 feet. Flag designations are as follows:

- **RED** – A turn to the left where the runner stays to the right of the flag.
- **YELLOW** - a turn to the right where the runner stays to the left of the flag.
- **BLUE** – Run straight where the runner may run on either side of the flag.

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A runner can move between lines as needed to run the shortest distance. You should consider terrain that may force you to slow down (e.g. an area that is slick/muddy) or is prone to congestion (such as a sharp turn In case of a discrepancy in course markings, directional flag marking stake precedence over any other course markings (Rule 8-1-2). If you notice a discrepancy in your pre-race walkthrough, bring it to the attention of the Meet Referee.

They can address a possible improper mark or confirm it is correct. Learning to read the course can make you a better cross country runner, increase your performance, and result in a higher place finish.You can also help your team by sharing information with them. Also consider information discovered during your actual race not apparent during the walk through. This information could assist a teammate in a later race that day.

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National High School Sports-Related Surveillance Report

As high school sports participation continues to increase in the United States, the number of sports injuries will also likely increase unless effective injury prevention programs are implemented. 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 11th year of track and field exposure and injury data.

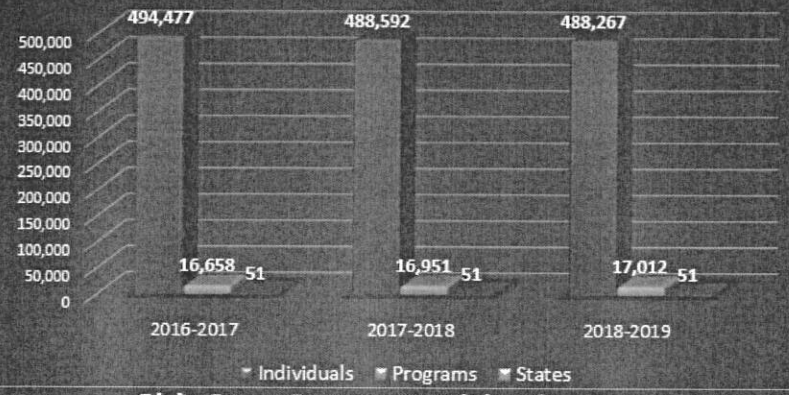
High School RIO™ data shows that both boys' and girls' track and field have among the lowest injury rates across the 22 sports under surveillance. Boys' and girls' track and field injury rates have remained relatively stable over time. During the 2017/18 academic year, hip/thigh/upper leg sprains/strains were the most common injury in track and field representing 39.5% of all boys' and 27.8% of all girls' injuries. Hamstring and quadriceps injury patterns differ by gender. 67.2% of thigh/upper leg sprains/strains sustained by male athletes were hamstring injuries and 25.4% were quadriceps injuries, whereas with female athletes 46.8% were hamstring injuries and 46.3% were quadriceps injuries. An understanding of such patterns of injury is one important tool that can be used when considering risk minimization efforts such as rule changes or educational programs aimed at keeping track and field athletes as safe as possible.

If you are interested in more information on the High School RIO™ Study or a certified athletic trainer is interested in becoming a reporter for boys' and/or girls' track and field, please visit

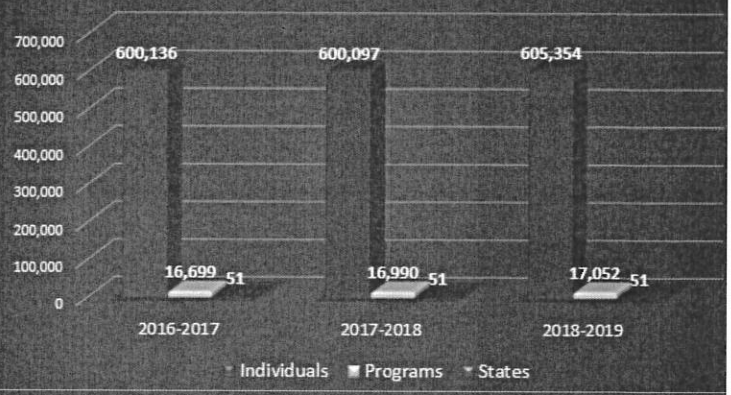
http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/PublicHealth/research/ResearchProjects/piper/projects/RIO/Pages/Study-Reports.aspx

2020 PRE-MEET NOTES

Girls Outdoor Track & Field Participation Data 2016-2019

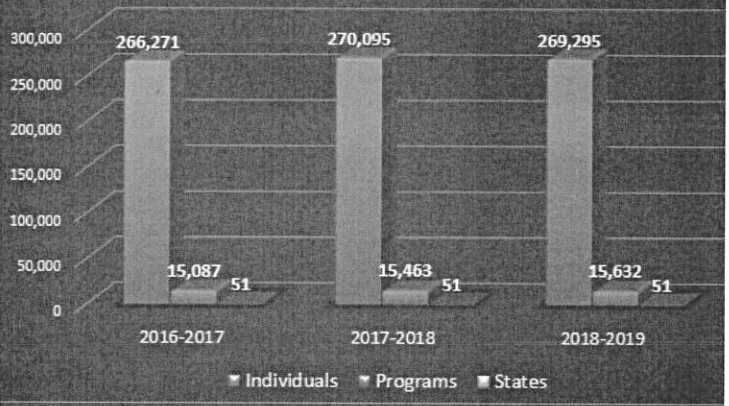


Boys Outdoor Track & Field Participation Data 2016-2019

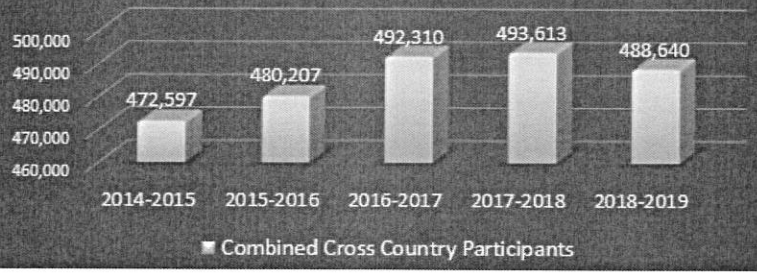


Girls Cross Country Participation Data 2016-2019

Boys Cross Country Participation Data 2016-2019



Combined Cross Country Participation Data 2014-2019



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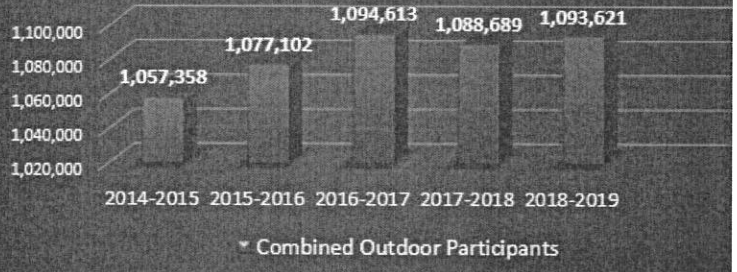

Combined Indoor Participation Data 2014-2019

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USA Track and Field
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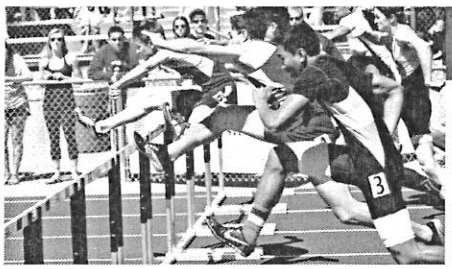

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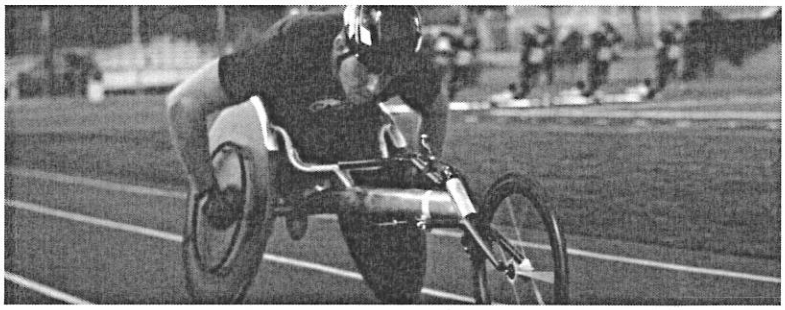

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