

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS**



NEWS RELEASE

Pole Vaulters Allowed to Leave Ground Without Breaking Plane

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Becky Oakes

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (July 9, 2007) — Beginning with the 2008 high school track and field season, it will no longer be considered a foul if a pole vaulter leaves the ground without breaking the plane.

This change in Rule 7-5-29b is one of five rules revisions approved by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Track and Field Rules Committee at its annual meeting June 11-12 in Indianapolis. The rules changes subsequently were approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

“This will be advantageous for the vaulter to abort and still have a chance to come back and try again within the prescribed time limit if he or she has a bad approach,” said Becky Oakes, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the Track and Field

Rules Committee. “This change will now allow all vertical jumps to be judged the same in regard to aborted attempts and trials.”

There has also been a revision in the length of the stopboard used for shot put. Rule 6-5-4 will revert back to the 4-foot measurement of a standard or international-length stopboard instead of converting to a shorter stopboard for the 34.92-degree sector.

“This will prevent schools from installing custom boards,” Oakes said.

“Manufacturers are not making a stopboard for the 34.92-degree sector and it is not necessary to require schools to provide funding for this extra expense of a custom board.”

A significant rules change in 4-3-1d(1) concerning uniforms specifies that a school’s name or insignia may be worn on an undergarment, providing it is not larger than $2\frac{1}{4}$ square inches with no dimension more than $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Previous rules regarding uniforms did not address if a school’s insignia was considered legal on undergarments.

“Along with permitting school identification on undergarments, the rule also states that if more than one visible garment is worn under a uniform top or bottom, they all need to be the same, solid color under that piece of the uniform,” Oakes said.

“This will help clarify what constitutes a legal uniform.”

Rule 2-3-2 will replace Rule 2-3-3, allowing meet results to be corrected at any time when a participant, who has been disqualified from further participation in the meet and/or should not have participated in the meet at any time, has participated and scored points. According to Oakes, previously there had never been a rule that specifically outlined this situation.

The final rules change, Rule 3-2-4g, states that the games committee will now have the authority to designate specific areas where coaches may observe and confer with athletes during competition, thus assisting coaches and meet administration especially when a venue may be located away from the track.

“Overall, all five rules changes are to the benefit of the competitors,” Oakes said.

Track and field is the third-most popular sport among boys and the second-most popular sport among girls at the high school level with 973,185 combined participants during the 2005-06 season, according to the High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS. It also ranks second in school sponsorship for both boys and girls.

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This press release was written by Nikki Miller, a summer semester intern in the NFHS publications/communications department and a senior at the University of Dayton (Ohio), majoring in journalism and Spanish.

About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and fine arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and fine arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 18,500 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; produces publications for high school coaches, officials and athletic directors; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, spirit coaches, speech and debate coaches and music adjudicators; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS Web site at www.nfhs.org.

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