

**2009**

**New York State**

**Track and Field**

**Rules**

**Interpretation**

**NFHS - NYSPHSAA**

**Edited by Tom McTaggart, NYS Rules Interpreter**

**mrstarter@aol.com**

**GENESEE VALLEY TRACK AND FIELD  
AND CROSS COUNTRY  
OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION**

GVTFCCOA Rules Interpreter: Bill Quinlisk  
[billq@frontiernet.net](mailto:billq@frontiernet.net)

## 2009 Track and Field Rules Changes

**3-9-2:** Specifies that for gun starts only a closed barreled starter's pistol may be used by the starter.

**Rationale:** It is not appropriate to use a live weapon at an educational event and in most cases state law prohibits firearms on school grounds and school events. The starter's pistol is adequate to produce the desired result for the starting of a race.

**Interpreter's commentary:** The suggestion for this rules change was apparently generated from school administrators when two incidents occurred where fully functional firearms owned by track starters were stolen from Track and Field venues during sanctioned meets. In addition, many state laws prohibit firearms from being carried on school grounds unless they are being carried by peace officers or law enforcement personnel.

Any starting device resembling a pistol ***must not be capable of firing a live round of ammunition.*** Anyone who modifies a working firearm to comply with this requirement should demonstrate this modification and have it certified as such by local law enforcement and your local officials' chapter as well.

**3-9-6:** When fully automatic timing (FAT) is used, timing shall be recorded in one one-hundredths of a second and all ties for place finishes and/or determining qualifiers for a subsequent round shall be broken by using timing to one one-thousandths of a second if the system allows.

**Rationale:** Fully automated timing is considered accurate and reliable enough to use 1/1000<sup>th</sup> to break ties and advance competitors to subsequent rounds of competition and is therefore reliable and accurate enough to break ties to determine final places or lane assignments.

**Interpreter's commentary:** While this was being done as a common practice by most FAT operators, it is now codified in the NFHS rules.

**3-9-9 new:** Indoor and outdoor meets using fully automatic timing (FAT) may be started by a .32 or .22 caliber starter's pistol (closed barrel) or electronic, gunless device for record purposes.

**Rationale:** The FAT systems do not require the noise of a .32 caliber, and a .22 caliber is clearly heard by competitors and provides adequate smoke for manual timing.

**6-4-9c, 6-5-9c:** A competitor in the throwing events may enter and exit the circle without a foul providing it occurs within the time allowed for the trial *and before the competitor starts his/her attempt beginning with the pause.*

**Rationale:** The competitor should be able to exit the circle and return to dry his/her hands, clean his/her shoes, wipe off the throwing implement etc. without penalty providing the throw is completed within the allotted time which begins when the competitor is called "up."

**Interpreter's commentary:** This should end forever any misunderstanding about this issue since is now part of the rules rather than just an interpretation of the rule. NOTE: The attempt begins when the athlete finally pauses to initiate their throw. Once that pause has been made, they may no longer leave the circle.

**7-4-11, 7-5-18:** Deletes the option for the event judge to place a cloth marker on the crossbar for sighting purposes.

**Rationale:** The current crossbars are of a bright contrasting color which no longer present a sighting problem for competitors and therefore the use of the cloth is no longer in use for competition.

**Interpreter's commentary:** Makes sense. I have not seen a marker on a crossbar in about 25 years now.

**7-5-3 Note new:** Visible etchings which appear on poles shall not meet the requirement of the manufacturer's pole rating appearing on the pole in a contrasting color.

**Rationale:** Most poles have an etching on the pole which is a code to the manufacturer. This code most frequently does not correspond to the proper weight rating for the pole. The rating appearing as the mark in contrasting color is established by the manufacturer is clearly visible and serves only this purpose. The requirement is for purposes of risk minimization and should be adhered to strictly.

**Interpreter's Commentary:** This is one of the most important of the rule changes this year that may have some profound effect on schools having to be aware of the change. ***This is again a rule modification to ensure that the pole vault survives as an event because the NFHS has done all it possibly can to make it as safe as possible.***

The contrasting band ***MUST*** be put on by the pole's manufacturer!! Coaches or officials are not to do this. Most of the poles that show etching only were produced prior to 1997. It is the feeling of the rules committee with the guidance of pole manufacturers concerned about liability issues, that some of these poles ***could or might have been modified*** over this time span; most notably by cutting, etc. A change in the pole length via modification would in most cases change the pole's rating. Consequently, the manufacturers would

obviously like to re-rate these older poles before certifying them with the contrasting band.

So, **these poles should be returned to their manufacturers for re-rating and certification with the band.** Each manufacturer has their own policy as to charges for this and shipping rates, etc. – but it is obviously less expensive than replacing the entire pole. Call your manufacturer (or sales agent – e.g. M-F) about how to get this done.

**7-5-29:** Clarifies the original intent to permit a competitor in the pole vault to abort the approach and in stopping plant the pole and momentum causes his/her feet to leave the ground without being considered a foul. It is a foul if a vaulter leaves the ground **in an attempt** and fails to clear the crossbar.

**Rationale:** The change in 7-5-29 last year by the committee was not intended to allow a vaulter to abort **a vault** but rather to have the opportunity to stop and **abort the approach**. However, the language was not clear and as written allowed a vaulter to abort a vault. This change clearly reflects the original intent of the committee to abort only the approach and have the opportunity to restart the approach. This exception is appropriate for the high school vaulter.

**Interpreter's Commentary:** The key here for the vault official is to understand that leaving the ground in and of itself does not constitute a foul. If the athlete aborts their **approach run**, it is fine. In this process if the slamming of the pole into the box takes them off the ground, then it is OK. There are some good guidelines on how to look for this included in the article on page 2 of the *NFHS Track and Field Pre-Meet Notes* that will be included in the distribution of these rules interpretations. If the vaulter aborts **their attempt** (eg. Pole is planted, it bends and the vaulter leaves the ground and then decides to stop), it then should be called a foul. Last year, either of these scenarios would have been considered fair and the athlete could make another attempt as long as their time did not expire (same as USATF & NCAA rules). The rules committee believes that in the interest of safety, this year's rule is more geared to the high school athlete and their general abilities.

### Editorial Changes

2-3-2; 4-3-1c2, 9-6-1b2; 4-3-2b; 4-5-8b; 4-5-10; 5-4 Note; 5-7-3; 6-4-5; 6-4-7; 6-5-5; 6-5-7;

6-6-2; 6-6-3; 6-6-6; 7-1-4; 7-5-4; 7-5-4 new Note; 7-5-13; 9-1-1; 9-6-4

## 2009 Track and Field Points of Emphasis

**1. ELECTRONIC DEVICES** - In NFHS rules, the determination of allowed electronic devices lies directly with the games committee. In general, the NFHS rules do not completely eliminate the use of personal electronic devices by coaches, contestants or officials. *However, the games committee can completely prohibit the use of any electronic devices.* The NFHS rules do prohibit the use of wireless communication devices, other than the official communication equipment, unless approved by the games committee. **The use of any wireless device to communicate performance or technique information, including pictures, between coaches and student-athletes is prohibited.**

**2. OBSERVED VIOLATION REPORTING PROCEDURES** - There is a defined procedure for umpires/event judges to follow when reporting observed violations. The umpire/event judge should report the observed violation to the head umpire or field referee/head field judge. The report must include complete information regarding the observed violation. **The individual or school must be positively identified at the time of the observed violation and specific details of the rule violation must be reported.** The head umpire or field referee/head field judge will evaluate the information and if merited report the observed violation to the referee. The referee will evaluate the information and make a determination if a disqualification is warranted. The referee will notify or cause to be notified, the competitor or the competitor's coach, of the disqualification.

**3. STARTER'S PISTOL** - In some states, by state law, and for all practical purposes, on any school property, pistols used for starting purposes should be disabled from being able to discharge live rounds of ammunition. When using a gun for the starting device, starting pistols are now, required by rule, to be a closed-barrel starting pistol, **incapable of discharging a live round.** Track and field and cross country starters should cease using any caliber pistol that is capable of firing live ammunition.

**4. EQUIPMENT FAILURE** - Competitors shall not be penalized if their performances are affected by the malfunction of meet equipment. *When equipment, such as jumping event standards or timing devices, malfunctions and a competitor's performance or advancement is affected, the competitor should be allowed an additional trial or opportunity.* It is important that meet officials inspect equipment before competition and have that meet management correct any problems. Once competition begins, officials should be cognizant that there could be equipment malfunction.

**5. POLE VAULT** - NFHS rules include specific requirements on the pole. Making physical alterations to the pole may change the manufacturer's pole rating, thus making the pole illegal. Poles shall not be shortened or altered in any manner. Coach's education is an important element of pole vaulting. Competitors need detailed and specific instruction regarding vaulting techniques. Increased performance height and new vaulting techniques require pole vault coach professional development.

**6. UNDERGARMENTS** - The design and style of undergarments is constantly changing. The Track and Field and Cross Country Rules Committee has reaffirmed the requirements of Rule 4, Section 3, Art. 1, d., Rule 4, Section 3, Art. 2, b., and Rule 9-6-1b(8). *Items displaying seams stitched on the outside of the garment in a visible contrasting color to the undergarment will be illegal beginning with the 2009-10 school year. The one-year exemption is a result of a*

*previous interpretation approved by the committee and distributed by the NFHS.* There are undergarments available for purchase by schools and athletes that are not in compliance with NFHS uniform rules. **Coaches must be aware of the rule requirements when purchasing undergarments, and must inform students - who are purchasing their own competitive undergarments - of the rules to avoid non-compliance.**

**7. RULE ENFORCEMENT THROUGHOUT THE SEASON** - The NFHS Track and Field Rules Committee has worked hard to provide a code of rules and interpretations that are the foundation for creating fair and equitable competition for all student participants. However, the creation of these rules is only one-third of the formula for success - only one leg of a three-legged stool that must always be balanced to provide fairness for all.

Successful meets require a core of knowledgeable workers. The development of individuals who are knowledgeable about track and field rules is the second leg of the stool. While some states have registered officials groups, in most states athletic directors and track and field coaches recruit volunteers from parent and community groups as well as school faculty members to assist with officiating responsibilities at interscholastic meets. Therefore, it falls to these track and field leaders to educate the numerous individuals who are necessary to run a successful meet. ***School administrators and their track and field coaches should obtain a copy of the three NFHS track and field publications - the rules book, case book and the officials manual. Once volunteers have been secured, they should be provided with the NFHS rules materials so that they can become knowledgeable of and familiar with the NFHS rules and interpretations prior to a meet.*** The committee suggests that training seminars also be held to develop the familiarity with the rules so that events are run by the rules and fair competition is provided all student participants.

The third leg of the stool is the actual management of the meet. The NFHS Officials Manual provides a simple, yet thorough, description of each worker's responsibility, whether volunteer or registered official. ***The mission of each worker should be fairness to all participants. That fairness starts with making sure that all timing, marks and judgments are made by workers who understand the rules.***

Well-run regular-season meets ensure that, as student participants progress toward postseason competition, they will be involved in meets that have a knowledgeable work force. ***There is little that is more frustrating for coaches, administrators, state association staff and student participants and their parents when participants are disqualified during a postseason meet even though they were allowed to compete during the regular season wearing an illegal uniform, using an improper technique or using illegal equipment.***

Keeping fairness to each participant at the core will ensure that meets are run consistently and fairly. Rules, the educating coaches, participants and workers about those rules, and properly managing events keeps the three-legged stool properly balanced, which creates a winning combination for all.

## 2009 NFHS Track and Field and Cross Country Rules Interpretations

Publisher's Note: The National Federation of State High School Associations is the only source of official high school interpretations. They do not set aside nor modify any rule. They are made and published by the NFHS in response to situations presented.

**Corrections to Rule Book:** Page 28, Rule 4-5-10, add "trial" to the end of the first sentence.

**Corrections to Case Book:** Page 43, Situation 4.5.8H, RULING, In Ruling, delete A1 and replace with A2 is disqualified.

**SITUATION 1:** In the 4x800-meter relay, A1 has completed his/her leg of the race and is still on the infield where permitted. A2 is running down the final straightaway toward the exchange zone. A1 begins to run alongside A2 for several meters shouting encouragement and keeping pace with A2. At the completion of the race, the referee disqualifies A2 and consequently the relay team under Rule 4-5-8b. **RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** It is considered an unfair act when a competitor receives assistance by a teammate not in the race, in this case pacing. Once A1 completed his/her leg of the relay, A1 must not provide assistance through pacing.

**SITUATION 2:** During a cross country meet, about two-thirds through the race, A1 is several meters ahead of one of his/her teammates. A1 slows and drops back with the teammate and runs in the pack to give encouragement. A1 then speeds up and continues on in the race. A coach from Team B wants the referee to disqualify A1 for pacing his/her teammate. **RULING:** Protest denied. **COMMENT:** It is considered an unfair act when a competitor receives any assistance from any other person including pacing by a teammate not in the race. In this situation, A1 is in the race and his/her actions are not considered to be unfair. This same interpretation would be applied in a multiple lap race if a teammate is lapped and the passing teammate slows and gives encouragement. In all cases, if interference occurs, the resulting penalty would be disqualification.

**SITUATION 3:** The pole vault event judge notices while A1 is warming up that a tennis ball has been placed on the bottom of the pole. The event judge brings this to the attention of the field referee. The coach of A1 is called to the event venue site and confirms the tennis ball was placed on the pole after inspection. The coach is told the tennis ball must be removed in order for the pole to be legal and used in warm-ups and competition and such changes to the pole after inspection should not take place. **RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** The event judge used preventive officiating in this situation. The pole would have been considered to have been altered by placing a tennis ball on the end. Consequently, the pole would not be legal.

**SITUATION 4:** Following each trial in the high jump, A1 goes to the bleachers and views a video of his/her attempt that has been recorded by the vaulter's parent. The event judge observes this reoccurring action by A1 and confirms that the vaulter is viewing his/her performance. A1 is disqualified. **RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** It is considered an unfair act when a competitor receives assistance from any other person, which includes viewing a videotape or any other visual reproduction of the competitor's performance prior to the completion of the competition. It may be helpful for coaches to remind athletes and parents the rule applies

regardless of who might be providing the visual reproduction of a competitor's performance before competition is completed.

**SITUATION 5:** A vaulter for Team B is not satisfied with his/her approach and pulls up to stop. In so doing, the pole is planted in the box and as the vaulter stops, the momentum causes him/her to leave the ground and return. The vaulter returns to the starting end of the runway and restarts the approach. The vaulter clears the bar and completes the attempt within the allowed 1½ minutes. **RULING:** Legal.

**SITUATION 6:** A high jumper while attempting to clear the cross bar is going over the bar with no touch. However, his/her foot a) has incidental contact with the front of the pit or b) has contact with the top of the pit. The competitor in both cases continues over the bar without dislodging the bar. **RULING:** In a), the event judge rules a successful attempt. In b), the event judge rules an unsuccessful attempt. Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** A competitor having incidental contact with the front of the pit that does not provide an aid to the jumper would not constitute a foul. If the contact results in aiding the competitor, a foul shall be called. When a competitor contacts the top of the pit, this would be considered an aid and result in an unsuccessful attempt.

## **A Collection of 2008-2009 Rulings from Tom McTaggart**

Q1. When do the new rules take effect? Our indoor chair persons have always used January 1st as the start date. Others think it's based on the school yr. and others on the start of outdoor track. Which is correct?

A1) January 1st for you guys in Section III. We work for the Sectional chairs, so if they say January 1, then it is January 1! Down in our Section, we start at the start of Indoor season (December) while waiting for further interpretation if necessary from the January interpretation in Indianapolis. Everyone should check with their Sectional Indoor Chairperson.

Q2. Are wrist watches approved for track and field, both indoor and out door, or is it just for cross country?

A2) I mailed this one out earlier in the year. ***Wrist watches are only allowed in CROSS – COUNTRY. Not in Track & Field!!!!***

Q3. In a race on the track a competitor slows down to stay with a teammate who is a slower runner and is verbally encouraging him/her and runs with that athlete for awhile. Is this considered an illegal assistance?

A3) This is covered in the new rules, was on the test, and is on the situations sheet sent out with the rules! This is not aiding the competitor unfairly because the other athlete is in the race. Penalties for assistance or pacing can only be applied when the assistance comes from an athlete who is NOT in the race, has finished the race, or who has abandoned the race.

Q4. I have a question about this year's test that was also on last year's test. The test question is number 60 (To avoid getting boxed in and improve his/her position, the runner from Team A moves to the inside of the track by passing a runner and then crosses back in front of the field without interfering with another runner's stride. Runner A is disqualified for passing on the inside

of the track.) When reading the rule 5-12-1 it states that is a violation. I understand a runner may not run more than three consecutive steps on a curve, and the question does not state that the runner is on a curve or straight-away. But is the runner is using inside the track to advance their position. It seems that rule 5-12-2 contradicts 5-12-1. Could you please shed some light on this? A4) Rule 5-12-1 addresses running to the inside of the measured boundaries of the track (i.e. -- off the track), and so if I run inside this measured course, I am diminishing the length of my course and therefore gaining an unfair advantage.

Rule 5-12-2 addresses running *while on the measured boundaries of the track*. The use of the words "inside or outside *of the track*" is not meant to mean running on or off the track. It is simply stating that it is permissible for a runner to pass another competitor on the inside or outside of that runner while on the prescribed course of the track, providing the situation meets the further provisions of that rule.

What confuses people in this question is that they construe "the runner from Team A **moves to the inside of the track**" as meaning leaving the measured course. That is not what is meant and is being tested here. They are testing knowledge of rule 5-12-2, making sure that officials understand that passing may occur to both the inside and outside of a runner while on the track. The wording could be changed, but considering they do rules, situations, and the test all in one weekend, they do a good job and we can forgive our rules committee for getting some wrong now and then.

Memo from NFHS

It has come to our attention that question #47 on the Track and Field Rules Exam has an incorrect answer and is marked incorrectly on the Answer Key. The rule reference is still correct, however. The correction is listed below:

Question 47                      False                      4-5-8b, PEN

A teammate within the same section of the 1600-meter run repeatedly speeds up, then drops back to assist a teammate to keep up a pace. The referee may disqualify both competitors from the event for pacing. The NFHS regrets any inconvenience as a result of the errors on the exam.

Q5. A situation that was brought to my attention occurred last weekend at the Sectional Meet. Apparently, a 4 x 400 relay team was disqualified because one member of the team had dark stitching on their white compression shorts. At first, one official instructed the team to roll up their compression shirts which they did. In doing so, one member had the dark stitching, thus resulting in the disqualification. This team has been wearing these shorts all season long with no penalty. The coach of the school was under the impression that this rule was to go into effect next season. My questions: Is there such a rule? Is it in effect now? If not now, when does it go into effect? If someone could please shed some light on this it would be greatly appreciated.

This question came from the Assistant Director of NYSPHSAA after a protest.

A5) This is the quote directly taken from NFHS Points of Emphasis for 2009.

**"6. UNDERGARMENTS** - The design and style of undergarments is constantly changing. The Track and Field and Cross Country Rules Committee has reaffirmed the requirements of Rule 4, Section 3, Art.1.d, Rule 4, Section 3, Art.2.b., and Rule 9-6-1b(8). *Items displaying seams stitched on the outside of the garment in a visible contrasting color to the undergarment will be illegal beginning with the 2009-10 school year. The one-year exemption is a result of a previous interpretation approved by the committee and distributed by the NFHS.* There are undergarments available for purchase by schools and athletes that are not in compliance with NFHS uniform rules. **Coaches must be aware of the rule requirements when purchasing undergarments, and must inform students - who are purchasing their own competitive undergarments - of the rules to avoid non-compliance."**

So, the ruling was in error. My bigger question is did they give the athlete the opportunity to comply with the rule before competing? They should have been afforded the opportunity to remove them before the race to avoid disqualification if they were being checked before racing. That way, regardless of the mistake, things would have been OK. If they were going either by the interpretation sent out *last year* or the one I sent out for *this year*, this should have been allowed.

Q6. I have had numerous inquiries in reference to the new rule 3-9-9! Although the rule appears to be very self explanatory, is it correct to say that at any meet adhering to National Federation rules, whether it is a modified meet, weekday varsity meet, championship varsity meet, etc., and whether or not fully automatic timing (FAT) is being used, a .32 caliber starter's pistol need not be used? Newly appointed officials are questioning the need to purchase both a .22 caliber and a .32 caliber starter's pistol if it appears that a .32 caliber pistol is no longer needed, and since most of the newer officials generally are assigned to modified or weekday varsity meets.

A6) Yes, that is the rule as written, interpreted and intended ***when FAT is used!***

Rule 5-7-1 still ***recommends*** the use of a .32 caliber for outdoor venues, but it is ***not required***. Up our way here we use the .32's in the championship meets, but .22's in all the modified and dual meets. The Starter is reimbursed in their fee at an extra \$8, to cover the cost of a box of .22's. I would advise new officials to buy the .22 pistol (NOT a crimps gun!! -- the real deal!!). The additional expense of buying the .32 makes no sense unless they know they will be working league championship level meets or higher. If they end up doing a championship meet, then they can beg, borrow or buy a .32 if the games committee provides the shells.

Q7. What is the official word on rolling up shorts? I looked and the rule book only says that the mid riff may NOT show, and the top is to either be tucked into the shorts, and/or hang over the top of the shorts. Can the shorts be rolled as long as these occur, or is no rolling allowed?

A7) Rule 4 - Section 3 - article 1 (page 25) says: " The competitor's uniform shall be issued by the school, ***worn as intended by the manufacturer***, and have the following ..." So, did the manufacturer intend for these shorts to be rolled? -- No. Get them to roll them back to the way they were intended to be worn -- or -- have them altered so that they are cut the way they wish.

Q8. A high jumper does not enter the competition until all other jumpers have completed their efforts:

A) How much time should they be allowed before their first jump? Some view this situation that the jumper is the last jumper and therefore allowed 5 minutes because they are the "one competitor remaining" in the event (Rule 7.2..5b). Others think that because this is the competitor's very first jump they are allowed only one minute. The jumper certainly does not need the 5 minutes because they may be fatigued from previous jumps. They do not seem to have "earned" any rights because they have not cleared any previous heights that were also cleared by other competitors. Additionally, it seems that extended times should only be allowed after a height change and are not meant for application if you become one of the last three or the only "last jumper" at a height where more than 1 started and all others have been eliminated. An example of NOT applying additional time when there are fewer than three jumpers is the first place tie-breaker procedure, where only 1 minute is allowed for an attempt.

B) If they miss their first jump, after the pit is ready, how much time is allowed for the second jump? This also can be viewed that they are only allowed one minute because they have not yet cleared a height and therefore have not yet qualified as "the last Jumper". After all, he/she may end with 3 missed attempts and be recorded as a NO HEIGHT or DNS/DNF for scoring purposes.

C) It seems that once he/she clears a height he/she should be allowed all the rights and privileges, such as 5 minutes between jumps, that the final jumper in the competition would be allowed. Is this correct?

A8) Answer to Part A) the athlete should be entitled under NFHS rules to an approach if they have passed the requisite number of jumps to do so. Their *first jump* trial should be *initiated within one minute* as by rule. Answer to Part B and C) If they either miss or make the height, *on subsequent jumps they should then be entitled to the five minutes under rule 7-2-5b* because now that they have made an initial attempt, they are now *officially* the only competitor remaining! The rule is written for the last jumper in the competition -- not necessarily the winner. So, the answer to Part B applies to cover Part C as well.

Q9. An **excused** high jumper has not reported back within the allowed time limits set by the games committee and no additional communications have been received by the event official and all other jumpers have completed the competition. How is the event to proceed to termination? (Should we page the athlete, assume that he/she has exceeded the time limit set by the games committee for being excused for an event, or what?)

A9) I would page the athlete telling them that they are "up" right now in the high jump. The clock should start at the paging. If no attempt is made, it should be recorded as a miss. Then, within a reasonable time, be called up again, and then a third time until it is obvious that they have ended competition in the event either by sloppiness or their own volition. If the official has followed this protocol, the athlete has no case for protest at all. If they are past the allowable time limits due to extenuating circumstances, then the athlete or coach should notify the referee or chief field judge. Only they can verify a legitimate excuse to hold up the event for the athlete. You should proceed to termination of the event and let the referee know of the situation, just in case if anything is questioned later, they are aware of all of the circumstances ahead of time.

Q10. An **unexcused** high jumper has not reported back within the allowed time limits set by the games committee and no additional communications have been received by the event official and all other jumpers have completed the competition. How is the event to proceed to termination? (Should the person's name be called, the appropriate time limit allowed to expire, and then just record those attempts as fouls?)

A10) Yes, the **unexcused** person's name should be called in their normal place in the rotation, the appropriate time limit allowed to expire, and then just record those attempts as fouls. If the athlete does not get excused it is their fault. Life -- and the competition -- will move on without them!

Q11. A high jumper that has not checked in for the event shows up after all other athletes have completed the event while the official is compiling the scoring. How is the event to proceed to termination? (It would seem that the person cannot be added as a competitor at this point.)

A11) Rule 4-1-3 (p. 24) covers this. One does not become a competitor until they report to the field event judge *before the start of the competition*. They shall not be allowed to participate if they have not personally checked in according to this rule. (Or, checked in by proxy if games committee allows that.)

Q12. Is it acceptable or advisable for the games committee or referee to establish a meet policy where "others" (teammates, coaches) may check in for an athlete? If so they would potentially miss all briefings and not be subject to uniform inspections etc. However, it certainly accommodates an athlete who is entered in several events, all of which are requiring his attention at approximately the same time.

A12) This (check-ins via proxy of another athlete or coach) would be advisable to the games committee since they create the time schedule and should try to accommodate athletes in multiple events that might be going on simultaneously. Meet policy needs to be established by the Games Committee and communicated before the events / meet starts. Event officials should also be aware of potential simultaneous events that might cause the athletes these dilemmas.

Q13. I have a question about cloth headbands/cloth wristbands/cloth armbands – are they legal or are they considered jewelry?

A13) Headbands – the games committee makes the call ... it is an article in excess of the uniform, just like a cap. Wristbands -- would be considered jewelry -- the exception would be wrist wrap or padding used by pole vaulters. Armbands - do you mean the sleeves that distance runners pull onto their arms? If so, these are OK, but must be of a single solid color just like "undergarments".

Q14. Do socks fall under the uniform rule regarding one logo per garment?

A14) Socks are not parts of the uniform. Just like underwear, they are considered to be "invisible".

Q15. Are non-prescription sunglasses allowed?

A15) It is the Games Committee's call. Many years ago, Sandy Scott had a ban on it for 2 years because she heard (inaccurately) that certain sunglasses were gang-related. That went away. The games committee (as with headwear) has authority over this. All forms of prescription glasses (including sunglasses) are allowed.

Q16. At our preseason sectional meeting last night, the representative for the officials said he believed all discus cages had to be updated to the new specs this season. Is this correct?

A16) This information is NOT correct. The specifications for upgrading are *still* suggestions/recommendations in the rules that are listed in Appendix A. The requirements of the current rule are in Rule 6-5-6. Will required compliance be coming soon? I cannot give you a firm yes, but it has been a pattern of the NFHS rules committee to require safety suggestions within 3 to 5 years. Note that this is year # 3 of the suggested guidelines. If you have the means in your budget, implement the suggestions as soon as you can. However, this season you only have to meet the specifications required in Rule 6-5-6. Appendix A has all Discus Cage guidelines, as well as all SUGGESTED specifications.

#### Memorandum from NFHS

**Subject:** Additional Pole Vault Contact Information

**Date:** February 10, 2009

The manufacturers of poles are working in a very cooperative fashion to assist high school coaches and vaulters in obtaining replacement pole weight rating labels. Since my last email, the NFHS staff has received additional information from UCS Spirit for a more direct phone number and contact information for Altius Poles. Please add the following information to your contact list.

**Altius Poles**

Jeff Erickson

1-800-374-7653

[www.altiuspoles.com](http://www.altiuspoles.com)

(Call and then fax the labels requested, pole serial number and all information in etchings)

**UCS Spirit**

New number: 1-800-537-7117

A complete to date contact list is available at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org), Sports, Track and Field.

([http://www.nfhs.org/web/2006/08/track\\_amp\\_fieldcross\\_country.aspx](http://www.nfhs.org/web/2006/08/track_amp_fieldcross_country.aspx))

Another Memorandum from NFHS

**Subject:** Pole Vault Weight Labels  
**Date:** February 6, 2009

At the recent NFHS Track and Field Rules Interpreters Meeting, a request was made to receive contact information for pole vault manufacturers. This contact information is current at this time and will be useful to contact the manufacturers to review the company's process and policy for replacing weight labels or obtaining a label for a pole manufactured prior to the weight label requirement. Each manufacturer has its own process to address the replacement of weight labels. It should be noted that the manufacturers will only supply, when appropriate, replacement labels for their manufactured product and not poles from another company. Specific needs and questions should be directed to the manufacturers.

Gill Athletics, Inc.

[www.gillathletics.com](http://www.gillathletics.com)

On home page, select Replace Worn or Unreadable Weight Labels on Vaulting Poles  
(Online request form)

UCS/Spirit

[www.ucspirit.com](http://www.ucspirit.com)

1-800-526-4856

(Will require submission of digital picture of pole manufacturer's marks/etchings)

ESSX

[www.officiallessx.com](http://www.officiallessx.com)

7624 Pebble Drive

Fort Worth, TX 76118

(Will require engraved flex number, serial number, size of pole and \$10.00 fee)

Please refer to NFHS Track and Field Rule 7-5-3 for the pole rating requirement. Thank you for your attention and cooperation.

NFHS and USATF Officials Training Subcommittee have developed a news letter to assist in getting a better understanding of events in track and field. It is well written and contains much information. To find it go to: [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org) under latest news click on "track and field pre meet notes" then click on NF HS Track and Field Pre Meet notes.

Also for great information on HS Track Officiating read...  
NFHS "Track and Field Pre-Meet Notes" posted at  
[www.nfhs.org.web/2009/02/track\\_and\\_field\\_premeet\\_notes.aspx](http://www.nfhs.org.web/2009/02/track_and_field_premeet_notes.aspx)