INTRODUCTION
TO
VERTICAL JUMPS
HIGH JUMP & POLE VAULT

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John Lilygren
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** Pacific Association **

August 2012
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**Introduction**

High Jump and Pole Vault are known as the Vertical Jumps. Many of the same rules apply to both so they are often combined as an area of officiating expertise.

A primary duty of High Jump and Pole Vault officials before an event is to ensure the proper set up and safety of the facilities to be used for the competition. They must be attentive to watch for approved and properly deployed equipment, time constraints, consistent measurement and a fair competitive opportunity for every competitor. That means that each competitor competes with an equal advantage in relation to the equipment used and the competition conditions. Most importantly, each field event official must give their full attention to maintaining safety at the competition site.

Also see the USATF Officials’ Best Practices documents for the High Jump, for one page tips on preparing for and conducting the event.

**Definitions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box</td>
<td>The area on the pole vault runway where the pole is planted to propel a vaulter over the crossbar. See Figures 3 and 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bungee</td>
<td>Rubber tubing that is stretched between the pole vault standards in place of a crossbar. A bungee is sometimes used during the warm-up period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossbar</td>
<td>A circular bar with rubber end pieces that rests on the standard pegs and defines the height to be cleared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extenders</td>
<td>Attachments to pole vault standards that lower the minimum crossbar height.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator Line</td>
<td>A white line 50 mm wide drawn on the ground (usually with adhesive (High Jump) tape) along the vertical plane through the edge of the crossbar nearest to the take-off area and extending 3 meters beyond each standard. (Figure 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>To forfeit one attempt (NCAA &amp; High School) or all remaining attempts (IAAF &amp; USATF) at a height.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pegs</td>
<td>Round metal extensions on pole vault standards that support the crossbar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plane (HJ)</td>
<td>A surface defined by the edge of the crossbar nearest to the take-off point and the standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plane (PV)</td>
<td>A surface perpendicular to the back inside edge of the top of the box.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules</td>
<td>There are 4 different rule books: IAAF, USATF, NCAA and High School. You need to know which rules apply to the meet you are working.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards</td>
<td>Movable uprights or posts that support the crossbar. High Jump standards must be placed with the crossbar supports pointing toward the opposite standard. Pole Vault standards must have the pegs pointing toward the pit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero line (PV)</td>
<td>A 1 cm wide line through the back inside edge of the top of the pole vault box (line A-D in Figure 3).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Zero “0” (PV) When the crossbar is sitting properly on the pegs and the front edge of crossbar is on the Plane, the standards are at “0”.
HIGH JUMP RULES

1. In NCAA and High School meets, field event contestants who report after the first competitive attempt has been made shall not be allowed to compete. In USATF and IAAF meets, the Chief Field Judge of the event shall permit a tardy declared (pre-entered) contestant to start at the height of the bar at the time of his or her arrival. That contestant shall not be permitted to have warm ups using the competition area. Tardy contestants who are not pre-entered shall not be allowed to enter the event.

2. The starting height of the crossbar and each successive height shall be determined by the games committee. USATF and NCAA high jump competitions commonly use 5 cm increments while High School competitions use 2 inch increments.
   a. USATF: Unless there is only one competitor remaining who has won the competition, the bar should never be raised by less than 2 cm.
   b. The increments may decrease at higher heights but should never increase.

3. All measurements of height may be made with a steel tape, fiberglass tape or bar (steel tapes are recommended). A steel tape or electronic/laser measurement device must be used for record purposes. Measurements are made perpendicularly from the ground to the lowest part of the upper side of the bar. Any measurement of a new height is made before competitors attempt such height. A new measurement is also made when a new crossbar is substituted for a broken one. In all cases of attempts at record heights, judges should check the measurement of the bar when the bar has been placed at the record height. They must re-check the height before each subsequent record attempt if the bar has been displaced for any reason or touched since last measured.
   a. Metric measurements will be made to the nearest lesser 1 cm.
   b. Imperial measurements are made to the nearest lesser ¼ inch.

4. In the high jump, each competitor is allowed an attempt in the order their name has been drawn by lot. In practical terms, this is the order their name appears on the entry sheet. Do not add competitors to the entry sheet without approval (preferably written approval) of Meet Management.

5. A competitor shall have the discretion to commence jumping or vaulting at the starting height or any subsequent height.
   a. Each competitor is allowed a maximum of 3 attempts at any one height. They may elect to jump at a height or pass. In USATF and IAAF meets, a pass is for a height, so the athlete may not take any more attempts at the height passed. In NCAA and High School meets, a pass is for an attempt. This means an athlete could take their first attempt, pass their second attempt, then take their third attempt at a height.
   b. Three consecutive failures, regardless of the height at which such failures occur, eliminates the competitor from further jumping except in the case of a jump-off to break a tie for first place.
c. Each competitor shall be credited with the best of all his or her jumps in the competition proper, including performances made in the jump-off of a first place tie.

6. Once a competition has begun, competitors are not allowed to use for the runway or takeoff area practice purposes, except as scheduled.

   a. NCAA: A competitor who has not taken a trial in at least one hour may use the runway and landing areas without the crossbar with the permission of the event official at the change of the bar to the height where they enter the competition. Each high jumper has a maximum of one and one-half (1 ½) minutes to warm up. (Note: Do not combine times if more than one competitor enters at a height.)

   b. High School: A competitor who has passed three consecutive heights after the competition has begun may be permitted one warm-up jump without the crossbar in place but shall enter the competition at that height. Such a warm-up must be taken at a height change.

   c. USATF Youth and Masters: A competitor who has passed three consecutive heights after the competition has begun may be permitted a warm-up jump without the crossbar in place. One jump shall be allowed for each three passed heights and may be taken only as earned, not cumulatively. (Note: Unlike High School, the competitor does not have to enter the competition after taking a warm-up jump.)

7. A failed attempt shall be called:

   a. When the crossbar is displaced in an attempt to clear it;

   b. When a competitor touches the ground or landing area beyond the plane of the crossbar or the crossbar extended without first clearing the bar, except for incidental touching of the front of the pit which does not result in an aid to the trial;

   c. If a competitor fails to initiate a trial within the time limit. (“Initiate” means that if an athlete has a regular routine, such as rocking back and forth before starting their approach, they should be considered to have initiated the trial when they actually start a forward motion (step) toward the bar.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time in Minutes for Initiating an Attempt in the High Jump</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of athletes competing at start of round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USATF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 or 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consecutive Trials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Introduction to Vertical Jumps (2012)
d. If, during or after the jump, the competitor deliberately steadies or replaces the bar;

e. If a competitor violates the warm-up restrictions;

f. High School only: If, after successfully clearing the bar, a competitor accidentally bumps the standards and displaces the bar while exiting the pit;

8. Recording performances:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>X = Miss/Fail</th>
<th>O = Cleared</th>
<th>P = Pass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

9. Ties:

a. The competitor with the lowest number of jumps at the height at which the tie occurs shall be awarded the higher place.

b. If the tie still remains, the competitor with the lowest total of failures throughout the competition up to and including the height last cleared shall be awarded the higher place.

c. If the tie still remains and concerns first place:

i. High School meets: The competitors tying shall have one more jump at the lowest height attempted above the tying height by any of the tied competitors. If no decision is reached, the bar shall be lowered (if all have failed) or raised (if 2 or more have cleared). They shall attempt one jump at each height until the tie is resolved. The tying competitors must jump on each occasion when deciding the tie. (Passing is not allowed in a jump-off.)

   ▪ Bar increment: 1 inch (High School)

### High School High Jump Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Athlete</th>
<th>Height and Performance</th>
<th>Total Fails</th>
<th>Jump Off</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5’10” 6’ 6’ 2” 6’ 4” 6’ 6” 6’ 8”</td>
<td></td>
<td>6’ 8” 6’ 7” 6’ 8” Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>O XO O XO PPP XXX</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>X O X 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>XO O PPP XO PPP XXX</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>X O O 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>PPP XO XO PPP XXX</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ii. NCAA, USATF and IAAF meets: If it concerns first place, the competitors tying shall jump-off beginning at the next height originally planned above the last height cleared by the tying competitors. If no decision is reached, the bar shall be lowered by 2 cm (if all have failed) or raised by 2 cm (if two of more have cleared). They shall attempt one jump at each height until the tie is resolved. The tying competitors must jump on each occasion when deciding the tie. (Passing is not allowed in a jump-off. However, under USATF rules, if no jump-off is held, including where the relevant competitors decide not to jump further, the
tie shall stand. This rule shall not apply to the Combined Events.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NCAA, USATF and IAAF High Jump Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Athlete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

d. If the tie concerns any place other than first place, the competitors shall be awarded the same place in the competition.

i. EXCEPTION: If a tie for other than first place involved a qualifying position for another meet, a jump-off would be required to break the tie. Normally the first jump to break that tie would be taken immediately. If the tie is not broken, the jump-off would continue following the completion of the event.

Pre-Competition (High Jump)

1. Read the applicable rules the night before the meet. Review the tie break procedures and the rules for passing an attempt or height. Passes are not allowed in jump-offs.

2. Arrive at least 45 minutes before the scheduled start of the warm-up period. For larger meets or sites you have not seen before, allow extra time.

3. Pick up 2 copies of the entry sheet(s) and ask about starting height and increments if they are not indicated on the sheet(s). (Most vertical jump sheets only have 6 or 8 columns to record results. Many competitions will go through 10 or more heights so you will need extra sheets.) Also ask about other special instructions. And ask who will get the results when the competition is complete.

   a. Typically the bar will be raised in 5 cm (2 inch) increments until higher heights. For combined events (decathlon & heptathlon) the increment is always 3 cm.

   b. Plan increments to include qualifying heights. If your normal progression will not hit a qualifying height, speak with meet management.

4. Verify you have the equipment and help you need to conduct the event:

   a. 2 High Jump crossbars (PV bars are 4.5 m long; HJ bars are 4.0 m long). IAAF, USATF, and High School: End pieces must be circular or semicircular with a flat surface. NCAA events may use either of these or square end pieces. (See Figure 5.)

   b. People to help you (1 pit helper, minimum)
c. Clipboard

d. Pencil(s) with eraser

e. Tape measure (metric and English units)

f. Ladder

g. Flags (red, white and yellow)

h. Performance indicator (to inform spectators and announcer of bar height)

i. Stopwatch

5. SAFETY: Make sure the competition area is set up properly and is clear of items that might cause injury. Stop any event where safety might be compromised.

a. Verify landing pads are the proper size and set up correctly (no gaps).

b. Check for hazards around pit (exposed concrete; exposed pallets under pads; hurdles; chairs; etc.). Remove/repair/cover up where possible.

c. Remove old marks from the jumping apron. Check for safety of surface. Sweep the surface at the take-off points near the pit.

d. Check for other events that may interfere with the High Jump competition. Competitors from nearby events may inadvertently cross the high jump area during competition.

e. See that standards move up and down freely and whether they lean in or out as they are raised.

6. Determine the low point on each bar and mark them (left, right, front) so that they can always be set on the standards with the same edge up and the same side to the front. (See Figure 6.) The bar with the least sag should be used for competition.

a. Lay the bar (not the rubber end pieces) across the backs of two chairs or hurdles. The bar will roll such that the sag will be downward. (See Figure 7.) If you don’t have any chairs, you may look along the bar and try to judge the sag.

b. Adjust the rubber end pieces so they will lie flat on the supports with the sag downward.

c. Mark the center of the front of the bar at the lowest point. All measurements should be made at this spot.

d. Draw a line from the front of the end piece onto the bar so you will be able to see if the end pieces turn during competition.

i. If the ends are too easy to move you can slide them inward, take a piece of adhesive tape about a half inch wide and place it on the bar then slide the end back into place. Don’t wrap the whole end because this will make it too difficult to reposition the end piece.

7. Position the standards. They should be centered on the pads and about 3 or 4 inches in front of them so that athletes will not touch the pads during take-off.
a. Put the competition bar on the top supports and verify you have at least 1 cm (about the width of a finger) between the end of the bar and the standard at the starting height and the expected winning height. Move the standards if necessary.

b. Repeat this procedure for the lower support if you expect to use it during competition.

c. Mark the position of the standards with tape or thumbtacks. High jumpers set up their marks relative to the standards; the tape or thumbtacks will enable you to put the standards in their original locations if they are displaced during competition.

8. Measure the opening height. If the lower supports will be used for the opening height also measure a height with the bar on the top supports. The bar should be measured at the lowest point of the top surface, typically in the center of the bar, perpendicular to the ground. Usually the standards will not be accurate due to the condition of the standards and curvature of the bar so an offset must be applied. For example, if the opening height is 5 feet the standards may have to be set to 5 feet 1 inch in order for the bar to measure 5 feet.

a. Set both standards to the opening height and measure the perpendicular distance from each bar support to the ground. If they are not the same, adjust one standard to match the other. Since the markings on the standards are for the top supports you will have to account for the distance between the upper and lower supports when setting the bar on the lower supports.

b. Center the bar on the supports making sure you have at least 1 cm clearance between the end of the bar and the standard.

c. Place a mark (a piece of tape or a thumbtack) on the jumping surface directly below the lowest point of the bar. This will insure the bar is measured in the same place. A plumb bob is helpful in doing this.

d. Measure the bar. Have someone hold the end of the tape measure next to the mark on the apron, extend the tape measure in front of the bar and read the height. If the measured height is not correct, raise or lower both standards by the same amount and remeasure.

e. Calculate the difference between the standards setting and the measured height for both standards. Record the offsets on the event entry sheet.

9. Remove the competition bar and put up the second bar for warm-ups.

10. Announce pit is open for warm-ups.

**Warm-Up Period (High Jump)**

1. Make assignments for officials or other helpers.

2. Attempt to prevent athletes from using chalk or other unsuitable marks on the runway.
a. In NCAA and USATF competitions a maximum of 2 markers may be used. NCAA markers are limited to 7 cm by 15 cm and cannot be located within 2 meters of either standard.

b. In High School meets the games committee will specify how many and what materials can be used for marks.

3. Check in athletes. Ask for opening heights; these will likely change. Tell athletes where they are in the order of jumping. Ask if they will be competing in another event.

4. Have officials/helpers replace the crossbar during the warm-up period to speed things along.

5. Take note of which side the jumpers approach the bar from. Most jumpers approach from the right so the lefties will be the exception. This will help you know where to look during the competition when an athlete is up.

6. Periodically announce how much time is left in the warm-up period. Plan to end the warm-up period 5 – 10 minutes before the scheduled start of competition (10 minutes, if there will be introductions).

7. Near the end of the warm-up period ask athletes for their starting heights, if they have not already told you, and note on the recording sheet. Some athletes may change the heights they gave you previously.

8. A few minutes before the end of the warm-up period, stand in the warm-up line to indicate that warm-ups are nearly over. At the end of the warm-up period, close the pit, adjust the standards to opening height using the previously determined offsets, put up the competition crossbar and remeasure.

**Instructions to Athletes (High Jump)**

1. Call athletes together at conclusion of warm-up period and before scheduled starting time of competition

2. Introduce yourself and welcome athletes. Introduce other officials.

3. Explain how you will conduct the event: Competitors will be called up in groups of 3 (“A” is up; “B” is on deck; “C” is on hold).

4. Read the order of jumping. Confirm starting heights.

5. Explain the increments by which the bar will be raised throughout the competition (give imperial equivalents as well as metric). Explain what to do if an athlete wants to pass an attempt or a height.

6. Remind them of time limits; point out who is keeping time or where the clock is, if available; explain how time warning will be given, e.g. raising of yellow flag.
   a. Warning is given with 15 seconds remaining in IAAF, USATF and NCAA competitions; there is no rule for this in High School.
7. Indicate if rotating flights (“5 Alive”) will be used. (5 Alive is a somewhat complicated procedure which may be used at certain times to ensure that a competitor waits for no more than 4 other jumpers between attempts at a height. It does not have to be used so new officials are advised not to attempt it.)

8. Remind athletes not to use the jumping area for warm-ups during competition.

9. Remind athletes that electronic devices are not permitted in competition area.

10. Ask athletes if any have to leave during competition for other events; explain that they must notify you before leaving and when they return. Remind them that the competition will not be held up while they are absent and that they are subject to missing attempts at a height. The bar will keep moving up and they may resume jumping at the existing height when they return.

**Competition (High Jump)**

1. Note the starting time and record it on the entry sheet.

2. Confirm that the bar is at the proper height.

3. Announce the first 3 jumpers (“A” is up; “B” is on deck; “C” is on hold).

4. Confirm that the pit is ready, remove the cone from the runway to signal to “A” that his time is starting. Start the watch/clock.

5. Record the result of the attempt.

6. Repeat steps 2 through 5 until all jumpers who declared their intent to jump at the height either cleared it, missed 3 times or passed to the next height. If you have multiple pages of entries, check all pages to make sure you did not skip someone.

7. Check your score sheet with the back-up recorder (if there is one).

8. Announce that the bar will be raised to the next height. Also announce who will be entering the competition at that height and whether they will get run throughs.
   a. Knock the bar down and conduct the run throughs.
   b. After all run throughs have been completed, put the cone on the runway to close the pit.

9. Raise the standards to the next height, replace the bar and measure it.

10. Repeat steps 3 through 9.

11. If everyone still in the competition has cleared a height, you can start determining places as people miss their third consecutive attempt.
   a. When there are 2 or 3 jumpers remaining determine whether a jump-off will be likely.

**Reminders/Instructions for High Jump Officials**

1. Have the same person measure the bar throughout the competition.
a. Raise each standard the same increment for each height change.

b. Verify that the crossbar is level.

c. Determine the crossbar sag by subtracting the end height at the standard from the center or low point height. The difference shall be a maximum of 2 cm for a record or qualifying height to be valid.

d. Do not trust the scale on the standards to accurately reflect the true height of the crossbar at its lowest point.

e. If you are using a measuring device instead of a tape, do not trust the scale on the measuring device to be correct – always double check with a certified steel tape.

f. Place the measuring device on the mark below the center of the bar.

g. The measuring device is not in place until it is at 90 degrees with the ground surface. The bar protruding from the measuring device should just touch the top of the crossbar without distorting it.

h. When using a laser measurement device, determine whether it has an offset function to account for the thickness of the bar and if that function is turned on. If not, the displayed value will be the distance to the bottom of the bar. You must add the bar thickness (3 cm) to calculate the height of the top surface.

2. Officials/helpers replacing the crossbar should center it horizontally on the uprights each time with at least 1 cm space between the bar and the standard.

3. Watch for the ends of the crossbar getting twisted, causing the bar not to sit flat on the supports (the lines marked on the bar and end pieces do not match up).

4. Officials and helpers at the standards should stand back far enough (3 – 5 feet from standard) so that they do not distract the jumper.

5. Watch that other competitions occurring at the same time do not present a danger to officials or athletes, e.g. discus or javelin throw.

6. When the jumper hits the crossbar during a jump but it fails to immediately fall from the supports, wait until its motion stops and the bar stays on the supports before signaling a fair jump with the white flag.

7. In all cases of attempts at record heights, the judges should check the measurement of the bar when the bar has been placed at the record height and they must re-check the height before each subsequent record attempt if the bar has been displaced for any reason or touched since last measured. The bar does not have to be measured again after a successful attempt unless it was displaced and another competitor will be attempting the same height.

8. Note the beginning and ending times of the competition on the recording sheet. (This aids in determining if protests were filed timely.)
# High Jump Officials Assignments and Duties

With 1 official:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Head       | On plane of bar, 3 – 5 feet from standard | • Adjust height of standards  
• Adjust performance indicator  
• Measure bar  
• Replace bar & straighten the pit  
• Call up athletes  
• Time attempts and give warnings (yellow flag)  
• Watch for “breaking the plane”  
• Flags: Red for a miss; white for a clearance  
• Record results |

With 2 officials:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Head       | On plane of bar, 3 – 5 feet from standard | • Adjust height of standards  
• Measure bar  
• Replace bar  
• Call up athletes  
• Watch for “breaking the plane”  
• Flags: Red for a miss; white for a clearance  
• Record results |
| Bar Judge  | On plane of bar, 3 – 5 feet from standard | • Adjust height of standards  
• Adjust performance indicator  
• Assist with bar measurement  
• Replace bar & straighten the pit  
• Time attempts and give warnings (yellow flag) |

With 3 officials:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Head       | On apron, near athletes | • Measure bar  
• Call up athletes  
• Flags: Red for a miss; white for a clearance  
• Record results |
| Bar Judge #1 | On plane of bar, 3 – 5 feet from standard | • Adjust height of standards  
• Replace bar & straighten the pit  
• Time attempts and give warnings (yellow flag) |
| Bar Judge #2 | On plane of bar, 3 – 5 feet from standard | • Adjust height of standards  
• Adjust performance indicator  
• Assist with bar measurement  
• Replace bar & straighten the pit |
POLE VAULT RULES

1. In NCAA and High School meets, field event contestants who report after the first competitive attempt has been made shall not be allowed to compete. In USATF and IAAF meets, the Chief Field Judge of the event shall permit a tardy declared (pre-entered) contestant to start at the height of the bar at the time of his or her arrival. That contestant shall not be permitted to have warm ups using the competition area. Tardy contestants who are not pre-entered shall not be allowed to enter the event.

2. The starting height of the crossbar and each successive height shall be determined by the games committee. USATF and NCAA pole vault competitions commonly use 15 cm increments while High School competitions use 6 inch increments.
   a. USATF: Unless there is only one competitor remaining who has won the competition, the bar should never be raised by less than 5 cm.
   b. The increments may decrease at higher heights but should never increase.

3. All measurements of height may be made with a steel tape, fiberglass tape or bar (steel tapes are recommended) with the standards at “0”. A steel tape must be used for record purposes. Measurements shall be made perpendicularly from the ground to the lowest part of the upper side of the bar. Any measurement of a new height shall be made before competitors attempt such height. A new measurement shall also be made when a new crossbar is substituted for a broken one. In all cases of attempts at record heights, the judges should check the measurement of the bar when the bar has been placed at the record height. They must re-check the height before each subsequent record attempt if the bar has been displaced for any reason or touched since last measured.
   a. Metric measurements will be made to the nearest lesser 1 cm.
   b. Imperial measurements will be made to the nearest lesser ¼ inch.

4. In the pole vault, each competitor is allowed an attempt in the order their name has been drawn by lot. In practical terms, this is the order their name appears on the entry sheet. Do not add competitors to the entry sheet without approval (preferably written approval) of Meet Management.

5. A competitor shall have the discretion to commence jumping or vaulting at the starting height or any subsequent height.
   a. Each competitor is allowed a maximum of 3 attempts at any one height. They may elect to jump at a height or pass. In USATF meets, a pass is for a height, so the athlete may not take any more attempts at the height passed. In NCAA and High School meets, a pass is for an attempt. This means an athlete could take their first attempt, pass their second attempt, then take their third attempt at a height.
   b. Three consecutive failures, regardless of the height at which such failures occur, disqualifies the competitor from further jumping except in the case of a jump-off to break a tie for first place.
c. Each competitor shall be credited with the best of all his or her jumps in the competition proper, including performances made in the jump-off of a first place tie.

6. Competitors may have the standards moved toward the landing area:
   a. USATF (except Youth): From 0 to 80 cm toward pit from the back of the box
   b. NCAA: From 45 to 80 cm toward pit from the back of the box
   c. High School & USATF Youth: From 40 to 80 cm (15.5 to 31.5 inches) toward pit

7. Once a competition has begun, competitors are not allowed to use the runway or takeoff area for practice purposes, except as scheduled.
   a. NCAA: A competitor who has not taken a trial in at least one hour may use the runway and landing areas without the crossbar with the permission of the event official at the change of the bar to the height where they enter the competition. Each pole vaulter has a maximum of two minutes to warm up. (Note: Do not combine times if more than one competitor enters at a height.)
   b. High School: A competitor who has passed three consecutive heights and has not entered the competition should be permitted two minutes of warm-up jumps per the number of competitors entering at that height without the crossbar in place. (For example, if three vaulters are entering at the same height, they will have 3 x 2 minutes = 6 minutes of simultaneous warm-up time.) The competitor(s) shall enter the competition at that height. Such warm-up must be taken at a height change.
   c. USATF Youth and Masters: A competitor who has passed three consecutive heights after the competition has begun may be permitted a warm up jump without the crossbar in place. One jump shall be allowed for each three passed heights and may be taken only as earned, not cumulatively. (Note: The competitor does not have to enter the competition after taking a warm-up jump.)

8. A failed attempt shall be called:
   a. When the crossbar is displaced in an attempt to clear it;
      i. EXCEPTION: If the wind is of such intensity that the pole is forced against the crossbar so as to displace it, the vault is successful.
   b. When a competitor touches the ground or landing area beyond the plane of the crossbar or the crossbar extended without first clearing the bar.
      i. It is not a foul if the competitor touches the pads in front of the box on either side of the runway;
   c. If the vaulter, after leaving the ground, places the lower hand above the upper hand or moves the upper hand higher on the pole;
d. If a competitor fails to initiate a trial within the time limit. (“Initiate” means that if an athlete has a regular routine, such as rocking back and forth before starting their approach, they should be considered to have initiated the trial when they actually start a forward motion (step) toward the bar.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of athletes competing at start of round</th>
<th>Time (in minutes) for Initiating an Attempt in the Pole Vault</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>USATF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 or 3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consecutive Trials</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

e. If, during or after the jump, the competitor deliberately steadies or replaces the bar;

f. If the pole is touched when it is falling toward the bar or uprights such that, without the intervention, the bar would have been knocked off;

g. If a competitor violates the warm-up restrictions;

h. High School only:
   i. If, after successfully clearing the bar, a competitor accidentally bumps the standards and displaces the bar while exiting the pit;
   ii. If the competitor uses a pole that is rated below his/her weight; the competitor will also be disqualified from the event.

**Note:** It shall not be counted as a trial or failure if a competitor’s pole breaks during an attempt to clear the bar. The vaulter shall be awarded a new trial.

9. Recording performances:
   X = Miss/Fail  O = Cleared  P = Pass

10. Ties:
   a. The competitor with the lowest number of jumps at the height at which the tie occurs shall be awarded the higher place.
   b. If the tie still remains, the competitor with the lowest total of failures throughout the competition up to and including the height last cleared shall be awarded the higher place.
   c. If the tie still remains:
      i. High School meets: The competitors tying shall have one more jump at the lowest height attempted above the tying height by any of the tied competitors. If no decision is reached, the bar shall be lowered (if all have failed) or raised (if 2 or more have cleared). They shall attempt one jump at each height until the tie is resolved. The tying competitors must jump on each occasion when deciding...
the tie. (Passing is not allowed in a jump-off.)

- Bar increment: 3 inches (High School)

### High School Pole Vault Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Athlete</th>
<th>Height and Performance</th>
<th>Total Fails</th>
<th>Jump Off</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>13’ O 13’6” XO 14’ XO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>X O X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>14’6” P 15’ XO PPP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>X O O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>15’ PPP XXO XXO XXX</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### NCAA, USATF and IAAF Pole Vault Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Athlete</th>
<th>Height and Performance</th>
<th>Total Fails</th>
<th>Jump Off</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5.20 O 5.35 XO 5.50 O</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>X O X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>5.60 XO 5.65 P 5.70 P</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>X O O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>5.65 P 5.70 XO 5.75 XO</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

d. If the tie concerns any place other than first place, the competitors shall be awarded the same place in the competition:

- EXCEPTION: If a tie for other than first place involved a qualifying position for another meet, a jump-off would be required to break the tie. Normally the first jump to break that tie would be taken immediately. If the tie is not broken, the jump-off would continue following the completion of the event.

### Pre-Competition (Pole Vault)
1. Read the applicable rules the night before the meet. Review the tie break procedures and the rules for passing an attempt or height. Passes are not allowed in jump-offs.

2. Arrive at least 1 1/2 hours before the scheduled start of the warm-up period. For larger meets or sites you have not seen before, allow extra time.

3. Pick up 2 copies of the entry sheet(s) and ask about starting height and increments if they are not indicated on the sheet(s). (Most vertical jump sheets only have 6 or 8 columns to record results. Many competitions will go through 10 or more heights so you will need extra sheets.) Also ask about other special instructions. And ask who will get the results when the competition is complete.
   a. Typically the bar will be raised in 15 cm (6 inch) increments until higher heights. For combined events (decathlon) the increment is always 10 cm.
   b. Plan increments to include qualifying heights. If your normal progression will not hit a qualifying height, speak with meet management.

4. Verify you have the equipment and help you need to conduct the event:
   a. 2-3 Pole Vault crossbars (PV bars are 4.5 m long; HJ bars are 4.0 m long). IAAF, USATF, and High School: End pieces must be circular or semicircular with a flat surface. NCAA events may use either of these or square end pieces. (See Figure 5.)
   b. People to help you (2 pit helpers, minimum)
   c. 2 crossbar lifters
   d. Clipboard
   e. Pencil(s) with eraser
   f. Height measurement tool
   g. Flags (red, white and yellow)
   h. Tape measure for runway
   i. Performance indicator (to inform spectators and announcer of bar height)
   j. Standards indicator (improves communication to pit & speeds up event)
   k. Extenders- Usually needed for High School and Masters competitions
   l. Windsock- To be placed next to runway near take-off point
   m. Stopwatch

5. Check direction and velocity of wind. Determine if Games Committee should be asked to change direction of runway, if practical/possible and before the start of warm-up period.

6. Set up windsock, if available, along runway near take-off point.

7. Clean out any water/debris in the box. Make sure it is dry.
8. SAFETY: Make sure the competition area is set up properly and is clear of items that might cause injury. Stop any event where safety might be compromised.
   a. Verify landing pads are the proper size and set up correctly (no gaps).
   b. Check for a padded collar around box (required for High School).
   c. Check for hazards around pit (exposed concrete; exposed pallets under pads; hurdles; chairs; distance between pit and track; etc.). Pay particular attention to the area behind the pit. Remove/repair/cover up where possible.
   d. Remove old marks from the runway. Check for safety of runway. Sweep the surface at the take-off point.
   e. Check for other field events that may interfere with the Pole Vault competition. Competitors from nearby events may inadvertently cross the pole vault runway during competition. Implements such as javelins, discus or hammers may land or skip across the pole vault runway.
   f. Note how close the pit is to the track. It may be possible for a pole to fall across the pit into Lane 1 or for a dislodged crossbar to be propelled onto the track. Make your pit helpers aware of this.
   g. Verify that the zero on the scale for standards aligns with the back of the box. Redo scale if necessary.
   h. See that standards move up and down freely and whether they lean in or out as they are raised. Also verify that the standards move back and forth in the frame from 0 to 80 cm without obstruction by the pads or pad covers. Move standards if they are not the proper distance apart.

9. Determine the low point and sag for each bar and mark the bars (left, right, front) so that they can always be set on standards with the same edge up and the same side to the front. The bar with the least sag should be used for competition.
   a. Lay the bar (not the rubber end pieces) across the backs of two chairs or hurdles, or across two vaulting poles placed on the runway. The bar will roll such that the sag will be downward. (See Figure 7.) The sag should be no more than 3 cm.
   b. Adjust the rubber end pieces so they will lie flat on the pegs/supports with the sag downward.
   c. Draw a line from the front of the end piece onto the bar so you will be able to see if the end pieces turn during competition. (See Figure 6.)
      i. If the ends are too easy to move you can slide them inward, take a piece of adhesive tape about a half inch wide and place it on the bar then slide the end back into place. Don’t wrap the whole end because this will make it too difficult to reposition the end piece.
   d. Keep the extra bar(s) out of direct sunlight as this will affect the amount and direction of sag.
10. Move the standards to zero (0), put the competition bar on the top pegs and measure a height. The bar should be measured at the lowest point of the top surface, typically in the center of the bar, perpendicular to the back of the box. Usually the standards will not be accurate so an offset must be applied. For example, if the opening height is 10 feet the standards may have to be set to 10 feet 1 inch in order for the bar to measure 10 feet.
   a. Stand back on the runway and determine if the bar looks level. Some standards may be damaged so you will have to adjust the left and right standards to different settings.
   b. Measure the bar. You should be able to feel the measurement device barely contact the top of the bar.
   c. Record the offset(s), if any, for both standards on the event entry sheet.
   d. Set the bar to the opening height and measure. This may require moving the bar to lower pegs. Most standards have 3 sets of pegs spaced 12 inches apart (12 inches = 30.5 cm). If you are using extenders they often have multiple pegs spaced 6 inches apart. Since the markings on the standards are for the top pegs you will have to account for the distance between the top pegs and the lower pegs when setting the height. This can be particularly confusing when using metric measurements so be careful. Record which pegs you used and the offsets required for opening height on the event entry sheet.

11. Remove the competition bar and put up the second bar (or bungee) for warm-ups.

12. Announce pit is open for warm-ups.

Warm-Up Period (Pole Vault)

1. Make assignments for officials or other helpers.

2. Attempt to prevent athletes from using chalk or other unsuitable marks on the runway. Instruct athletes to place markers along side of runway.
   a. In NCAA and USATF competitions a maximum of 2 markers may be used. NCAA markers are limited to 7 cm by 15 cm.
   b. In High School meets the games committee will specify how many and what materials can be used for marks.

3. Stretch measurement tape from the back of the box along runway for ease of placing competitor’s marks, if runway does not have permanent marks.

4. Check in athletes. Ask for opening heights and standards settings; these will likely change. Tell athletes where they are in the order of jumping. Ask if they will be competing in another event.

5. For High School, coaches are required to verify that their vaulters have correct poles for weight, but it is a good idea to watch for obvious disparities.
6. Have officials/helpers move the standards and replace the crossbar during the warm-up period to speed things along.

7. Have official/helper mark take-off step for each vaulter. In NCAA meets step placement can also be done during competition.

8. Periodically announce how much time is left in the warm-up period. Plan to end the warm-up period 5 – 10 minutes before the scheduled start of competition (10 minutes, if there will be introductions).

9. Look for athletes wearing tape on hands. Ask if tape is to cover a wound and/or the athlete has permission to use tape. (For less important meets, the official will have to use their best judgment.) Tape of wrist, forearm protectors, and headgear are allowed.

10. Inspect poles for no more than two layers of tape at hand holds for HS only. Numerous layers of tape at the bottom for pole protection are permitted.

11. Near the end of the warm-up period ask athletes for their starting heights and standards settings, if they have not already told you, and note on the recording sheet. Some athletes may change the heights and settings they gave you previously.

12. A few minutes before the end of the warm-up period, stand in the warm-up line to indicate that warm-ups are nearly over. At the end of the warm-up period, close the pit and place a cone on the runway. Move the standards to “0”, adjust the standards to opening height using the previously determined offsets, put up the competition crossbar and re-measure.

**Instructions to Athletes (Pole Vault)**

1. Call athletes together at conclusion of warm-up period and before scheduled starting time of competition

2. Introduce yourself and welcome athletes. Introduce other officials.

3. Explain how you will conduct the event: Competitors will be called up in groups of 3 (“A” is up; “B” is on deck; “C” is on hold).

4. Read the order of jumping. Confirm starting heights and placement of standards for each athlete. (Let them know they can change their standards during competition but that they need to tell you before the clock starts for their trial.)

5. Explain the increments by which the bar will be raised throughout the competition (give imperial equivalents as well as metric). Explain what to do if an athlete wants to pass an attempt or a height.

6. Remind them of time limits; point out who is keeping time or where the clock is, if available; explain how time warning will be given, e.g. raising of yellow flag.

   a. Warning is given with 15 seconds remaining in IAAF, USATF and NCAA competitions; there is no rule for this in High School.
7. Indicate if continuing flights (“5 Alive”) will be used. (5 Alive is a somewhat complicated procedure which may be used at certain times to ensure that a competitor waits for no more than 4 other vaulters between attempts at a height. It does not have to be used so new officials are advised not to attempt it.)

8. Remind athletes not to use runway for warm-ups during competition.

9. Remind athletes that electronic devices are not permitted in competition area.

10. Ask athletes if any have to leave during competition for other events; explain that they must notify you before leaving and when they return. Remind them that the competition will not be held up while they are absent and that they are subject to missing attempts at a height. The bar will keep moving up and they may resume jumping at the existing height when they return.

11. Athletes may cross the track to consult with their coaches in NCAA meets only up to the time of the scheduled start of the first running event. In other competitions the decision about crossing the track is a games committee decision.

**Competition (Pole Vault)**

1. Note the starting time and record it on the entry sheet.

2. Confirm that the bar is at the proper height.

3. Announce the first 3 vaulters (“A” is up; “B” is on deck; “C” is on hold).

4. Have the pit set the standards for the next vaulter.

5. Confirm that the pit is ready, remove the cone from the runway to signal to “A” that his time is starting. Start the watch/clock.

6. Record the result of the attempt.

7. Repeat steps 2 through 6 until all vaulters who declared their intent to jump at the height either cleared it, missed 3 times or passed to the next height. If you have multiple pages of entries, check all pages to make sure you did not skip someone.

8. Check your score sheet with the back-up recorder (if there is one).

9. Announce that the bar will be raised to the next height. Also announce who will be entering the competition at that height and whether they will get run throughs.
   
   a. Knock the bar down and conduct the run throughs.
   b. After all run throughs have been completed, put the cone on the runway to close the pit.

10. Move the standards to 0, raise them to the next height, replace the bar and measure it.

11. Repeat steps 3 through 9.

12. If everyone still in the competition has cleared a height, you can start determining places as people miss their third consecutive attempt.
a. When there are 2 or 3 vaulters remaining determine whether a jump-off will be likely.

**Reminders/Instructions for Pole Vault Officials**

1. Have the same person measure the bar throughout the competition.
   a. Make sure standards are at “0” for every measurement.
   b. Raise each standard the same increment for each height change.
   c. Have someone stand back on the runway to assure that the crossbar is level.
   d. Do not trust the scale on the standards to accurately reflect the true height of the crossbar at its lowest point.
   e. If you are using a measuring device instead of a tape, do not trust the scale on the measuring device to be correct – always double check with a certified steel tape.
   f. Place the measuring device on the back of the box in the center. (If the box is not flush with the jumping surface place the measuring device on the jumping surface directly behind the box.)
   g. The measuring device is not in place until it is at 90 degrees with the ground surface. The bar protruding from the measuring device should just touch the top of the crossbar without distorting it. If you can’t feel the top of the crossbar, raise both standards the appropriate amount. If the measuring device hit the bar, lower both standards the appropriate amount.
   h. Determine the crossbar sag when you determine the low point. The sag shall be a maximum of 3 cm for a record or qualifying height to be valid.
   i. When using a laser measurement device, determine whether it has an offset function to account for the thickness of the bar and if that function is turned on. If not, the displayed value will be the distance to the bottom of the bar. You must add the bar thickness (3 cm) to calculate the height of the top surface.

2. Make sure an official is in position to spot whether the pole touches any surface beyond the plane of the back of the box (this cannot be seen by officials at standards). **Note:** It is not a foul solely because the pole touches the vaulting pad, in the course of an attempt, when planted in the box.

3. Officials/helpers replacing the crossbar should center it horizontally on the uprights each time.

4. It is helpful if the officials/helpers working the standards retrieve the displaced crossbar and place it front side up so that it can be easily lifted by crossbar replacement officials or helpers.
5. Officials/helpers at the standards should assure that the crossbar is snug against the standards with no space between the bar and standards for every attempt.

6. Watch for the ends of the crossbar getting twisted, causing the bar not to sit flat on the pins (the lines marked on the bar and end pieces do not match up).

7. Officials and helpers at the standards should stand back far enough so that the pole or crossbar falling to the side will not hit them. These same people should pay attention when the bar is being put back up so they don’t get hit if the bar falls off the pegs.

8. Use a cone on the runway during the replacement of the crossbar, setting of standards and measurement of height. Removal of the cone can be used as a signal to start the clock/watch for a trial.

9. It is helpful to use a number board to transmit standards settings to the people at the pit rather than shouting. If possible, have the athletes do this.

10. An athlete may change their standards setting after the time clock/watch has started, but it is done on his/her time and the clock is not to be reset.

11. Watch that other competitions occurring at the same time do not present a danger to officials or athletes, e.g. discus or javelin throw.

12. Remember that the pole cannot be caught by an assigned official or the competitor unless it is falling away from the bar.

13. It is not a failure if the pole passes underneath the crossbar in the event the competitor clears the bar.

14. When the vaulter hits the crossbar during a jump but it fails to immediately fall from the pins, wait until its motion stops and the bar stays on the pins before signaling a fair jump with the white flag.

15. In all cases of attempts at record heights, the judges should check the measurement of the bar when the bar has been placed at the record height and they must re-check the height before each subsequent record attempt if the bar has been displaced for any reason or touched since last measured. The bar does not have to be measured again after a successful record attempt. If it was displaced and another competitor will be attempting the same height then it must be remeasured.

16. Note the beginning and ending times of the competition on the recording sheet. (This aids in determining if protests were filed timely.)

**Pole Vault Officials Assignments and Duties**

With 1 official:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Head       | Next to runway, 20 - 30 ft. from box | • Adjust height and position of standards  
• Adjust performance indicator  
• Measure bar |

Introduction to Vertical Jumps (2012) 24
- Replace bar & straighten the pit
- Call up athletes
- Time attempts and give warnings (yellow flag)
- Watch for touching ground/pad beyond plane
- Watch for steadying the bar
- Flags: Red for a miss; white for a clearance
- Record results

With 2 officials:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head</td>
<td>Next to runway, 20 – 30 ft. from box</td>
<td>• Adjust height and position of standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Measure bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Replace bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Call up athletes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Watch for touching ground/pad beyond plane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Flags: Red for a miss; white for a clearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Record results</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bar Judge</td>
<td>Next to standard</td>
<td>• Adjust height and position of standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Adjust performance indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Assist with bar measurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Replace bar &amp; straighten the pit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Time attempts and give warnings (yellow flag)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Watch for “breaking plane”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Watch for steadying the bar</td>
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With 3 officials:

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<td>Head</td>
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<td>• Measure bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Call up athletes</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Flags: Red for a miss; white for a clearance</td>
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<td>• Record results</td>
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<th>Duties</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bar Judge #1</td>
<td>On zero line, outside standard</td>
<td>• Adjust height and position of standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Assist with bar measurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Replace bar &amp; straighten the pit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Time attempts and give warnings (yellow flag)</td>
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<td>• Watch for “breaking plane”</td>
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<td>• Watch for steadying the bar</td>
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<th>Duties</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>On zero line, outside standard</td>
<td>• Adjust height and position of standards</td>
</tr>
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<td>• Adjust performance indicator</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Assist with bar measurement</td>
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<td>• Replace bar &amp; straighten the pit</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Watch for “breaking plane”</td>
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**Figure 1:** High Jump Layout

**Figure 2:** High Jump Plane
Figure 3: Pole Vault Layout

Figure 4: Pole Vault Plane
High School, USATF, and IAAF require type A or B. NCAA may use type A, B or C.

**Figure 5:** View of Crossbar Endpiece
**Figure 7:** Two ways to determine low point of crossbar

![Diagram of two ways to determine low point of crossbar]

**Figure 8:** High Jump Officiating Positions

![Diagram of high jump officiating positions]

- Bar Replacer
- Bar Judge
- Performance Board
- 2nd Recorder
- Clock Operator
- w/ Flag or Timing Device
- Recorder
- Marshal / Escort
- Athlete’s Bench
- Chief Judge / Flight Coordinator
- Bar Replacer
- Bar Judge
- w/ Flags
- (Flags)
Figure 9: Pole Vault Officiating Positions

Keep area near takeoff clear for viewing by coaches & fans