

Item 7, b. - Prohibition of Jewelry Lifted in High School Track and Field 2014

Effective with the 2015 high school track and field season, the prohibition of jewelry will be eliminated. This was one of several rules changes recommended by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Track and Field Rules Committee at its June 16-18 meeting in Indianapolis. The committee's recommendations were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

Becky Oakes, NFHS director of sports and liaison to the Track and Field Rules Committee, said the committee determined that prohibiting jewelry in high school track and field and cross country is not necessary.

"The wearing of jewelry ordinarily presents little risk of injury to either the competitor or opponents," Oakes said. "Elimination of the rule allows officials to focus on meet administration directly related to actual competition. Coaches continue to have the obligation to see that competitors are properly equipped."

In other changes, language regarding the time limit to initiate a trial in the throwing and jumping events was revised. Previously, competitors in these events had to initiate a trial and carry it to completion within one minute. Beginning next year, participants must only initiate the trial within the one-minute time limit. Completion of the event will be allowed beyond the prescribed time.

Another change was made in field events involving implements. In events such as the shot put, discus, javelin and pole vault, an additional trial will be allowed when an implement breaks – and thus becomes illegal – during competition due to no fault of the competitor.

The revised note in Rules 6-2-17 and 7-2-17 reads as follows: "If a legal implement breaks during an attempt in accordance with the rules, no penalty shall be counted against the competitor and a replacement trial shall be awarded. If the implement breaks upon completion of the trial, a replacement attempt shall not be awarded and the results of the trial shall be recorded, provided it was made in accordance with the rules."

In the discus throw, it no longer will be a foul if a competitor is out of control when exiting the back half of the circle. Also, in the discus, shot put and javelin, the requirement for the judge to call "mark" was eliminated.

Another change involves the high jump and pole vault events. A new article in Rule 7-2 will state that “a crossbar displaced by a force disassociated with the competitor after he/she is legally and clearly over the crossbar shall not be a fault and is considered a successful attempt.”

In Rule 8 involving special events, the committee approved the 1,500-meter run as an alternate for the 1,600-meter run in the decathlon and pentathlon. Oakes said when using the IAAF standard scoring, the 1,500-meter run is the standard distance. In addition, the indoor weight throw was approved for the listing of special events.

The final change involves Rule 1-4 on indoor track. Since many indoor meets are held in college facilities, the committee approved the 60-meter high hurdles and dash as alternates for the 55-meter high hurdles and dash. Oakes said this option eliminates special marking of the facilities for the hurdles and dash.

Track and field is the second-most popular sport for boys with 580,672 participants in 16,001 schools and is the No. 1 sport for girls with 472,939 participants in 15,962 schools during the 2012-13 season, according to the NFHS Athletics Participation Survey.