

*USA TRACK AND FIELD
NATIONAL OFFICIALS COMMITTEE
TRAINING SUBCOMMITTEE*

Pole Vault 2019 Complete Rules Comparison

Craig Cooper

February 2019



2017 POLE VAULT RULES COMPARISON

Rule	NCAA	NFHS	USATF
Accidental bar knockoff	If the bar is displaced by a force disassociated with the competitor, after the competitor is clearly over, the vault is successful. If the crossbar is displaced by wind before the competitor is over, give a redo. If the wind is of such intensity that the pole is forced against the crossbar so as to displace it, the vault is successful. It is <u>not</u> a failed attempt if a competitor clears the crossbar and while exiting the pit <u>under control</u> accidentally displacers the crossbar.	Same as NCAA except it is a foul if the competitor (not pole) after clearing the bar, contacts an upright and displaces the crossbar.	When it is clear that the bar has been displaced by a force not associated with the competitor, if such displacement occurs after the competitor has cleared the bar without touching it, the attempt shall be considered successful, and if such attempt occurs under any other circumstances, a new attempt will be awarded.
Appeals	The referee's decisions in all matters shall be final and without appeal, except in those meets where a games committee or appointed jury has been established for that special purpose. The Games committee or jury then will have the final authority.	The referee is the sole authority for ruling on infractions or irregularities not within the rules Games Committee is the jury of appeals or appoints a jury of appeals. The referee shall not be included.	A jury of appeal composed of 3 or 5 persons, preferably certified officials, may be established by the Games Committee to consider appeals from decisions of the Referee as to matters that developed during the conduct of the event.
Bar height individual competitors	Starting height & successive heights are chosen by games committee except the winner may choose any progression. The recommended initial increment is 15cm (never less than 5cm) and the increment shall never increase. Pay attention to national standards when determining starting height and increments.	Games committee decision. Winner may choose heights.	Unless there is only one competitor remaining who has won the competition the bar shall never be raised less than 5cm after each round. The increment of the raising shall never increase. Masters winner may choose a non standard progression during combined age group competition that only they may attempt.
Bar height combined competitors	In the pole vault, the starting height of the cross-bar shall be determined by the competitors. Each increment rise shall be 10cm. and followed throughout the competition regardless of the number of competitors.		The increment increase in the pole vault shall be uniform throughout the competition at 10 cm. Youth. The increment shall be 15 cm.
Box content	No foreign objects in box.	Same as NCAA	No rule
Box collar	ASTM specified box collar wing must be used. ASTM collar must meet the most current ASTM specification standard.	Same as NCAA	The exposed area to the sides and back shall have suitable padding. ATSM box collar is required for youth.
Catching pole	The pole may never be caught to prevent it from dislodging the crossbar. If pole is caught it is a foul if the bar would have dislodged if not for the catching the pole.	Same as NCAA.	Same as NCAA.

Rule	NCAA	NFHS	USATF
Coaches	<p>In meets with 5 or fewer teams, meet management may allow coaches to confer with competitors while not in an attempt in the field of competition. Otherwise must coach from a non restricted area. No electronic devices may be used by coaches in a coach's box. If located in the field of competition.</p> <p>On the report of an official or from a properly filed protest, the referee shall warn or DQ a competitor determined to have been directly or indirectly aided from inside the competition area by a coach, a teammate not in the race or a non-competitor connected with the competitor's team.</p>	<p>The games committee may designate a coach's area, usually not on the field.</p>	<p>Athletes may not leave the immediate area and engage in dialogue with persons outside the area.</p> <p>Athletes in the infield may not cross to the outside of the track during competition.</p>
Crossbar	<p>Must be circular with ends that are flat and smooth, not covered with material meant to increase friction and may be either round or square.</p> <p>Mark face of bar so same surface is always placed up.</p> <p>If standards incorrectly set and vaulter misses, give another free try. If vaulter makes height when standards wrong, give credit for a valid performance.</p> <p>3cm of sag max.</p>	<p>Must be circular w/ flat ends that may be round or square.</p> <p>Mark face of bar so same surface is always placed up.</p> <p>Bungee OK for warm up.</p>	<p>Must be circular with ends that are hard and smooth. 3cm of sag max.</p> <p>Ends must be circular or semi circular with one clearly defined flat surface.</p> <p>Mark face of bar so same surface is always placed up.</p> <p>Bungee not addressed.</p>
Crossing track	<p>It is permissible for competitors to cross the track and confer with coaches before the start of running events.</p>	<p>No rule.</p>	<p>May not leave the immediate area of the event nor cross track to converse during event.</p> <p>Warn 1st by ref then DQ'd for any repetition.</p>
Five alive individual	<p>When there are large opening fields in the pole vault, greater than 20, the games committee shall select one of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize a qualifying competition under rule 6.6.2. Utilize two flights following the normal order of competition. The overall placing is determined by combining the results of both flights. A rotating flight may be used until there are 9 or fewer competitors remaining at a bar height. 	<p>Games committee decision on when and how to use 5 alive.</p>	<p>Five alive not used.</p> <p>When the number of competitors exceeds 15, the games committee shall select one of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize a qualifying competition. Utilize two flights. The overall placing will be determined by combining the results of both flights. Ties for first place shall not be broken.

Rule	NCAA	NFHS	USATF
Five alive combined	<p>For total fields greater than 13 two flights should be considered.</p> <p>When more than one flight is used, the competitors should be split into equal sections as equal in number as possible by lot or based on past seasonal performance in that event.</p> <p>The flights should be concurrent when facilities with equal conditions are available.</p>	No rule	Not used.
Flags	<p>Red flag = foul/non valid performance.</p> <p>White flag = valid performance.</p> <p>Yellow flag = final 15 seconds of time clock.</p>	No rule.	<p>Red flag = foul/non valid performance.</p> <p>White flag = valid performance.</p> <p>Yellow flag = final 15 seconds.</p>
Fouls	<p>After vault, the bar does not remain on the original pegs because of any direct action of competitor while vaulting.</p> <p>If bar falls while exiting pit after a successful vault it is good.</p> <p>If pole hits standards and bar dislodged vault is good. Vaulters cannot steady the bar with hand or arm.</p> <p>It is not a failure if the competitor leaves the ground for the purpose of making a vault and fails to clear the bar, provided he/she does not touch pit or ground beyond inside edge of the top of the box.</p> <p>May not touch ground/pit beyond plane of box with any part of body/pole after time begins w/o 1st clearing bar.</p> <p>NO tapping. Immediate DQ from the competition.</p> <p>A broken pole is not a foul and vaulter shall get new trial.</p> <p>Time foul. Coaches may not confer during an attempt.</p> <p>May not touch pole unless falling to ground after a jump. It's a foul if the bar would have fallen off if not for the athlete catching the pole.</p>	<p>Same as NCAA except: Touches ground or pit behind box w/o 1st clearing bar.</p> <p>It is a foul if the vaulter leaves the ground in an attempt and fails to clear the crossbar.</p> <p>No foul if the vaulter attempts to stop but slightly leaves the ground.</p>	<p>Bar has been displaced by a force associated with the competitor.</p> <p>Vaulter steadies the bar with hand or arm.</p> <p>It is not a failure if the competitor leaves the ground of the purpose of making a vault and fails to clear the bar, provided he/she does not otherwise commit a foul. i.e., touch pit beyond back of box or run out of time.</p> <p>OK for pole to touch pad in an attempt after being properly planted in the box.</p> <p>Without clearing bar 1st, and part of body or pole touches ground or pit beyond the vertical plane of the inside edge of the top of the box.</p> <p>A broken pole is not a foul and vaulter shall get a new trial.</p> <p>Time foul.</p> <p>May not touch a pole unless falling to the ground after a jump. It is a foul if the bar would have fallen off if not for the catching of the pole.</p>
Gloves	Allowed.	Not allowed.	Allowed.
Late arrival	Cannot compete. Athlete must report no later than check in time as designated by games committee.	Allowed.	Allowed.

Rule	NCAA	NFHS	USATF
Markers	<p>Two markers maximum on side of runway.</p> <p>Marker must not exceed 7cm X 15 cm size. (6” length)</p> <p>Shoes may not be used as markers.</p> <p>Warn athlete/coach first then DQ if athlete does not comply.</p>	<p>Markers may be placed on side of runway.</p> <p>No size or limit restrictions.</p>	<p>May place one or two markers supplied or approved by the Games Committee alongside runway. If no markers supplied, a competitor may use tape, but no chalk or anything that leaves indelible marks.</p> <p>May have a 1 cm wide line across pit and on ground to mark back of box (zero line).</p>
Measure of bar	<p>An accurate measurement of the height of the cross bar shall be taken each time it is placed at a new height; each time a new crossbar replaces a broken one; each time a standard has been displaced; and for record attempts each time the bar is touched.</p> <p>Any displaced bar should be placed on the standards in exactly the same position as before its displacement.</p> <p>It is recommended that all electronic equipment measuring performance be certified for accuracy by an appropriate testing agency in accordance with methods specified by the manufacturer, before the first competition each year and preferably before each major competition.</p> <p>Verification of the accuracy of devices used to measure distance can be accomplished by comparison to an available surveyed distance.</p>	<p>Same as NCAA for first paragraph only.</p> <p>Measurement may be made with a certified electronic measurement device.</p>	<p>Precise measurement should be made when the bar is raised. Measurement must be made perpendicular from a point on the same level as the takeoff.</p> <p>Any measurement of a new height shall be made before competitors attempt such height.</p> <p>A measurement shall also be made when a <u>new</u> crossbar is substituted for a broken one.</p> <p>For record heights re-check height when bar set and if the bar displaced or touched.</p> <p>If electronic measurement devices are used the electronic measurement judge shall meet with the operators of equipment to familiarize themselves with the equipment.</p>
Order	<p>Event judge may allow competitors to take attempts out of the official order, which may or not be in succession.</p>	<p>As assigned by Games Committee.</p>	<p>Same as NCAA. Excused athletes must return before the end of the event or be ruled as having abandoned the competition.</p>
Passing	<p>A “pass” is for a single attempt only. Competitors may pass all attempts at a given height, or may pass their second and/or third attempt. Passes must be indicated before the start of the time limit.</p>	<p>Same as NCAA.</p>	<p>A competitor who forgoes a trial at a height thereby forfeits the right to jump again at that height.</p>
Pit distance from box.	<p>Recommended maximum distance from the back of the box to the beginning of the pad is 15 cm.</p>	<p>3” max.</p>	<p>The side of the landing area nearest the box shall be placed 10 – 15 cm. from the box.</p>

Rule	NCAA	NFHS	USATF
Pegs	<p>55mm maximum length.</p> <p>Pegs shall be smooth, without indentations or aids of any kind that might help to hold the crossbar in place.</p>	<p>76mm (3 inches) maximum length.</p> <p>Round, smooth without indentations or aids of any type.</p>	<p>55mm maximum length.</p> <p>Pegs shall be without notches or indentations of any kind, of uniform thickness throughout and not more than 13mm in diameter.</p> <p>Pegs may not be covered with rubber or with any material that has the effect of increasing friction.</p>
Pole	<p>The vaulting pole may be of any material or combination of materials.</p> <p>It may be of unlimited size and weight.</p>	<p>Vaulter's weight shall be at/or below manufacturer's pole rating on a min. $\frac{3}{4}$ inch contrasting color band located within or above top handhold position. DQ if using an illegal pole.</p> <p>Pole must be etched and banded with the same rating.</p> <p>Top handhold position to be a 1" circular band.</p>	<p>The pole may be of any material or combination of materials and of any length or diameter, but the basic surface must be smooth.</p> <p>Youth. Same rules apply as for NFHS.</p>
Protests	<p>Treat any question of a call or rule by coach or athlete as a protest.</p> <p>The following is an IAAF rule but could be used for NCAA:</p> <p>In a Field Event, if an athlete makes an immediate oral protest against having a trial judged as a failure, the Referee of the event may, at his discretion, order that the trial be measured and the result recorded, in order to preserve the rights of all concerned. If the protested trial occurred in a vertical Field Event, where the athlete would advance to a higher height only if the protest or subsequent appeal is upheld, the Referee may allow the athlete to continue competing to preserve the rights of all concerned. The protested performance of the athlete and any other performance achieved while competing under protest will become valid only if a subsequent decision to that effect is made by the Referee or an appeal to the Jury of Appeal is made and it is upheld. An appeal to the Jury of Appeal must be made within 30 minute or the protest is denied.</p>	<p>Same as NCAA.</p>	<p>Same as NCAA except any available video or photo evidence may be used in a protest.</p>

Rule	NCAA	NFHS	USATF
Recording	Metric recording.	Imperial recording.	Metric recording. When practical two judges should keep a record of all trials, checking their recordings at the end of each round.
Records	Steel tape or a certified scientific measuring device for records only. Fiberglass ok for non-records. For record attempts, an accurate measurement of the crossbar shall be taken: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Each time the bar is placed at a new height. II. Each time a new crossbar replaces a broken one. III. Each time a standard (s) has been displaced, IV. For record attempts, the crossbar height shall be measured before record attempts or if the bar has been touched by another competitor also jumping at a record height. Measure before each record attempt. Metric measurement to the nearest centimeter.	Same as NCAA. Imperial measurement to nearest lesser ¼” or cm. Measurement shall be recorded with non stretchable tape such as fiberglass, nylon, steel, or certified scientific measurement device (laser).	Record measurements shall be read by three Field judges, including the Chief Field Judge of the event. Measurement made perpendicularly from a point the same level as the takeoff. For record heights re-check height when bar is Set, and if the bar displaced or touched since last measured. Metric measurement. Steel tape only. Outdoor records may not be made on a wooden track. The electronic measurement judge shall verify the accuracy of the electronic measurement device and report the distance to the chief judge of the event and field event referee.
Runway direction	The games committee shall designate the official runway to be used at least one hour before the vault competition begins. Start time would therefore be pushed back if the direction were changed during that one hour time zone. In the event of unsafe wind conditions once competition has begun, competition may be suspended, but the event venue (direction of jumping) shall not be changed except as below. In the event of unsafe conditions once competition has begun (weather or facility concerns) competition may be suspended, but the event venue (direction of jumping) shall not be changed (except the direction of runways may be changed for weather conditions if the event is continued the next day, since it’s a new day of competition). Have the field event referee make this decision.	The Games committee or if none the Referee decides the runway direction if a change in wind direction occurs. If a change do at the beginning of a new height or at the end of one round of trials.	The referee may change the location of the competition after it has begun only if extreme conditions warrant it. When possible change only after a round in progress has been completed. Change of wind direction is never a justification for reversing the direction of the runway after the event has started.
Standards	45cm to 80 cm. from inside edge of the top of the box. A standard that slips after the competitor has hit the bar shall be ruled “no vault” and the vaulter shall be allowed another attempt.	Same as NCAA.	0 cm to 80 cm. from inside edge of top of the box. Youth: 40-80 cm.

Rule	NCAA	NFHS	USATF
Tape on pole	<p>The vaulting pole may have protective layers of tape at the grip end and at the bottom end of the pole.</p> <p>Tape at the grip end must be uniform without creating gripping rings.</p>	<p>No limit as long as the tape is in smooth layers.</p>	<p>At the end of the grip and at the bottom end, the pole may have protective layers of tape.</p> <p>Such tape must not have any sudden changes in diameter, such as the creation of a ring on the pole.</p> <p>The pole may be taped in either direction.</p>
Tape on hands/ wrist	<p>Gloves and adhesive substance OK. Forearm guard OK.</p> <p>No mention of taping the hands is in the NCAA rules for the pole vault.</p>	<p>No tape on hands or fingers unless an open wound.</p> <p>Taping of wrist OK</p>	<p>Any bandage, tape, belt or support is acceptable for medical purposes only. Referee shall have the authority to verify.</p> <p>May tape wrist.</p>
Ties	<p>The tying competitors shall have one more jump at each height, starting at the next height in the original progression above the tying height.</p> <p>If a decision is not reached, the bar shall be raised 5 cm if the tying competitors were successful, or lowered 5 cm if not successful.</p> <p>Competitors must jump once on each occasion when resolving a tie. No passing during jump off.</p> <p>If the tie occurs for a cut off position such as qualifying for NCAA finals use the same tie breaking formula as for first place.</p> <p>Combined events: No tie breaking procedure.</p>	<p>Take 4th attempt at the height at which they failed. If no decision reached the bar shall be lowered in increments of 3 inches.</p> <p>If two or more of the tying contestants cleared the height, the bar shall be raised by 3 inches.</p> <p>If the height which the tied competitors last attempted is not the same, because of a passed height by one or more of the remaining competitors, the bar shall be lowered to the lowest height last attempted by any of the remaining competitors to begin the jump off.</p> <p>One attempt at each height until ties resolved.</p>	<p>Take 4th attempt at the next height after the height last cleared by the competitors, and if no decision is reached the bar shall be lowered or raised by 5cm increments.</p> <p>One attempt at each height until tie is resolved. If the tie occurs for a cut off position such as qualifying for the alternate spot in the Olympic games use the same tie breaking formula as for first place.</p> <p>If the tie concerns first place, the competitors tying shall jump off, described as follows, unless otherwise decided either in advance according to the technical regulations applying to the competition, or before the start of the event by the appropriate Referee.</p> <p>If no jump-off is held, including where the relevant competitors at any stage decide not to jump further, the tie for first place will stand. This shall not apply to the combined events.</p> <p>A competitor who does not jump at any height automatically forfeits any claim to the higher place. If only one other competitor remains, that competitor is declared the winner regardless of whether that height is attempted.</p>

Rule	NCAA	NFHS	USATF															
Time allowed	<p>The following times for initiating field events is based upon number of athletes competing <u>at the start of a height.</u></p> <p>In all cases the standards should be set to desired setting, the competitor's last name called and a visual signal given.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>More than 3 athletes</th> <th>2-3 athletes</th> <th>1 left</th> <th>Consecutive attempts</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Individual</td> <td>1 min.</td> <td>2 minutes</td> <td>5 minutes same height or not.</td> <td>3 minutes at same height.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Combined</td> <td>1 min.</td> <td>2 minutes</td> <td>3 minutes same height or not.</td> <td>3 minutes within <u>any</u> height.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>1st attempt individual/combined: 1 min.</p> <p>If visible time indicators are not used, the event timer shall give a warning by raising, and holding overhead, a yellow flag for the final 15 seconds of the time allowed.</p> <p>Any change in time period shall not be applied until the bar is raised to a new height.</p> <p>Note: A competitor who has won the event gets 5 minutes even in the middle of a height before the bar is raised.</p>		More than 3 athletes	2-3 athletes	1 left	Consecutive attempts	Individual	1 min.	2 minutes	5 minutes same height or not.	3 minutes at same height.	Combined	1 min.	2 minutes	3 minutes same height or not.	3 minutes within <u>any</u> height.	<p>Individual:</p> <p>>3 = 1 min. 2 to 3 = 3 minutes. 1 left = 5 minutes. Consecutive = 3 min.</p> <p>30 second warning flag.</p> <p>Combined:</p> <p>>3 = 1 min. 2-3 = 3 minutes. 1 left = 5 minutes. Consecutive = 3 min.</p>	<p>In the pole vault, the trial and the time allowed for it shall commence when the uprights have been adjusted to previous wishes of the competitor. The official shall so indicate by verbal and visual signal to the competitor.</p> <p>Same as NCAA except:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Consecutive jumps: 3 min. whenever a competitor has 2 or more consecutive trials <u>within or between bar heights.</u> Winner is granted an added minute if attempting a record. <p>In final 15 seconds, official shall raise overhead a yellow flag or another suitable indicator. Keep the flag raised until vaulter starts approach or time expires. Verbal indication is acceptable.</p> <p>Any change in time period shall not be applied until the bar is raised to a new height. If the competitor confirms his or her pass, the official shall not require that the time for the next competitor commence until the time period for the passing competitor(s) has elapsed.</p>
	More than 3 athletes	2-3 athletes	1 left	Consecutive attempts														
Individual	1 min.	2 minutes	5 minutes same height or not.	3 minutes at same height.														
Combined	1 min.	2 minutes	3 minutes same height or not.	3 minutes within <u>any</u> height.														

Rule	NCAA	NFHS	USATF
Uniforms	<p>Must be school issued and unaltered.</p> <p>Must cover full length of torso.</p> <p>Undergarments must be a solid color.</p> <p>Violators shall be warned first.</p> <p>Shoes not required.</p>	<p>Same as NCAA except, no jewelry. Warn during check in. Refer to referee.</p> <p>Hats OK unless disallowed by meet management. Shoes required.</p>	<p>Nothing objectionable or transparent.</p> <p>Same color front and rear.</p> <p>Shoes not required.</p> <p>Bib may be worn on the back or front only.</p>
Video/ electronic devices	<p>It is permissible for coaches to take and to use video to coach as long as the video is taken from outside the competition area and the athlete does not view the video during the competition.</p> <p>Rule 4-3 6a (1) forbids the viewing of video by a competitor during competition.</p> <p>Rule 4-312 disallows the use of video including drones in the competition area.</p> <p>Rule 4-3.11 defines an infield coaches box as part of the competition area.</p> <p>Coaches, athletes, competitors and officials shall not use video or audio devices radio transmitter or receivers, mobile phones or computers, unmanned aerial systems or any similar devices in the competition area, except as authorized by the games committee.</p>	<p>The use of electronic communication devices is permitted in unrestricted areas and coaches boxes; however, they may not be used for any review of a referee's decision or to communicate with an athlete during a race or trial.</p> <p>There shall not be communication during a trial but a video may be viewed between changes in height or between trials only if there is no delay of the competition</p>	<p>It is permissible for coaches to take and to use video to coach as long as the video is taken from outside the competition area.</p> <p>The athlete may view the video during the competition, but not in the competition area.</p> <p>Athletes competing in an event on the infield may not, during the competition cross to the outside of the track.</p>
Warm up foul	<p>Once competition begins the runway shall not be used for practice purposes.</p> <p>Warn 1st, then Referee may DQ.</p>	<p>No rule.</p>	<p>Same as NCAA.</p>

Rule	NCAA	NFHS	USATF
<p>Warm up rule for those competitors who have not entered the competition.</p>	<p>A competitor who has not taken an initial trial in at least one hour from the first attempt of the competition shall, under the direction of the event official, use the runway and landing areas without the crossbar at the change of the bar to the height they enter the competition.</p> <p>Two minutes per vaulter. This time is <u>not aggregated</u> for the group.</p>	<p>A competitor who has passed 3 consecutive heights and has not entered the competition should be permitted 2 min. of warm up jumps per # of competitors entering at that height.</p> <p>Warm-ups w/o the crossbar in place.</p> <p>The competitor shall enter the competition at that height.</p> <p>Such warm-up must be taken at height change.</p>	<p>Only warm-up is prior to competition.</p> <p>For Masters and youth the warm up rule is that a competitor who has passed 3 consecutive heights may have one warm up jump without the crossbar at change of height. A competitor may take a run through at the height they enter the competition after three or more passes instead of taking a run through every three passed heights.</p> <p>No cross bar will be allowed during the warm up period.</p>
<p>Wind sock</p>			<p>Should place a wind sock near the take-off area.</p>