

TECHNIQUES FOR OFFICIATING THE HIGH JUMP

The high jump is one of the most graceful field events in track and field but it presents several unique problems when it comes to the mechanics of officiating the event. For a championship event, there should be from 6 to 8 officials for this event. One of the first things that must be done is to prepare the venue for competition. The preparation should be done 1 ½ to 2 hours before the scheduled time for the competition to begin and will take 30 to 45 minutes to perform. The following things should be done to prepare the venue:

- ✓ The pit needs to be checked to be checked to make sure it is safe for competition and meets the size requirements as specified in the rule books
- ✓ The pit needs to be properly located in the jumping area to give all competitors a chance for fair competition.
- ✓ The pits needs to be square to the take off area to give all competitors the same distance to the pit
- ✓ The standards need to be checked to see that they will allow fair competition
- ✓ The standards need to be set in place. The standards must be parallel to each other and square with the pit. They must also be far enough apart to allow the crossbar to properly set as required by the rules. Once set, the surface around the standards should be marked with tape or thumbtacks to designate the location of the standards in case the standards are dislodged during competition.
- ✓ The crossbar must be checked to see that it conforms to the specifications in the rulebook. It should be checked for excessive bend or sag. This can be checked by placing the crossbar on the standards and setting the standards at a specific height. Measure the height of the bar next to the standard at each end. Then measure the bar in the middle. The difference in those measurements should be 2 cm or less. If greater than 2 cm, the bar should not be used. Once a side has been designated as the surface everyone will jump at, the bar should be marked to properly indicate this. This can be done by using a whiteout pen. There should be R & L placed on the grips to indicate the right and left end of the bar. There should be an up arrow to indicate the proper way should be placed on the platforms. Finally there should be lines made on the grip and the bar to indicate proper alignment of the bar. The midpoint of the bar should be marked as well for measuring purposes.
- ✓ Once the crossbar has been determined to be legal and properly marked, the platforms on the standards can be adjusted to calibrate the measurement of the bar. How these adjustments will be carried out will depend on the brand and model of standards being used at the site. These adjustments allow the measurement of the bar at each new height to progress quickly with very little fine tuning. The purpose of the adjustments is to make the center of the bar to read at the height that the standards are set at. For example, if you want to be jumping at 1.6 meters, you can adjust the platforms so that at the measuring point in the center of the bar reads 1.6 meters. After adjusting the platforms, measurements should be taken of the bar next to the standards to insure that each end of the bar

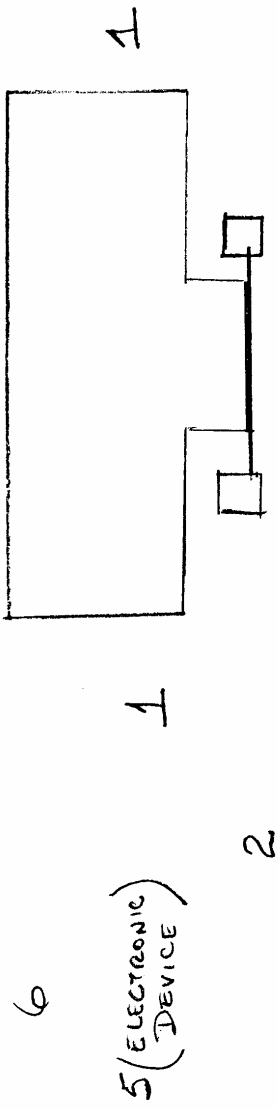
- is at the same height. A carpenter's level can be placed on the bar in the middle to also check to see that the crossbar is level.
- ✓ A point midway between the two standards should be marked with either tape or a thumbtack to serve as a reference point when measuring the bar.
 - ✓ USATF rules require that a 2" line be placed on the jumping surface that is parallel to the crossbar and extends 3 meters beyond each standard. This is to help determine if the jumper broke the plane of the crossbar when making their approach.

Once the venue is ready for competition, officials should then prepare for checking in athletes for competition. The responsibilities for the various officials are describe below:

- 1) There should be two officials who are responsible for setting the bar when it is dislodged. They should check to make sure the bar is squarely on the platform and the prescribe 5 centimeters of spacing from the standard is there. They should also check to see that the correct surface of the bar is facing the competitor. They can steady and reposition the bar once the official flagging the bar has determined a legal jump. They will also assist in adjusting the standards when moving to a new height. They will also assist with the measuring of new heights. Finally, they should check to see if the pit or the landing pad need to be adjusted to insure safe competition and to make sure the padding is not on or up against the standards.
- 2) The bar official is in charge of the landing pit and declaring legal jumps. Their job is to make sure the pit is totally ready for competition. This means the pit is safe, the standards are at the proper height, the crossbar has been measured at the beginning of each new height, and the bar is in the proper position. They should be positioned themselves slightly in front of a parallel line with the crossbar so that they can judge if an athlete broke the plane on their approach but far enough away from the standard as to not hinder an athlete's line of sight for their approach. They need to have both a white and red flag to indicate a legal or foul jump. It is their judgment to determine if the crossbar was dislodged by the impetus of the jumper or not. This official needs to be one with both experience and good judgment.
- 3) The flight coordinator (FC) is the most important official in a high jump competition as they control the tempo of the competition. The FC is responsible for calling the names of the competitors in the proper order. They must also keep a proper record of attempts. The FC should check with the bar official to make the pit is ready for competition at each new height. The FC should also check to make the bar and pit are properly set before calling the name of the next competitor. The FC should check with the primary recorder to make sure that the records are identical before moving to a new height. This official needs to have a good, loud speaking voice and be able to move around in order to be heard. They must all be able to utilize the procedures for "Five Alive" when handling large fields of competitors. The FC should also check to make sure the timekeeper is ready and the proper time limit is set for the competitor.

- 4) The primary recorder is responsible for keeping an accurate and neat accounting of all misses and successful attempts for each competitor. They must also know how to administer "Five Alive" so as to assist the flight coordinator if needed.
- 5) The duties of the timekeeper will depend on the type of timing device available at the competition venue. If an electronic device is used their duties are made easier but they must have good knowledge of the various time limits a jumper has depending on the number of jumpers left in the competition or if successive attempts are being made. If an electronic device is not used, the timekeeper needs a stopwatch and a yellow flag to indicate remaining time as required by the rules. They should be positioned so that every competitor and flight coordinator can easily see the timing device or the timekeeper and flag.
- 6) Performance board operator (Optional) will depend upon the venue and the equipment being used. If performance boards that work in conjunction with a palm pilot are used, this position is not required. If only a standard performance board is available, this person will change the board at each height change. This duty can also be performed by one of the bar officials if necessary.
- 7) Palm Pilot Operator will depend again on the venue and the equipment available. However, officials should be versed in the Palm Pilot so that they can perform these duties. No matter who is keeping the Palm Pilot, that person should be situated next to the primary recorder, if at all possible, so that two records are identical.
- 8) At large competitions, one official is designated Crew Chief. They are responsible for the overall competition. They are to oversee every official in the crew and insure that they are properly carrying out their responsibilities.

Finally, warm-up for the high jump presents unique challenges. There needs to be officials assigned to adjust the standards and replace the bar to expedite the warm-up process. I like to use officials who are not responsible for the bar during competition so that they do not get fatigued. Also one official needs to serve as a traffic cop since you have competitors approaching the bar from two different directions. This official is there to insure both safe and equitable warm-up for all competitors. Since there are usually more jumpers who approached the bar from the right than the left, this officials needs to make sure that the left jumpers have equal opportunity to warm-up as the right jumper. The official performing this duty should not be the flight coordinator or primary recorder, as they will be preparing their sheets for competition.



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5 (STOP WATCH)

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SAMPLE LOCATION OF OFFICIALS
FOR HIGH JUMP COMPETITION