

Officiating the Throws

Training Clinic – Arlington Oakridge

January 25, 2014

George Adams
Southwestern Association

1. Today's clinic will reflect some of my pearls of wisdom. These are definitely not the be all and end all of setting up the throws. I would like to get through the talk and if any of you have any questions or comments please feel free to interrupt.

Overview

- I. Internet Resources
- II. Safety Considerations
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 - A. Prior to Meet
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- IV. Positions
- V. Throws in Detail
 - A. Hammer
 - B. Discus
 - C. Javelin
 - D. Shot Put
- VII. Numbers of Officials
- VIII. Keep in mind....
- IX. Selected Equipment List
- X. Acknowledgements

Many of the things that we will cover today will be from the approach that you are the head official. Some of the things I will talk about are my personal approach, **but the number one rule to keep in mind is to always defer to the head official especially when it comes to stylistic differences.**

Now if the head official is wrong about a rule, that is another story.

Internet Resources

- **Today's Topics:** <http://www.usatf.org/groups/officials/>
<http://www.usatf.org/groups/officials/resources/field-events/> OR
<http://www.usatf.org/groups/officials/resources/best-practices/>
- **Rulebooks for download:**
<http://www.usatf.org/groups/officials/resources/rules/>
- **Rulebooks for purchase:**
 - NCAA – www.ncaapublications.com
 - NFHS - <http://www.nfhs.com/c-235-track-field.aspx>
 - Case Book also very useful
 - USATF -
<http://www.usatf.org/store/showProducts.asp?category=Publications> Available 3/14
- **NCAA Case Book/Rules Interpretations -**
<http://www.ncaa.org/championships/playing-rules/cross-country/track-and-field-rules-game>
- **Equipment and Facilities Newsletters – contact Bob Springer**
bobspringer2@comcast.net to subscribe

Some universities are requiring officials to sign liability documents before working meets. Officials section on USATF web site now has writing samples of how these documents should be worded in order for you to sign courtesy of Shelby Sharpe. Link is available through the most current USATF officials newsletter.

Alternate Source

- Track & Field Rules Comparison & Officials Duties
by Bill Boyd – USATF Virginia Association

Cost: \$24.00 Now Available as of this month (1/14)

Mail check to Bill Boyd
2529 Burrows Court
Williamsburg, VA 23185

- Virginia Track Notes (e-mail notices)

Discussion of various T&F scenarios – opinions
by Boyd

To subscribe free of charge, e-mail Bill Boyd at
hoppyboyd@widomaker.com

Rules comparison is a good source when you're trying to keep all three rulebooks straight; case book scenarios covers all three rulebooks (USATF; NCAA and NFHS); Info on safety and liability issues

Safety Considerations

- Eyes on the circle or arc at all times
- Supervise warm-ups at all times
- Athletes ≠ Retrievers
- Retrievers s p r e a d o u t !
- Side impact - not head on; Discus / Javelin can skip!
- Stop event w/ compromised safety

DEFINE THE THROWS

1. Number 1 rule is to keep your eyes on the circle or arc at all times especially during warm-ups because the time interval between throws is shorter. Critical to focus if the event (i.e., weight throw and shot) is indoors and confined to the infield.
2. As officials, we should supervise the warm up at all times. At the very least there should be a coach monitoring what is going on.
3. Don't let athletes retrieve; keep them out of sector and adjacent areas cordon off a minimum of 10 feet off sector line and throwing cage; Safety-conscious athletes should look twice at impact area – once as entering the circle/runway and once before initiating throw
4. Your retrievers need to spread out; avoid small groups and make sure to have their cell phones turn off! No texting especially!!
5. Better to stand to the side of impact rather than head-on; 10 feet cushion

from point of impact is suggested.

Guidelines Prior to Meet

- Conducting rules?
- Officials crew numbers? Volunteers?
- How many to the final?
- Minimum mark?
- Discuss competition scenarios

1. Which rules – most of the time this is obvious but there are some governing bodies which may have their own manual; these bodies may have their own particulars. It is your job to find out their web-sites **or ask meet management** and get their manuals or find out someone who can get those manuals or provide you with the web site. **Go over NCAA Rules Interpretations Read the rule book the night before (MENTION LAST WEEKEND in A&M)**
2. Will there be volunteers? **Talk to meet management early (ideally a week before) especially if you head of an event and make sure the volunteers are there 45 minutes to an hour prior to an event. Find out how long they will be at the event so you won't be short-changed later on.** Instruct the volunteers. Always keep your eye on the ring. Turn your cell phone off. If you want to take a break, take it during **the competition**, not during **warm-up**. The throws come more often during warm-up, not the competition. If the event is in the infield, you need to really focus when the running events start, don't be distracted.
3. Some invitational meets will have non-collegians and collegians; make sure you and everyone else who's recording knows exactly how many will go to the final (i.e. is it the top nine collegians and non-collegians? What if

two non-collegians in the top 9? Do you now take 11?)

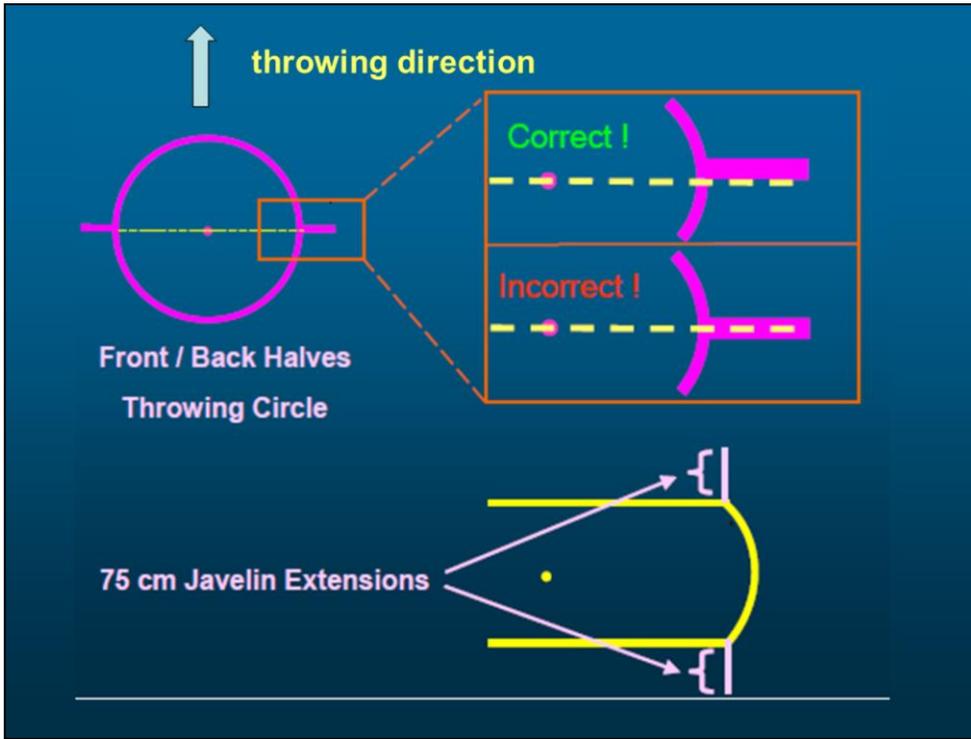
4. Some selected meets you may have a qualifying mark. Anything that falls below this minimum, there is no measurement.
5. Hopefully, you will have volunteers who are not directly involved in the competition (i.e., coaches or parents involved directly with competition)
6. Are there qualifying marks? Any attempt short of qualifying mark will not be measured
6. For major competitions, if you are the head official, meet with the other officials; is there assignment that he or she is uncomfortable with? Make sure you are in agreement on certain rules, interpretations (i.e. when does the attempt begin!!)

Guidelines - Day of Competition

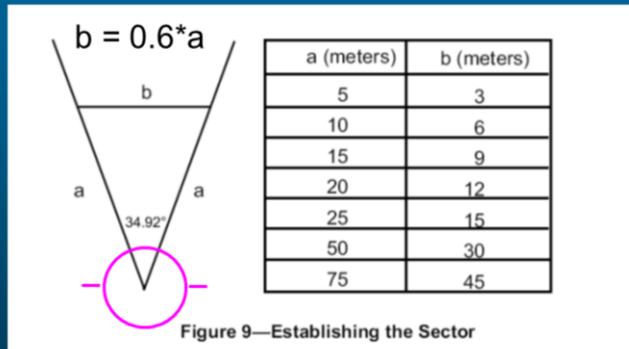
- Arrive early!
- Center and front / back halves / Javelin Extensions
NEXT SLIDE
- Inspect the cage
- Check the sector
- Distance to the first mark?
- "Zeroed" measuring tapes?

1. Get to the venue early; a minimum of one hour prior to competition; check with the Field Event Referee for any special rules or points of emphasis; Example: tree in hammer sector for NACAC U-25 meet at Trinity University in San Antonio; distance was approximated if hammer hit tree.
2. Center of ring has to be defined for the tape puller. If no lines are in place for defining front and back halves, put one in making sure back edge of mark is even with the center of the ring. Touch the mark and it's a foul.
Next slide in detail!
3. Check for any holes or loosely-anchored netting. Make sure that any gaps between the cage and gates are covered with netting. If there are no holes or loose netting, grab the netting with your hand and extend it towards you. Pull on the netting (with a good amount of force) to see how far it is displaced toward the outside of the cage. Add an additional 3 feet to that point and mark the ground with a red line or stripe. This is the buffer zone; place chairs or stand a minimum of three feet beyond this distance.
Plastic ties very useful in mending holes in netting.
4. If you're maintaining the buffer zone, then athletes are **keeping their hands off the netting. Big problem for high school and junior high athletes. Also, want to make sure there is enough slack (2-3 ft.?) so that the netting won't cause the implement to bounce back toward the athlete**
5. 34.92 degrees sounds complicated but is not. Measure the distance from the center of the ring. The distance across the sector should be 60% of the distance from the center of the ring
6. Just a good idea to know; invariably, athletes will ask you what is the distance of the first mark.
7. "Zeroed" means that the tape end is measuring zero. The last thing you want is to get midway through the competition and then find out your tape

is not zeroed!



Establishing Sector for Hammer, Weight, Shot and Discus



Amended from the NCAA
2013/2014 Men's & Women's Cross Country & Track & Field Rules, p.21

Guidelines Day of Competition Continued

- Mark of the day?
- Pooled implements
- Warm up
 - Heavy and light
 - Number of attempts
- Athletes in another events?
- Records?
- Rules

1. Just use the implements that have passed inspection (marked as legal). **Can athletes take implements back immediately after the competition or do the implements need to be checked back in? If implements are pooled during competition, then the athletes who do not make the finals cannot take their implements back until the finals are over! Both shot and discus are pooled for both district and region meets. DEFINE POOLED – ANYBODY CAN USE ANYBODY’S implements**
2. No warm-up with implements heavier or lighter than those approved. Common problem in HS district meets. As a variation on the second bullet, in high school districts meets sometimes the schedule can have the varsity girls shot or discus preceding the boys and if you don't have all the girls implements put away or picked up invariably some boy will pick up a girl's shot or discus.
3. Maximum of two warm-ups in the discus. Javelin close arc to retrieve after X number of attempts. Use a cone to designate ring or runway closed or use "bouncer" or "traffic cop" at ring or runway to watch warm-ups
4. Early in the outdoor season, with meets outside of championships, with a large number of competitors and with 15 or 20 minute warm-up time, consider going to one warm up per entry into ring with five to six minutes left prior to competition, so that the remaining athletes toward the end of the line will get an opportunity. Ideally, you want each competitor to have 3 to 4 warm-ups and a minimum of two. Assume 20 to 30 seconds per throw. Announced the time remaining in warm-up, at least give a five minute warning.
5. During competition, know the time it takes to complete a given flight. What is the average time per attempt? This is important when you're instructing an athlete who is going to be excused. You want to give them an idea of when the flight will be completed. This area is complicated also by the rules. Different rulebooks. Different rules. You need to have some idea about how long each athlete takes on average per attempt so that you can estimate how long a flight will take. This estimated total time for the flight is important when you need to inform the athlete when he or she needs to be back. **Always write down the time the athlete leaves and have them check in and out with either the flight coordinator or head field judge. Explain the rules and how you will enforce them**
6. Are the records listed on the sheet? Is there anyone close to throwing a record. Talk to the athlete who is close to the record. Inform him or her, if he or she breaks the record are they comfortable without their implement for the next round if they don't have a back up implement Remember, implement should be taken for inspection immediately. What if the implement is not back in time for the next round? Do they have a backup? Let them know ahead of time. **Mention West Preliminary Round Last Year.**
7. Go over rules for all ages at the beginning of the season; inform athletes of any major changes in the rules. Always go over rules for youth and high school competition; major championships may want to keep it to a minimum noting only points of emphasis

Guidelines During Competition

- Call athletes by groups of three – Visual Indication
- Measure impact from side
- Speed = marker, tape puller and flight coordinator
- “Turnabout is fair play”
- Flag coordination
- “Silence is golden”

1. “Up, On Deck, On Hold” Up again and clock starts; Use either last name or first; doesn’t matter unless you have two with same first name.
2. Marking the implement from the side along the sector line as opposed to within the sector is critical for both the javelin and discus not as important for hammer and shot put.
3. The speed of the event is predominately determined by three persons in the long throws: marker, tape puller and flight coordinator! Younger, presumably more agile officials in these first two positions. This point is critical. There should be a rhythm to the throws. The throws in and of themselves are deliberate in nature (can be slow-paced) and maybe more deliberate for male athletes rather than females. The last thing you want is to slow down the event even more because the tape puller is moving slow to the circle and the marker in the field is dragging.
4. Officials in and around the cage during competition should work in the field as retrievers during between flight warm up. Retrievers during competition should take a break. Experienced officials should know this. This unspoken rule is especially important on hot humid days.
5. One set of flags at circle or arc. Thumbs up or thumbs down for other circle judges. Always one set of flags in the circle not two – this avoids confusing situations. Flag man for the circle is usually assigned to judge the back of the ring. Sector foul means white flag initially at circle then red. Foul in circle means red; no need for red in sector. **Keep the flags up – fair or foul – until sector workers acknowledge it**
6. For large meets (collegiate, USATF Championships) you want to avoid as much verbal communication. Officials should be constantly watching letting the flags do the talking. Calling the ring out loud probably should be reserved for youth meets and high school. Keeping distractions to a minimum for

athlete is really important.



1. Head Event Judge – 3rd circle judge; 2nd reader and/or recorder
2. Tape Reader announces measurement – left circle so that numbers on tape are facing him or her
3. Recorder – on right of impact area; repeats announced measurement
4. Tape puller – positioned to the right of sector – moves quickly as exits circle; avoids standing in the ring under any weather condition – wet / muddy / dry. Sweeps ring occasionally. Pulls tape through the center of the circle or runway spot in the javelin. Tape puller does not pull tape tight until marker has mark.
5. Circle judges – one on right, left and back of circle; one judge to check foot faults; one judge to check form (shot put); one judge observing if athlete has left circle / runway before implement makes contact; **Back circle judge (also may be 2nd recorder/timer) makes sure athlete does not leave the circle or runway before implement hits the ground.**
6. Sector judges – stand to the side of sector line to call fouls
7. Flight coordinator - informs athlete of throwing order; calls athletes up; announces “Pass” ; signals time remaining for warm-up. Flight coordinator is also the traffic cop (especially with no marshalls!). He or she controls the rhythm of the event. It’s important that he or she makes sure for each attempt that the sector people are ready and that there’s no one running across the sector. To keep the event going, FC needs to inform the athletes to let him or her know that they will be passing before they are called up! Sometimes athletes are waiting on an implement to be retrieved. Don’t call him or her up right away.
8. Marker / Stabber - marks implement’s 1st point of impact and/or holds tape for initial measurement; important to be to the side of sector for javelin and discus – assumes all attempts are fair until told of foul! **And even if the throw is foul, know where the mark was made. This is important in case there is a protest. You need to measure the throw anyway if the decision to record a foul is overturned (i.e., protest is upheld).**
9. Retriever - carries implements out of impact area.
10. Timer - Positions clock in clear view for athlete; signals to Head Judge if athlete fails to initiate attempt within the allotted time; Instruct the timer not to give a verbal warning if the athlete has started their attempt. Raise the flag, though, no matter what, just in case the athlete aborts. Just because the athlete has started his attempt does not mean you abort your timing. If athlete aborts, then it is a foul on time. Attempt starts with the motion.
11. Landing judge - stands to the side of sector; determines if javelin lands metal head (point) first – does not act as marker!
12. The positions in red are “time-sensitive” positions; these people make the event go at a decent pace or can they can drag the event down
13. **For university conference championships, state high school meets, ideally for district and regional high school meets you want to have at least two readers and three**

recorders, Redundancy!

[Hammer Position.ppt](#)

[Discus Position.ppt](#)

[Javelin Position V3.ppt](#)

[Shot Put Position.ppt](#)

Minimum Number of Officials

Hammer

HAMMER(WEIGHT)	MINIMUM	NORMAL	MAJOR EVENT
HEAD	1/2	1/2	1
DOORS	1/3	1/2	1/2
RECORDER /COORDINATOR	1/3	1/2	1/2
TAPE PULLER	1/2	1/2	1
CIRCLE/TAPE READER	1/3	1/2	1
FIELD TAPE	1/2	1/2	1
MARKER	1	1 1/2	2
RETRIEVER/SECTOR	1/2	1	2
FIELDLYNX	1/2	1/2	2
TOTAL	4	6	11

Javelin

shared duties

JAVELIN	MINIMUM	NORMAL	MAJOR EVENT
HEAD	1/2	1	1
RECORDER /COORDINATOR	1/2	1/2	1
TAPE PULLER	1/2	1/2	1
ARC/TAPE READER	1/2	1/2	1
FIELD TAPE	1/2	1/2	1
MARKER	1 1/2	1 1/2	2
POINT/FLAT	1/2	1	1
RETRIEVER/SECTOR	1/2	1	2
FIELDLYNX/BOARD	1/2	1/2	2
TOTAL	5	7	12

Discus

DISCUS	MINIMUM	NORMAL	MAJOR EVENT
HEAD	-	1/2	1
RECORDER /COORDINATOR	1/2	1/2	1
TAPE PULLER	1/2	1/2	1
CIRCLE/TAPE READER	1	1	1
FIELD TAPE	1/2	1	1
MARKER	1	1 1/2	2
RETRIEVER/SECTOR	1/2	1/2	2
FIELDLYNX	1/2	1/2	2
TOTAL	4	6	11

Shot Put

SHOT	MINIMUM	NORMAL	MAJOR EVENT
HEAD	1/4	1/2	1
RECORDER /COORDINATOR	1/4	1/2	1/2
TAPE PULLER	1/4	1/2	1
CIRCLE/TAPE READER	1/4	1/2	1/2
FIELD TAPE	1/3	1/2	1
MARKER	1/3	1/2	2
RETRIEVER/SECTOR	1/3	1	2
FIELDLYNX	1/3	-	2
TOTAL	2	4	10

Amended from The Throwing Officials' Manual 2007 Edition by George Kleeman, pp. 13-14

1. I have emphasized the minimum number in each event because more often than not this may be the situation you are faced with as a head official. The fractions indicate shared duties (i.e. in the javelin head event judge may serve as head judge and flight coordinator)

Keep In Mind...

- Eliminate problems before they occur by being practical, hands-on, POSITIVE
By thinking ahead you can anticipate problems
- Approach should be to ensure fair and safe competition not to disqualify athletes
- Make your calls quickly, decisively so there's no confusion.
Don't explain your call unless athlete asks you directly -
keep the event moving
- Know the rules and if you have *any* doubts look it up in the rulebook
- If you're the head official, monitor the help. Often they are young, tend to group together and easily lose their focus
- Officials have never been and will never be the show; the athletes are!
The best crews know that silence is golden and tend to be **invisible**

My Selected Equipment List

Box cutters	Official's Helpers
Broom	Pencils
Clipboard	Rule Books
Cones (pylons)	Record Forms (www.usatf.org)
Freezer Bags	Stopwatch
Garbage Bags	Sunscreen
Gloves (tape puller; retrieving)	Tapes
Highlighters	Adhesive Masking
Hip Numbers	Thumbtacks
Key Rings (to repair measuring tapes)	Towels
Markers	Measuring Tapes
Plastic Ties (Discus/Hammer Cage)	330 ft / 100 m Fiberglass and Steel
	100 ft / 30 m

1. Some of these items should be provided by meet management (and that is really their duty and obligation), but I, personally, don't trust management to always have these items
2. Hip numbers for javelin throwers to use for marking runway in rainy conditions. Hold down hip numbers with thumbtacks
3. Thumbtacks to hold down measuring tape parallel to runway in rainy conditions.

Acknowledgements

Chris Marcellus

David "Doc" Tyson

Chester Bradley

Jim Carlisle

Lou Vicenik

Shirley Crowe

John Murray