

Races to be Recalled in First 50 Meters in High School Track and Field When Contact Occurs Between Competitors

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Effective with the 2025 season, races in high school track and field will be recalled in the first 50 meters when a competitor falls due to contact with another competitor. This change, which was one of eight revisions recommended by the NFHS Track and Field and Cross Country Rules Committee at its June 10-12 meeting in Indianapolis, relates to races not run in lanes, or when two or more competitors are assigned to a single lane.

All the committee's recommended changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

Julie Cochran, NFHS director of sports and editor of the NFHS Track and Field Rules, said the committee determined that 50 meters is sufficient in calling a fair start, which previously was listed at 100 meters.

"Athletes are accelerating and are up to racing speed well before the 100-meter mark," Cochran said. "In addition, the current recall distance is problematic depending on the number of officials on the track and location of field events that may obstruct the view of the 100-meter distance around the entire curve."

In other changes, the committee approved a reorganization of Rules 5-10 and 5-11 regarding relays and relay infractions. All infractions were moved into Rule 5-11, which will be easier for officials to use and enforce. While none of the infractions are new, the revised rule provides a listing of the 14 occurrences when a relay team will be disqualified.

The committee also provided clarification to a change in field events that was implemented last year. Last year, the revision to Rule 6-2-2 permitted one minute for the first trial of a competitor first entering the high jump and pole vault competition. This year, the committee approved the following two notes for additional clarification.

6-2-2 NOTE 1 states that "at any given bar height, the time for all competitors remains the same until the next bar height is established," and 6-2-2 NOTE 2 states that "regardless of the number of competitors remaining, the first attempt of a competitor entering the competition – at any height – is one minute."

The committee approved four other field events revisions. In 6-2-2 regarding general rules for field events, a new sub-article (f) was approved regarding the one-minute time limit to compete. Rule 6-2-2f states that "the competitor shall be warned either verbally or by signal when 15 seconds remain in the

time allowed.”

In 6-3-2 NOTE 1 regarding breaking ties, language was added to provide directions to officials and event judges for the starting height in a jump-off when athletes exit the event at varying heights due to passes. The jump-off will begin at the next height in the progression after the tying height.

In Rule 6-8-2 regarding vertical jumps, the committee provided clarification in definitions for an active flight (five-alive) and a continuing flight (straight-through). The revised rule is as follows:

“When the number of entries dictates, the games committee may assign competitors to active flights (five alive) of no less than five competitors or may conduct the event in continuing flights (straight-through). In active flights, the five competitors, as determined by the games committee, constitute a flight.”

In Rule 6-9-22 regarding venue specifications, an additional sentence states that “the plane of the crossbar shall not be less than 4 inches from the landing pad.”

A final change included clarification provided for Rule 5-13-3 regarding infractions for races not run in lanes.

A complete listing of the track and field rules changes will be available on the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org. Click on “Activities & Sports” at the top of the home page and select “Track and Field.”

According to the 2022-23 NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey, track and field is the second-most popular sport for boys with 604,983 participants in 17,038 schools, and the No. 1 sport for girls with 486,355 participants in 16,997 schools.