

2015 NFHS Track & Field Rules Examination

Comments and Explanations from Bill Quinlisk, GRTFOA Rules Interpreter

For the most part, the 2015 Rules Exam was direct and fair and covered most of the new rules. Unlike past years, the NFHS has eliminated the double negative and the poorly worded questions. Below are my personal comments regarding several of the trickier questions.

#11 – The at least one meter obstacle-free zone on the inside and outside of the track is recommended not required – yet. It is a good idea to move hurdles, steeplechase barriers, blocks, etc. at least one meter away from the track anyway.

#25 - Does anyone really believe that “Hunger” could be a symptom of a concussion? Really?

#38 - While Rule 3-2-4-f gives the Games Committee authority to “Specify the number of jumps and distances to be measured in the horizontal events”; Rule 7-2-1 makes it clear that the options are limited. Option one allows 3 preliminary and 3 final jumps. Option 2 allows all competitors 4 attempts.

#49 – Competitors shall be credited with their best performance if it occurs in a jump-off. However, there are no jump-offs for 2nd place.

#54 – Rule 5-10-8 indicates that the first options after passing the baton should be to either stand still or jog straight ahead. The relieved competitor should only step off the track to their left when it is clear to do so.

#59 – IMO – It is difficult to find a rule citation that covers the Cross Country portion of the answer. Rule 4-3-1-c-7 certainly covers cross country runners as far as the rule book covers both Track & Field and Cross Country. But, Rules 9-6-1-b-7 and Notes and Rule 9-6-1-c-7 and Notes are clearly written for two or more runners on the same cross country team. These two rules in the Cross Country section are not specific for only one runner. It would be easy to add wording in 9-6-1 that would indicate that these requirements are applicable for any cross country runner.

#65 – Rules 6-3 and 7-3 indicate that “When there is a tie at any distance...places and points scored shall be awarded as follows”. Does this really imply that ties shall be broken only for scoring places? I put “true” on my answer sheet. But, shouldn’t a tie for 7th place (where only 6 places score) be broken also since it involves “any distance” and a “place” – 7th and “points scored” – zero. I admit that the “points scored” is a stretch but what is so difficult about breaking ties for all places?

#86 – This question should be answered using the NFHS Rule Book but we must understand that NY State has banned jewelry. There is a document at: <http://gvtrack.com/NYSTrackJewelryPolicy.pdf> that explains the jewelry ban.

#96 – “B” is the best answer but requires clarification. The acceleration zone may be used if the incoming runner is running 200m or less “in the assigned lane”. If a 4 x 200m relay runs from a waterfall start (don’t laugh, I’ve seen it done) then the acceleration zone should not be allowed for any of the exchanges.

Personal comment:

Rule 9-3-3 is a bad rule. It allows chip transponder times to be used for the official order of finish in cross country. No one else (IAAF, USATF, NCAA) believes that transponders are accurate enough to allow their use to place runners at the finish. Transponder accuracy is at best within 1-2 seconds of the actual finish. Some transponders read before the line, some read after the line, some don’t read at all. Cross Country is all about place and not time. When transponders are used to place runners, then mistakes will be made. A back-up system should be used to call close finishes (within 1-2 seconds). I suggest either a finish line judge or optimally a Lynx camera be used.