

## Start of the Race

Two changes were adopted in the rules which impact the starting of the race. Rule 3-9-2 specifies that for gun starts only a closed-barrel starter's pistol shall be used. In some states, by state law, and for all practical purposes, on any school property, pistols used for starting purposes should be disabled from being able to discharge live rounds of ammunition. When using a

gun for the starting device, starting pistols are now, required by rule, to be a closed-barrel starting pistol, incapable of discharging a live round. Track and field and cross country starters should cease using any caliber pistol that is capable of firing live ammunition.

The other change allows the option for the use of a .32 or .22 caliber starter's pistol for any indoor or outdoor

meet where a FAT system is being used. The FAT systems do not require the noise of a .32 caliber, and a .22 caliber is clearly heard by competitors and provides adequate smoke for manual timing. Either caliber is acceptable for NFHS record purposes.



## What is Excused Time and How Does it Work?

The games committee is allowed to set the time limit and procedure to follow when athletes need to be excused from one field event to compete elsewhere during the meet. (Rule 3-2-3o) There is no set procedure or time limit since the site may dictate a longer time is necessary if some distance might be involved from one event venue to another. For purposes of this discussion, we will use 10 minutes as the time allowed.

A typical procedure that does not disadvantage the majority of the competitors in an event has the competitor check out with the head judge for that field event. The head judge shall record

the time the competitor(s) checks out on the flight sheet or separate page. That competitor would have 10 minutes FROM THAT TIME, to return to the event without penalty. If he/she takes longer, the competitor runs the risk of having the bar raised or a jump or throw not being allowed. If the athlete is given a time limit from the time a running event ends, then the rest of the field may have to sit around with nothing to do but cool down.

For competitors excused for running events, it is advisable to check out, go to the clerk and return. They can then go directly to the starting line for their race

without having to leave the field event for an extended time. In the case of other field events being involved, this may require multiple absences from each of the events. The judges need to know this so that jumps or throws may be taken out of order in accordance with Rules 6-2-6 and 7-2-6. Preventive officiating by the event judge may include asking the competitor prior to the competition in which other events they are competing.

If a contestant is entered in two events being held at the same time, the other competitors in those events should not be the ones to pay the price for that



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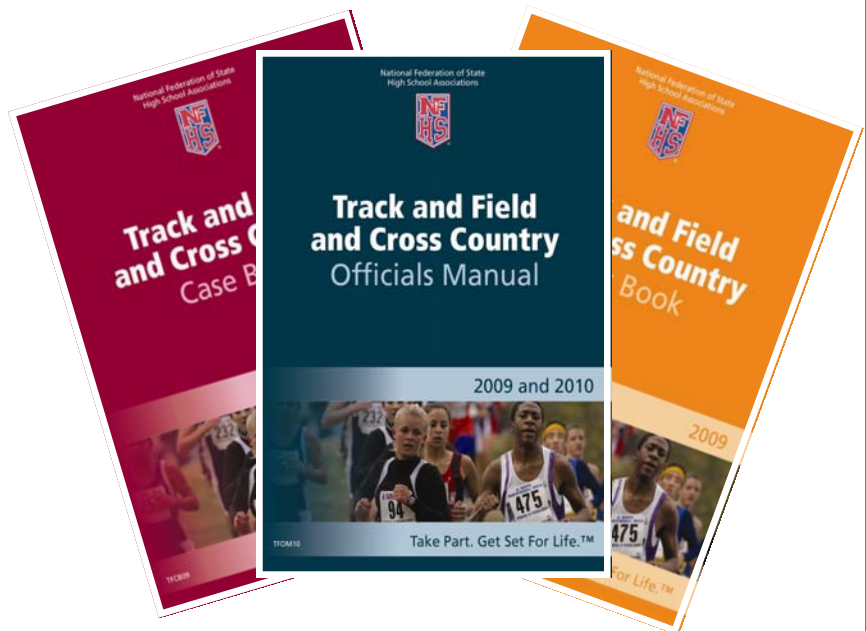
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competitor's decision to compete in simultaneous events. The meet officials can increase efficiency of the meet for all competitors through an organized procedure of excusing competitors.

**Breaking Ties in Running Events**

Fully automated timing is considered accurate and reliable to use 1/1000th to break ties and advance competitors to a subsequent round of competition. Therefore, it is reliable and accurate enough to break ties to determine final places of lane assignments. Using the timing system to its fullest capability allows for greater fairness in the competition.



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