

2014 Sacramento Super Clinic

Teaching the High School Pole Vaulter from Freshman to Senior Year

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Safety for All the Jumps

- Landing areas should be free of debris and obstructions
- The takeoff area should be visible, stable, in good condition
- Athletes should be properly instructed and supervised
- Athletes should wear proper footwear

Safety in the Jumps: Pole Vault

- The back of the plant box should be slanted backwards
- Poles should be stored in a protective case
- Attempting to loosen poles by bending them should be avoided
- Pole plugs should be correctly sized and kept in good condition and changed periodically

Safety in the Jumps: Pole Vault

- The landing pit and the front extensions that surround the box should be large enough, and larger is always better
- The landing area should be in close proximity to the box
- The pit should be kept in the proper position, and should be adjusted when it moves
- Padding should envelop the base of the standards and any projections on the standards
- The bases of the standards should be adequately weighted to prevent toppling

Talent Demands for the Jumps

- The primary characteristics required for success in the jumping events are:
 - Speed
 - Power
 - Ability to come off the ground in extension
- Taller athletes may have an advantage, but do not neglect the smaller athlete who is strong in these areas

General Concepts

- Horizontal and vertical velocities of body are the two components that combine to form takeoff angles in the jumps
 - Horizontal velocity is developed in the approach
 - The takeoff should produce vertical velocity, enabling greater projection in flight
- Increases in vertical velocities normally result in decreases in horizontal velocity

Pole Classification

- **Poles are classified in two ways:**
 1. Pole Length
 - Shorter poles enable developing vaulters to grip lower, while longer poles enable better vaulters to grip higher
 - Should be gripped in an area 6-18 inches from the end of the pole

Pole Classification

- **2. Bodyweight Rating**
 - Weight rating represents the maximum body weight limit of a vaulter using that pole
 - Athlete in competition should use the stiffest pole possible, but not so stiff that penetration is sacrificed

Teaching Guidelines

- Make vaulter understand that sufficient pole speed guarantees both success and safety
- Emphasize horizontal movements of the vaulter and pole movement
- Emphasize landing in the center of the pit
- De-emphasize bending the pole
- Emphasize vault efficiency over excessively high handgrips
- Emphasize taking off in a balanced position over the take-off foot.

Video – Pole Vault

- Big Time - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&feature=endscreen&v=CkgYXk47Jpl>
- What your kids will look like
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GXomVyCTuFQ&feature=related>



Pole Grip

- Slightly wider than shoulder width
- Top hand should be positioned within the assigned grip range of the pole
- Hands should be positioned so that when pole is held overhead, both palms face inward

The Pole Carry

- Top hand: slightly behind the left hip
- Bottom hand: near the center of the chest, with wrist flexed so pole rests on between thumb and first finger
- Both hands should be closed loosely
- Shoulders square to the box



The Approach

- Goals of the Approach:
 - To achieve desired velocity.
 - To achieve accuracy in the takeoff location
 - To achieve good body positions for takeoff
- The jumper must be proficient in the skills of sprinting, as the approach resembles a sprint race in its simplest form
- It is a progression from acceleration mechanics to maximal velocity mechanics

Pole Alignment and Drop in the Approach

- Initial Position
- Drive Phase Mechanics
 - Pole Alignment
 - Direction of Force Application



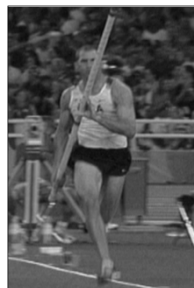
The Approach

- Frequency and stride length are inversely proportional
- Do not move the athlete's starting checkmark indiscriminately
- Speed should not be developed at the expense of faulty mechanics, nor should it be so excessive that the jumper is out of control and the effectiveness of takeoff is diminished

Phases of the Approach

- The approach may be divided into 4 phases
- Each should blend seamlessly into the next
 1. Start: simpler starts are more consistent so crouch and rollover starts are the best choices
 2. Drive Phase: characterized by low frequency and high displacement
 3. Continuation Phase: characterized by continued progression to maximal velocity mechanics
 4. Transition Phase: characteristics should be similar to those of a good continuation phase

Pole Alignment and Drop in the Approach



- The Pole Drop
 - Timing the Pole Drop
 - Bottom Hand/Arm Action
 - Top Hand/Arm Action
 - Lateral Pole Movements

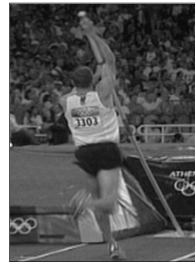
Creating a High Pole Angle

- Goal: move the pole to vertical
- It is obvious then that the pole must be as high as possible at box impact
 - Vaulter should be in a tall/extended position
 - Arms extended
 - Takeoff foot directly under top hand at takeoff



Lateral Alignment

- At takeoff:
 - Shoulders should be parallel to crossbar
 - Top arm extended completely upward
 - Bottom hand positioned in front of the opposite shoulder



Takeoff Angle

- Takeoff angle in pole vault should resemble that of long jump
- Vaulter should:
 - Use slight preparation on the penultimate step
 - Aggressively extend off the ground in a forward and upward direction
 - The pole will pick up the vaulter!

Pole Vault Sand Drills

- Drill # 1 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=32YkDAa2h7Y>
- Drill # 2 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=teN8J8uGOs8>
- Drill # 3 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vW2QwFT4iSM>

Standard Placement

- Rules allow for the standards to be moved in a direction parallel to the runway
- Adjustment is often needed as a result of environmental factors and pole characteristics
- It is better to keep the standards back
 - Improves safety and emphasizes horizontal components of takeoff
- Standards should not be moved haphazardly

Pole Selection Guidelines

- Five basic guidelines that govern decisions about grip height/pole length and pole stiffness:
 1. Poor penetration + large pole bend = lower grip
 2. Poor penetration + small pole bend = choose a softer pole that is still rated at or above vaulter's weight
 3. Excessive penetration + large pole bend = stiffer pole
 4. Excessive penetration + small pole bend = raise grip
 5. Landing left or right of center regardless of pole bend = lower the grip

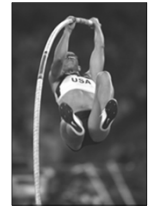
2014 West Coast SuperClinic – Ken Grace & Bob Olsen
The Pole Vault: From teaching the Beginner to Advanced Vaulter

Teaching / Training Guidelines for the Jumps

- Runway and approach work can be done without takeoffs or with modified takeoffs in all events
- 95% of all your jump work is running and establishing a consistent approach
- The majority of technique work, especially in the horizontal jumps, should be done from runs shorter than those used in a meet
- Stop workouts when fatigue creates technique problems
- Break movements down into easily practiced and mastered parts in early stages of learning

Teaching Progressions for the Pole Vault Approach

- Pole Accelerations
- Standing Pole Drops
- Boxless Approaches
- Runway Rehearsal with/without Takeoff



Bubka's first 6 M Vault

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhqEdocpcfCM>