



2025 and 2026 NCAA Men’s and Women’s Track and Field/Cross Country Major Rules Changes

The following rules changes were approved by the NCAA Men’s and Women’s Track and Field Rules Committee, and the Playing Rules Oversight Panel. These eleven of these rules changes are effective December 1, 2024 for the 2025 and 2026 seasons. One will be effective December 1, 2026 and another will be effective August 1, 2027 for the 2027 and 2028 seasons.

Rule	Recommendation and Rationale
Weight Harness 3-8	To require that harness straps are sewn underneath the head of the implement. Rationale: To increase consistency of the length of the implements being thrown.
Roles of Meet Management, Meet Director and Referee 4.2-4 12.2-4 20.2-4	To redefine the roles of Meet Management (formerly Games Committee), Meet Director and Referee. Rationale: Meet Management describes the entity responsible for making decisions regarding tasks for the meet personnel. All competitions have some form of Meet Management in place, either an individual or a group.
Competition Manager 4-6 12-6	To add language to include the Competition Manager as meet management. Rationale: This position is known as the Technical Manager in World Athletics and has been utilized at the Division I National Championship. These individuals are not officials, and their function is to assist with competition management during the meet.
Challenge 5-7 13-7	To change the language from “Immediate Protest” to “Challenge” and define who can submit a challenge and when a challenge is allowed. Rationale: This clarifies the process and procedures for protests, disqualifications and appeals.
Official Video 5-8 13-8	To add language regarding the use of official video prior to the start of the meet and confirmation of its use for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirming or denying a perceived rule violation reported by a competition official. • Addressing a submitted protest or appeal regarding the referee’s decision on a perceived rule violation. • Confirming either a legal or foul attempt by the competitor at a field event. Rationale: To address the advancing video technology as well as how and by whom it can be used.
Failure to Participate –	To modify the Failure to Participate rule to apply to all scored competitions.

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6-2 14-2	Rationale: To keep failure to participate in the rules book and apply it to only scored competitions.
Shoes 6-4.6 14-4.6	To outline stricter specifications on all shoes worn during competition. Rationale: To align with World Athletics, and to increase the likelihood of performance marks being accepted by World Athletics.
Running Violations 7-5.2b 15-5.2b	In races on curves, to categorize steps on or over the curb or line the left with more than one step throughout the entirety of the race is a foul. Rationale: To align with World Athletics to increase the likelihood of performance marks being accepted by World Athletics.
Track Event Procedure and Qualifying- 7-9 7-10 15-9 15-10	To reorganize the formation of heat, sections, qualifying and lane assignments Rationale: To present the current Rule 7-9, 7-10, 15-10, and 15-11 in a more concise and organized manner by separating into four different sections.
High Jump 8-2.2 16.2.2	To require the crossbar to be initially raised in increments of five (5) centimeters. Rationale: To provide more consistency by making this a requirement instead of a recommendation.
Pole Vault 8-3.2 16-3.2	To require the crossbar to be initially raised in increments of fifteen (15) centimeters. Rationale: To provide more consistency by making this a requirement instead of a recommendation.
Calibration of Measuring Devices 3-9 11-12	Effective December 1, 2026: For indoor and outdoor track and field, to require all equipment used for timing, weighing, and measuring implements and performance be certified for accuracy by an appropriate testing agency. Approximate costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Timing camera equipment - \$300/camera. (Every four years) ● Implement weighing scale - \$100-150/scale. (Annually) ● Triangulation distance measuring device recalibration - \$300-400/unit. (Annually) ● Lasers for distance measuring - \$50-150/unit. (Annually)

	<p>Rationale: To improve the accuracy and operations of the measuring equipment utilized in the conducting of a track and field meet.</p>
Calibration of Measuring Devices 19-2	<p>Effective August 1, 2027: For cross country, to require all equipment used for timing be certified for accuracy by an appropriate testing agency and recalibrate for accuracy in accordance with method's specified by the manufacturer.</p> <p>Approximate costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Timing camera equipment - \$300/camera every four years. <p>Rationale: To improve the accuracy and operations of the timing equipment utilized in the conducting of a cross country meet.</p>