



VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

MEMORANDUM

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October 18, 2013

TO: Head Men's and Women's Track and Field Coaches, Directors of Athletics and Conference Commissioners.

FROM: John McNichols, chair  
NCAA Men's and Women's Track and Field/Cross Country Rules Committee

Bob Podkaminer, secretary-rules editor  
NCAA Men's and Women's Track and Field/Cross Country Rules Committee.

SUBJECT: Pole Vault Box Padding Rule Clarification.

This memorandum is to provide clarification to NCAA members that the NCAA's pole vault box padding rule requires all pole vault box collars to contain padding in and around the pole vault box collar, as required by the applicable ASTM specification standard (designation F2949-12), including on the part of the box collar arm that extends down the inner sidewall of the pole vault box (referred to in the ASTM specification as a "box collar wing"). Doing so will give effect to the NCAA's purpose in adopting the rule – to reduce the risk of injury to student-athletes caused by impact in and around the pole vault box.

The NCAA's pole vault box padding rule, approved in early 2013 by the NCAA Men's and Women's Track and Field/Cross Country Rules Committee ("Rules Committee") and the Playing Rules Oversight Panel ("PROP"), requires pole vault box collars to be in place by December 1, 2013. Additionally, the rule specifies that each box collar must meet the most current ASTM specification standard and be capable of being incorporated into the design of the pole vault box or serve as a padding addition to an existing pole vault box.

ASTM, through ASTM Committee F08 on Sports Equipment and Facilities (Subcommittee F08.67), adopted designation F2949-12 as the specification standard for pole vault box collars.

The NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sport ("CSMAS") recommended adoption of the pole vault box padding rule for safety

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purposes to further reduce the risk of student-athlete injury caused by impact with the pole vault box. There is substantial evidence demonstrating that a number of pole vault injuries occur when student-athletes land in or around the vault box. The box collar padding rule adopted by the NCAA was designed to mitigate such injuries by providing as much padding around fixed and solid objects as possible to absorb the potential impact from a student-athlete.

At the time of the rule's adoption, the Rules Committee, PROP, and CSMAS determined that pole vault box collars with padding inside the box collar would provide student-athletes with greater protection from injury than what would be provided by box collars without such padding. Additionally, the NCAA found that ASTM designation 2949-12 – which ensures padding inside the box collar through the use of box collar wings (in addition to other padding around the box collar) – adequately addresses the NCAA's concerns about student-athlete injuries caused by impact with the pole vault box. The NCAA does not consider such padding, to be located on the part of the box collar arm that extends down the inner sidewall of the pole vault box, to be optional under the ASTM specification. Rather, the standard provides adequate specificity regarding the nature, purpose, dimensions, and need for padding inside the box, through box collar wings. This interpretation is consistent with the NCAA's rationale for revising the rule – to enhance student-athlete safety.

In view of the foregoing, the Rules Committee hereby clarifies that its pole vault box padding rule requires the use of box collars that comply with the current ASTM standard, which specifies the inclusion of padding inside the box collar through the use of box collar wings.

The Rules Committee has no intention of changing or altering the rule, and expects all Division I, II, and III members to be compliant with the rule by December 1, 2013. However, you are encouraged to contact the NCAA if you discover that compliant pole vault box collars are not adequately available in the marketplace.

Please contact Rachel Seewald at [rseewald@ncaa.org](mailto:rseewald@ncaa.org) or 317-917-6141 if you have any questions regarding this communication.

CJT

cc: Mr. Sam Seemes  
Men's and Women's Track and Field/Cross Country Rules Committee  
Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP)  
Selected NCAA Staff Members