

## ***25 Things I Learned My First Year Officiating Track & Field – Beyond the Rulebook***

1. A 2 gallon Ziploc bag can be used to keep your clipboard reasonably dry in wet weather (until you break down and buy a Weather Writer)
2. A plastic garbage bag can be used to cover your gear bag when it rains (or snows)
3. A rubber band at the bottom of your clipboard comes in handy on a windy day
4. Bring a bottle of water or something to drink
5. Carrying chalk sticks is a good idea for putting down additional take off boards, clearly marking throwing circles (including the half way point), and marking high jump standard locations
6. If you are going to use an “open pit” for long/triple jump make sure everyone knows their number (a Sharpie is a good idea for them to write it on their hand).
7. Make sure you talk with the starter at the start of the meet to understand how vouchers will be handled (e.g., filled out at the end of the meet, mailed to the schools, etc.)
8. Ask host school coaches for helpers at the start of the meet
9. Once you are assigned an event, it is your event to run, not the coach’s
10. Encourage athletes to get in jumps/throws before they take off for another event
11. Discourage athletes from leaving field events when ‘first call’ is made for another event they are entered in
12. Make sure that you call out distances loud enough for athletes, coaches, AND spectators to hear
13. Take your time recording results and watch out for recording mistakes due to excused athletes
14. Be consistent (e.g., warmup time, feedback, excused time, etc.)
15. It is OK to give athletes feedback on their jumps/throws (see #10)
16. It is OK to ask athletes/coaches trying to talk to you during an event to hold on a minute while a jump/throw is completed
17. When checking in athletes for the jumps make sure that you are getting take off boards, starting heights, and/or pole vault standard settings
18. Holding the measuring tape in your hands while jumps/throws are taking place and you are recording results will speed things up
19. Make sure you stand on the runway until you know that the pit is clear
20. Stand in a position so that you are not casting a shadow on take off boards
21. If another official comes to help you measure, make sure that they are measuring from the proper take off board
22. When officiating the discus, make sure that you actually see the discus land outside of the sector before you call a sector violation (it can start out on a path outside and the sector and bend back in)
23. When umpiring relay hand off zones make sure you have a whistle
24. When umpiring relay hand off zones and distance race starts, make sure you talk to the starter to understand the procedure if you see a violation AND LASTLY
25. When you make a mistake, own it and fix it the best you can