



Race Walking

By Susan Heiser, USATF Race Walk Officials Chair

Junior Olympic Series Race Walk Protocols

In the USATF Junior Olympic series, race walk athletes progress from Association to Regional and then National competitions. Each event offers an opportunity to learn and prepare for higher levels of competition. To help prepare athletes, Association Junior Olympic meets (JOs) should attempt to follow championship protocols to the best of their ability. Regional JOs should closely mimic the National meet procedures.

The USATF Youth Committee has adopted performance standards to advance athletes to the National JO Championships. USATF Rule 306.4b allows each USATF Youth Region to advance race walk athletes under the following conditions:

- The top two finishers in each age division, provided they complete the event in compliance with USATF Race Walk rules, plus
- Any additional athletes who have met the time standard for their respective age division:

JO National Championships Advancement Standards			
Age Division	Distance	Girls	Boys
9 - 10	1500m RW	12:00	12:00
11 - 12	1500m RW	11:30	11:30
13 - 14	3000m RW	24:00	23:00
15 - 16	3000m RW	22:00	21:45
17 - 18	3000m RW	22:00	21:45

The time standard must be achieved at a Regional JO Championship, and the qualifying race must be judged using USATF rules. The Youth Committee may increase the number of athletes qualifying for Nationals according to USATF Rule 306.1. Marks made at National U20, National Youth, or at a Association JO Championship, may only be considered if the race is judged according to USATF rules. To ensure the best opportunity for the athletes to meet or exceed the standard and to have their marks accepted for Nationals, the following protocols are recommended:

- The race walks should be scheduled at a time of day when weather conditions are cooler and most conducive to distance events, allowing athletes to perform at their highest abilities.
- Age groups and genders may be combined for a single race but the performance standards apply for each athlete in their respective age divisions and gender.
- A minimum of three race walk judges must officiate the race.
- When only three race walk judges are officiating, an athlete who accrues three red cards from the three different judges will be disqualified. These disqualifications are not appealable.
- JO Nationals requires five record-level race walk judges and the use of a penalty zone.
- The penalty zone can only be used when at least four race walk judges are officiating.
- For the 1500m race walk (9-10 & 11-12 age groups), athletes should not be placed in the penalty zone but a time penalty of 30 seconds must be added to the finish times of any athlete who has received three red cards from three separate judges. The penalty zone should be set up and may be used as a coaching box.
- For the 3000m race walk (13-14, 15-16 & 17-18 age groups), athletes who have received three red cards from three separate judges must be directed into the penalty zone as soon as possible and remain there for 30 seconds before being allowed to resume their race.
- If an athlete accrues four red cards from four (4) separate judges, they will be disqualified. These disqualifications are not appealable.
- For the 1500m race walk (9-10 & 11-12 age groups), disqualified athletes should be allowed to finish the race and be notified of their disqualification after the race.
- For the 3000m race walk (13-14, 15-16 & 17-18 age groups), disqualified athletes must be notified and removed from the track as soon as possible.
- At JO Nationals, the Chief Judge alone has the power to disqualify any athlete who is in flagrant violation of the rules of race walking during the last 100m of the race. These disqualifications are appealable.
- **In order to verify that USATF Rules have been followed and for qualifying marks to be accepted, the Judging Summary sheets for each race must be completed and posted to the US Race Walk Committee website. The Chief Judge should ensure the Judging Summaries are emailed to racewalkvicechair@usatf.org.**

The penalty zone is a tool recommended by World Athletics to allow youth walkers an opportunity to receive coaching, adjust their form and improve their opportunities to complete races. This is especially important for young walkers who are new to judged

race walking. To facilitate learning and growth as an athlete, the penalty zone should be explained to the athletes and be accessible to the coaches during the race so they may speak with their athletes if they have received red cards. See the penalty zone diagram below.

JO Race Walk Set Up

>>Official Coordinator, Meet Management: Secure sufficient Certified Race Walk Judges. Nationals should have at least six RW Judges including three Judges who are record-level (Masters & National), and the balance of judges shall be either Masters, National, or Association certified. Association meets must have at least three Race Walk Judges at any level of certification, Apprentice through Masters.

>>Designate a RW Head Official to coordinate equipment and materials; assign duties and manage the crew.

>>Secure additional Certified Race Walk Officials/Judges for the Recording Crew. The National recording crew should have at least two RW Officials/Judges for the 1500m RW and three for the 3000m RW (when the Penalty Zone is in use).

>>Provide additional officials/volunteers for Red Card Collectors (3-5) and assistants for the Posting Board and Penalty Zone as needed.

>>Provide equipment including: table(s), canopy, and chairs.

>>Head Official: Secure equipment and paperwork including Posting Board, judging forms, Penalty Zone paddles, count down timers, etc.(see *the USA Race Walking [RW Best Practices](#) - Equipment & Prep* and [RW Judging Forms](#) - Track Event w/Penalty Zone).

>>Designate two Chief Judge's (CJ) to alternate serving as CJ and CJ Assistant.

>>Chief Judge(s) & RW Crew: Follow the relevant protocols in [RW Best Practices](#): *How to Judge; How to Host a Race Walk; Venue Set Up; and RW Track Assignments*.

>>Posting Board/Recorder: Located 80 -100 meters before the finish line (typically inside the curb) and visible to athletes and coaches.

>>**Penalty Zone:** Located in lanes 5 to 7 on the final straight, roughly 80 meters from the finish line. (See the set up diagram below).

