



SAFETY IN THE THROWING EVENTS

National Federation of State
High School Associations



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2019 Rules Interpreter Meeting

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INTRODUCTION

- High School T&F Athlete
- High School T&F Coach – 9 years
- T&F Official since 1983 (36 years)
- Severed as a Chapter Interpreter for 12 years
- Now the Statewide Rules Interpreter for the State of Pennsylvania
- Owned and operated a FAT timing business since 1983 (36 years)
- State Regional Meet Director for 10 years for T&F
- State Regional CC Meet Director for 16 years
- PA State Championship Meet Referee T&F/CC -5 years



QUICK STORY CONCERNING SAFETY

- First time State Championship Meet Official
- Assistant Judge of the Discus



LEVELS TO BE CONSIDERED

- Throw Implements were originally weapons of Warfare – and should be considered Dangerous!
- Pre-Meet Responsibilities
- Warm-up Procedures and Responsibilities
- Competition
- Post Meet Duties
- Discussion of Safety Zones



PRE- MEET

- Inspection of the Competition Venue
 - Inspect the throwing circle or runway
 - Check for:
 - Dirt
 - Grass
 - Stones
 - Water, etc.
- Inspect the landing area
 - For all of the above and other things that could effect the landing or damaging the implement



PRE-MEET – “CONT.”

- Determine the best (safest) place to :
 - Have the on deck and staging area for the Throwers
 - Viewing area for Coaches and Spectators

- Is there other competition venues nearby ?
 - Time Schedule of other events (overlap)
 - Travel pathways etc. (especially if Indoors)

- Cage Inspection – (Discus/Hammer/Weight Throw)
 - Condition of Netting (tears, holes, etc.)
 - Check the amount of Slack in the netting!



PRE-MEET – “CONT.”

- The purpose of the “Cage” is **NOT to stop** the implement!
- The cage is used to take away or dissipate the energy of the implement.
- There needs to be enough slack in the netting to slow the implement down and prevent the Discus/Hammer from bounce quickly back toward the Thrower in the circle.



PRE-MEET – “CONT.”

- Meet with other Officials/Volunteers working the event and review their assignments and responsibilities.
- Place a cone and possibly a sign on the Circle/Runway to signify the venue is CLOSED for practice or etc.
- Determine the Safety Zones or Areas (To be explained in detail later)



PRE- MEET “CONT.”

- Do NOT be afraid to make the decision to not to contest the event if you have any reservation as to the safety of the venue or due to weather conditions.
- If possible use at least one or two certified Officials for the Throwing Events!!



WARM-UP (PRACTICE)

- Warm-up or practice for the event can ONLY happen at the times specified by the Games Committee.
- At least one Official (or Coach) MUST be present.
- **RULE #1 –NEVER TURN YOUR BACK TO THE CIRCLE!!**
- Establish the time limit for warm-ups and the procedure for throwing and retrieving the implements
- The Official MUST control the pace of the warm-up throws by controlling the circle/runway.



WARM-UP – “CONT.”

- If possible ONLY Officials or those individuals assisting with the event should be in the impact area/sector.
- Implements need to be carried back to the athletes.
- NEVER toss, throw or roll back*****



COMPETITION

- **RULE #1 –Never turn you back to the circle/runway!!**
- Establish the procedure for retrieving the implements.
- Enforce the Restricted areas and limit athletes, coaches and fans to their assigned areas.
- Control the Circle/Runway



COMPETITION – “CONT.”

- Be aware of weather conditions especially wind and warn fellow officials, athletes, coaches and spectators the potential effect it could have on the flight of the implements.
- Assign officials/volunteers based on their physical abilities and knowledge of the event
- Officials only should be working the impact area and returning implements to the athletes



COMPETITION – “CONT.”

- All implements Must be carried back to the athletes.
- Never toss, throw or roll the implements – hand them back to the athletes.
- The javelin needs to be carried in a vertical position – with the point of the javelin pointing down.
- NO Warming up with implements in adjacent areas at anytime during the competition.



POST MEET DUTIES

- Clear the venue of ALL implements
- Ask ALL athletes, coaches and fans to leave the throw venue area.
- Remove all equipment used to run the event.
- Place a cone in the center of the circle or runway and a sign if possible explaining that the area is closed and NO practice or etc. is permitted.



SAFETY ZONES

For each of the throwing events establish recommended safety zones. Each throwing area has 4 zones: green, yellow, light red and red. We look at these as safest (green), cautionary (yellow), potential danger (light red) and danger (red).

- Courtesy of Mark Heckel, MACH2K, Hughesville, PA
- (National Throws Coaches Association Throws Safety Certification, MACH2K and Mark Heckel)
- The size of the safety zone will vary, depending on the terrain of your particular throwing venue, the proximity of other events or features, and other game-day factors such as wind.



SAFETY ZONES – CONT.

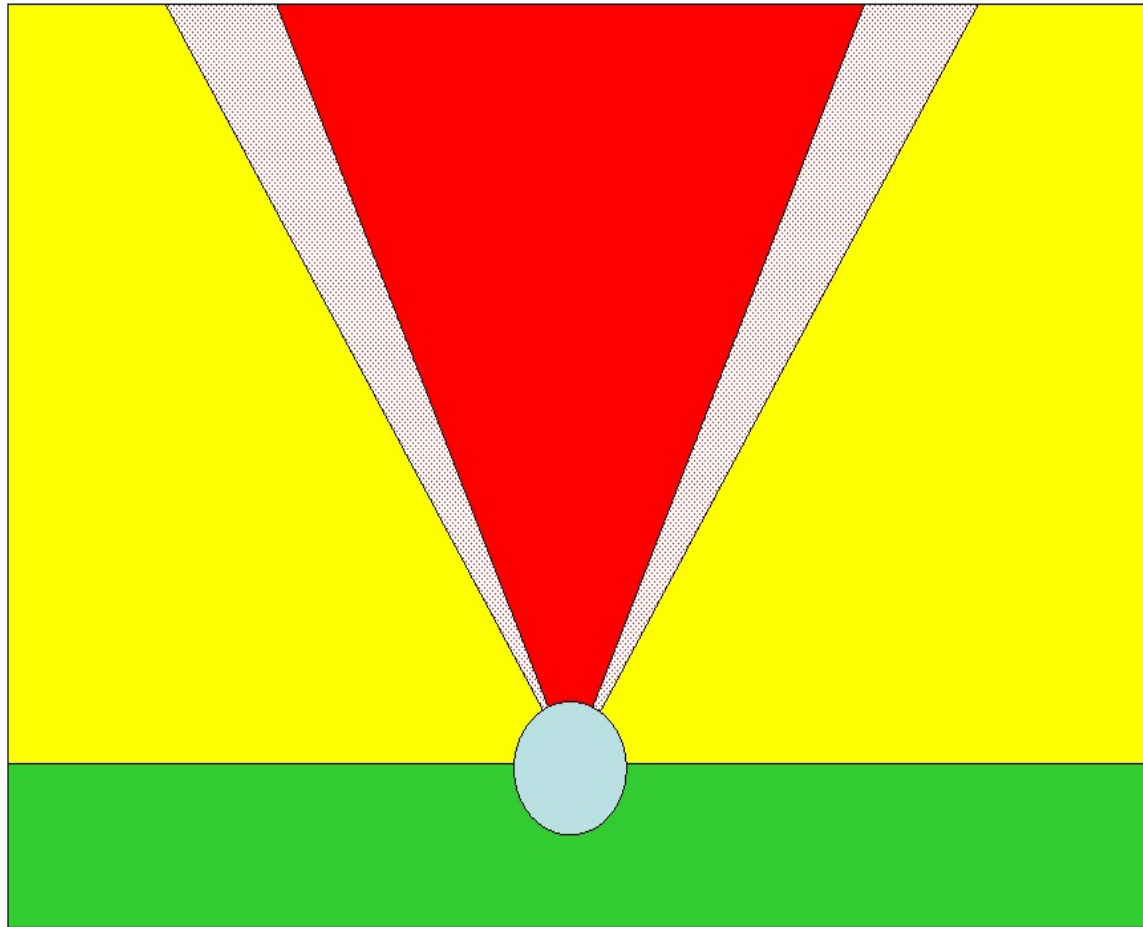
- Remember that these zones are recommendations only, and that anytime an implement is being throw, rule #1 should always be followed - **never turn your back to the circle or runway!**
- The on Deck and waiting area needs to be always in a Green Safety Zone.
- Courtesy of Mark Heckel, MACH2K, Hughesville, PA
- (National Throws Coaches Association Throws Safety Certification, MACH2K and Mark Heckel)



SHOT PUT SAFETY AREAS

Courtesy of Mark Heckel, MACH2K, Hughesville, PA

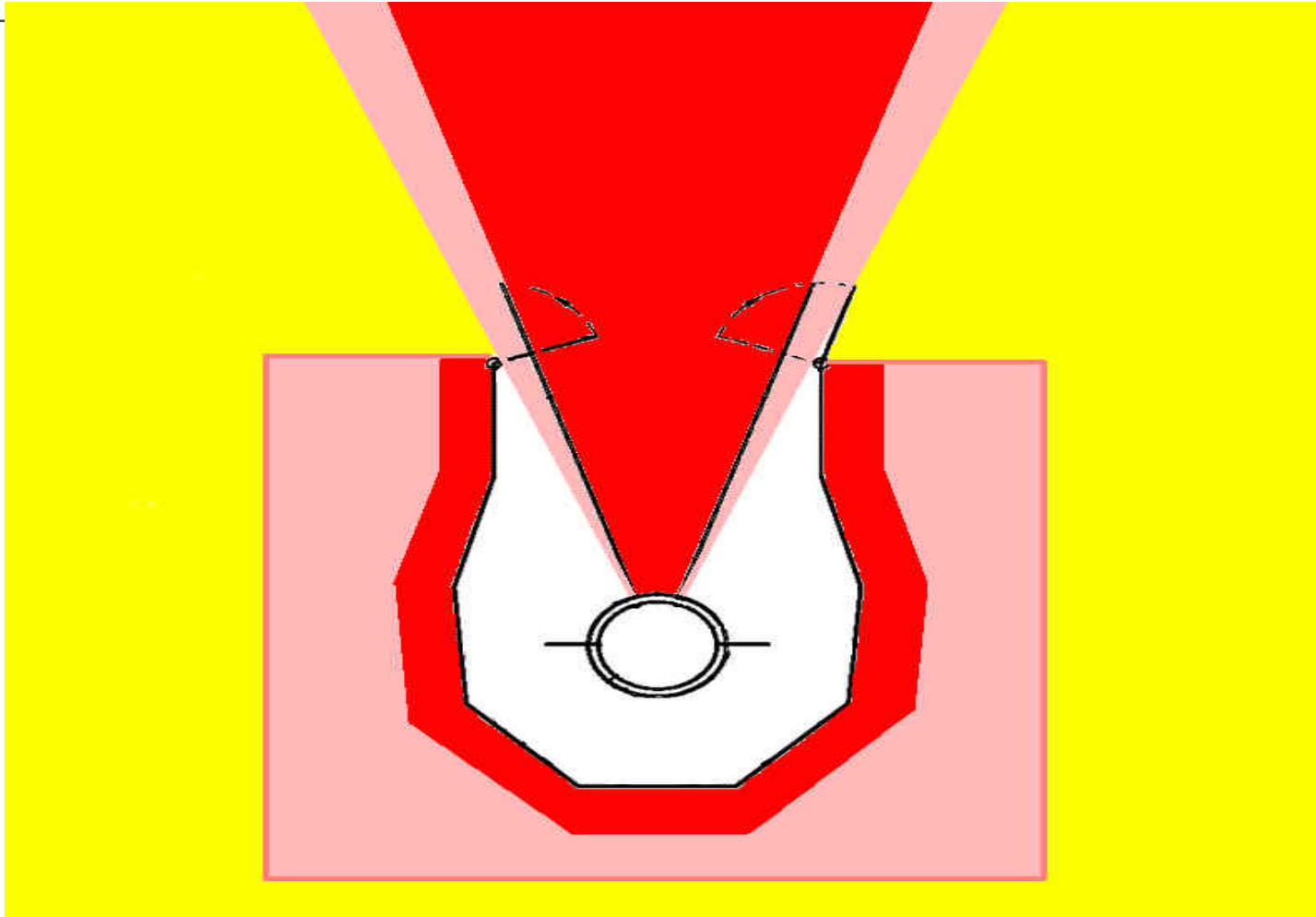
(National Throws Coaches Association Throws Safety Certification, MACH2K and Mark Heckel)



DISCUS SAFETY AREAS

Courtesy of Mark Heckel, MACH2K, Hughesville, PA

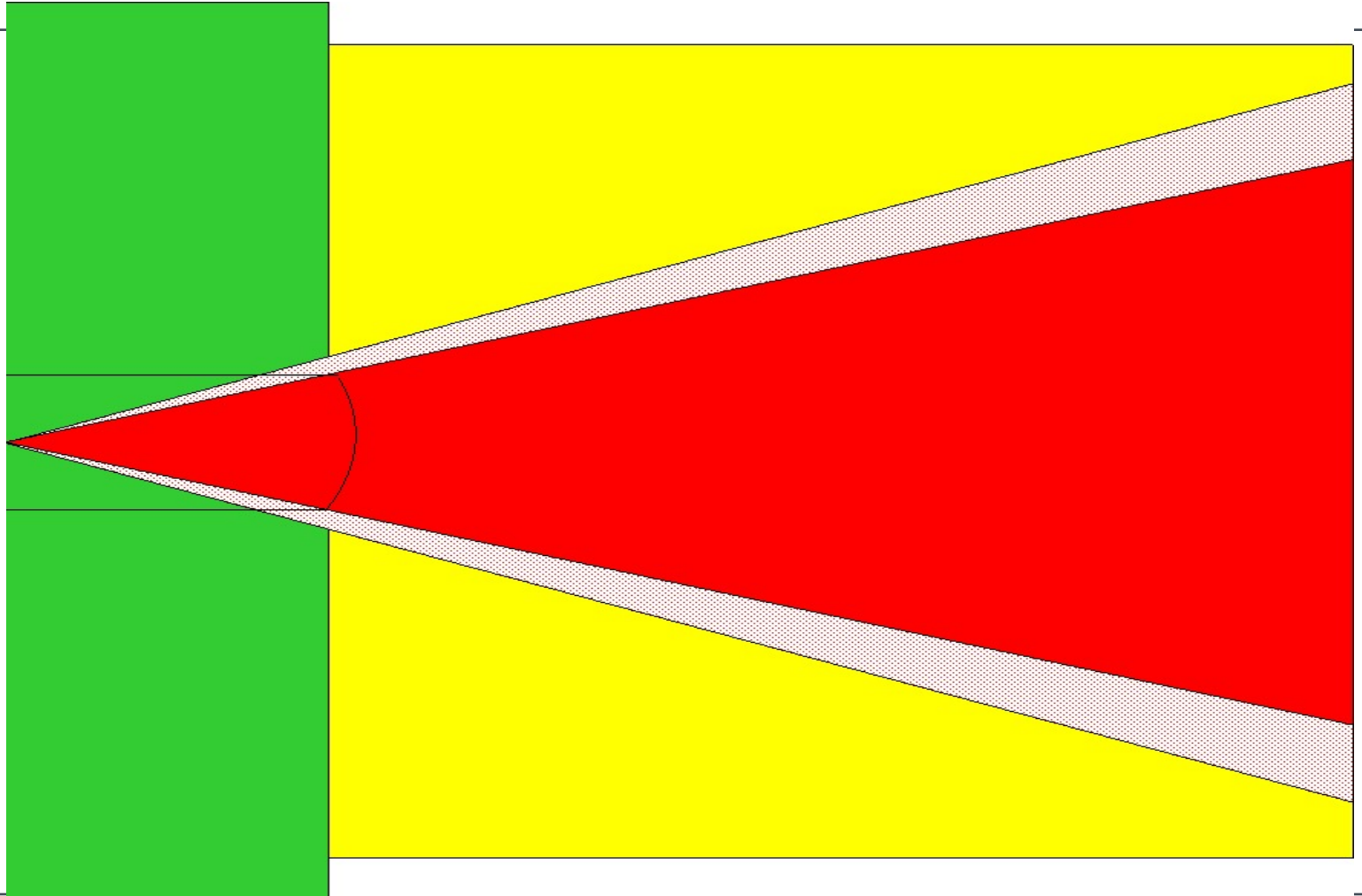
(National Throws Coaches Association Throws Safety Certification, MACH2K and Mark Heckel)



JAVELIN SAFETY AREAS

Courtesy of Mark Heckel, MACH2K, Hughesville, PA

(National Throws Coaches Association Throws Safety Certification, MACH2K and Mark Heckel)



PROPER CORDONING OFF THE THROWING VENUE

- Throwing events should be cordoned off and/or flagged properly for the safety of spectators, athletes and officials
- Ropes, fences or flags should be set up well outside of the sector lines to minimize the risk of injury for spectators, competitors and officials
- Spectator seating needs to be placed behind throwing area and away from landing area



PROPER CORDONING OFF OF THE THROWING VENUE



FINAL THOUGHTS

- General Rules of Throwing Safety

- **Never turn your back to the circle or runway**
- Never allow anyone else to turn their back to the circle or runway
- Keep the sector and area near the boundaries as clear as possible
- Walk the implements back - don't throw them back
- Never assume that everyone is watching and aware of their surroundings
- Cages are there to dissipate the energy of the implement - not necessarily to stop it!
- Safety is an all-the-time, every day thing!





OFFICIALS' CHECKLIST:

- Inspect the venue (circles, runways, cages) for any problems or deficiencies
- Review the layout of the venue before the event starts for potential safety hazards, and for traffic flow patterns around the throwing area
- Ask meet management to correct any un-safe situations prior to the beginning of an event to avoid unnecessary delays during the event



OFFICIALS' CHECKLIST: "CONT."

- If the chief judge, meet with your crew to review warm-up and competition protocols
- If the chief judge, meet with competitors and coaches to clearly outline what the acceptable warm-up areas and times (if any) and review all safety protocols
- (Discuss) if you are not marking/retrieving, you must be behind the cage



RESOURCES

- Resources: Mark Heckel
- Mark Heckel, MACH2K, Hughesville, PA
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7r1a6DJGw&t=2s>
- Throws Safety Handbook that you can find at <http://www.mach2k.net/Throws%20Safety%20Handbook%202016.pdf>



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- NFHS Rule Books
 - 2014 Points of Emphasis - #4 page 79
 - 2013 Points of Emphasis - #3 page 79
 - 2014 Points of Emphasis - #1 page 78
 - 2015 Points of Emphasis – #1 & #2 page 76
 - 2018 Points of Emphasis – Item #4 page 78



CREDITS AND THANK YOU

- Mark Heckel, MACH2K, Hughesville, PA
- Jim Geiswite – Milton PA
- National Throws Coaches Association
- TFO Training Associates
- Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association
- National Federation of State High School Associations

