

Arrowhead Pole Vault

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About me

This is my 13th year of coaching the pole vault (4th at Arrowhead), but I have been a student of the vault for 19 years and counting.

I have coached over 100 vaulters, including dozens of conference/regional/sectional meet finalists and 9 state meet qualifiers.

My priorities are:

- Help our athletes (learn to) pole vault safely.
- Help our athletes have a fun and fulfilling experience as Arrowhead pole vaulters.
- Help our athletes develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to achieve their personal best.

What is the pole vault?

The pole vault is a field event in which the athlete sprints down a runway while carrying a long fiberglass pole. At the end of the runway, the athlete maneuvers the tip of the pole into the ground, jumps up, and attempts to clear a horizontal crossbar that is positioned over a pit of foam mats. The athlete's fundamental challenge is to transfer their horizontal energy (runway speed) into vertical energy (height), using the pole as an implement to facilitate this energy transfer. At track meets, the vaulter who clears the greatest height typically scores 10 points for their team. 2nd place = 8 pts, 3rd place = 6 pts, 4th = 5 pts, 5th = 4 pts, 6th = 3 pts, 7th = 2 pts, 8th = 1 pt.

Is it dangerous?

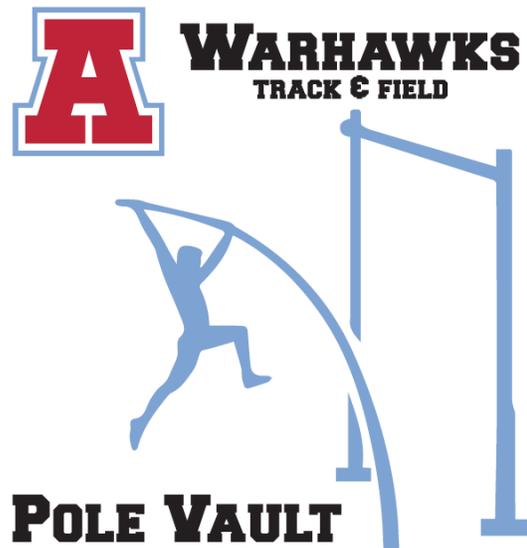
Pole vaulting is inherently dangerous, but we mitigate the risks through wise decision-making and careful skill development. If you are concerned about your athlete's safety, let's chat about it.

Is it difficult?

The pole vault is certainly challenging, but my athletes who are positive, patient, and persistent have always developed into successful vaulters over time. And the fun outweighs the difficulty!

Can my athlete try the pole vault first before committing to it?

Absolutely! Please nudge your athlete and encourage them to try it a few times - especially if they are in grades 9 or 10. We start low and easy, gradually adding height and difficulty over time.



More information on back side >>>

My athlete is a pole vaulter. How often will they compete in the vault at track meets?

Some vaulters might only compete in 4 meets all season. Some of our best vaulters might compete in 10 meets. Most vaulters will end up in between. Often we are limited to entering 2 or 3 pole vaulters per meet - a challenge we share with the 17 other events as well. When selecting vaulters to compete in each meet, we evaluate a whole collection of factors including but not limited to personal record (PR). All this to say: (1) Your vaulter should try to diversify and train for several events, and (2) Your vaulter might not get to vault in every meet they or you believe they should. Our vaulters have always had a positive attitude about these challenges, and they continue to work hard and support each other regardless - I am tremendously proud of them for this.

At track meets, the stadium seats are far from the pole vault. Can I move closer?

Please do! Our vaulters thrive when they have engaged and supportive fans. We only ask that you give the competitors some breathing room and independence. Let the coaches do the coaching and let the event judges do the judging.

Can my vaulter train or continue to train at a pole vaulting club during track season?

This is probably unwise for many of our vaulters. Please understand your vaulter risks fatigue and injury due to overtraining, and risks acute, season-ending injuries as well. The potential harm extends beyond your individual vaulter and affects the rest of the team, as well. Our vaulters love to vault, but most of them need fewer reps and more recovery time than they want to realize. If your vaulter is planning on doing club training - or other athletic/physical activities - please encourage them to chat with me about it.

Can my family help with fundraising?

Yes! We still have a few gaps in our pole inventory and we regularly use some older poles that we would like to replace. A new pole costs about \$400-\$700 depending on its length, so every donation is very helpful and much appreciated.

Can I rent a pole(s) for my vaulter from a third party?

Renting seems like an exciting option. However, the economics diminish quickly, and the renter often misses important considerations. We suggest you invest in our pole vault program instead of renting from a third party. If your vaulter is considering renting a pole(s), please encourage them to chat with me about it.

What else can you tell me about the AHS pole vault program?

I had each of our vaulters fill out a form that provided me useful (and entertaining...) information. This season:

- They are excited about hanging out with each other and setting new personal records.
- They are nervous about injuries and “not being good enough.” [Let’s help them be confident!]
- They are eager to demonstrate positive leadership, and they want snacks.

Any other questions? Don’t hesitate to reach out:

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