Long Jump Approach & Take-off
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APPROACH

Approach Length – Depends on the athlete’s ability, technical proficiency, chronological age and training age.
- Beginners – keep approach short 6-7 steps (12 -14 total strides)
- Intermediate – Start to lengthen approach 7-8 steps (14-16 total strides)
- Advanced – Approach should be 8-9 steps (16-18 total strides)

As the athlete becomes more proficient in the above areas, the approach will start to increase.

How should the athlete perform the approach?
- As the coach think of the approach in three phases!
  *Drive
  *Accelerate
  *Attack

Things to think about when practicing the approach!
- Athletes should never be at TOP speed at take-off. MAX controllable speed at take will lead to better jumps.
- If the athletes gets up to speed to early he/she will slow down at take off resulting in reaching which will lead to fouls or bad jumps
- Athletes should never look at the board
- Be sure the athlete has good posture
- USE CHECK MARKS!!!

Check marks for coaches are an easy way to make adjustments quickly!
- Athletes use a check mark at the start of the run, if an athlete uses a mid check mark it should never effect the how the approach is performed.
- Coaches should use a mid check step. This will allow you to gauge if the athlete is performing the drive & acceleration aspect of the approach correctly.
- Penultimate step check can also be used.
- MAKE ADJUSTMENT BASED ON HOW THE ATHLETE PEROFRMED THE APPROACH NOT JUST ON WHERE THEY ARE AT THE CHECK MARKS!

Notes:........
- Approach should be practiced early and often! (First week of practice)
- Acceleration development is key to any horizontal jump approach
- Practice the approach away from the runway
- Since we jump in spikes, practice the approach in spikes
- Don’t get too greedy!!!!! Baby steps lead to BIG steps!
- Train long jumpers as SPRINTERS!
- Sprinters should be long jumping
TAKE-OFF

When thinking of the take-off, think about what happens two steps out from take off. Most problems at the take-off can be a result from what happens the last 2 steps (4 strides) in the approach. In the attack phase of the approach this is where the most steering occurs. If the athlete is too far out from the mid check step he/she will lengthen their stride to reach the board. An athlete that is over the check step will then start to cut/chop their steps in order to not foul.

When evaluating the preparation and take-off think of the following!
- Athlete must have good posture. Head & pelvis should be aligned properly. You should not see the athlete leaning forward or backward
- Correct running mechanics should be present.
- Preparation for the take off will require the athlete’s center of mass to lower. This will help with the transition from horizontal velocity to vertical velocity.

Preparation for take-off
- The penultimate step prepares the athlete for take-off
- The lowering of the COM should occur during the support phase of the penultimate step
- Athlete should keep good posture during preparation
- Think of this action as a pushing towards the board not a “dipping” action

Take-off
- This should blend into the run/approach. Should not see any or much difference
- Take off foot will be placed just in front of athletes COM.
- Athlete should not lean forward or backwards at take-off. This will help maintain horizontal velocity.
- The COM should continue in a horizontal path until it is over the take-off foot. Then the lifting effect should occur.
- Make sure that athlete blocks other the drive knee and arm, this will help with converting the horizontal velocity created in the approach into vertical velocity at take-off.

Notes:....... 
- Athlete should never slow down at the take off
- Accelerate throughout the take-off
- Athlete should be at MAX Controllable speed at take-off!!
- Cue I use for the prep & take-off is “Push-Pull”
- For elite jumpers take-off angle will be 19-21 degrees
- Prep & take-off should be practice early and often
Postural Integrity

- Most over looked aspect in all movement.

Bad posture will lead to mistakes that are very hard to correct/overcome in the jumping events.

Throughout the entire long jump process, it is important that the athlete shows good posture!
- This includes during the following
  - Running/warm-up drills
  - Long jump specific drills
  - Approach practice
  - Competition

Coaches should work on the athlete’s core. Lower back and AB exercises are a must! Be sure you cue the athlete during warm-up, drills, competition, etc...to maintain good posture.

### Long Jump 6 Stride Check Mark Chart

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<th>LJ Jump Dist.</th>
<th>6 Stride Mark</th>
<th>Stride Length</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

(Each 1” stride length = 6” Mid-Mark & Jump Distance)

### Penultimate Step Check Marks

Males – 2.2 to 2.4 meters
Females – 2.0 to 2.2 meters