

General Rules of Throwing Safety



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

Areas of Concern/Interest

Implements

- improperly maintained implements can create potential hazards for competitors, officials and spectators

Practice

- Practice can be the most dangerous time, since the coach is looking at many different things, and athletes are in constant motion

Competition

- A bit more controlled environment, but still, many hazards can abound here

Coaches

- Coaches need to be aware of safety hazards at all times - practice and competition

Officials

- Preventive officiating can help to minimize risk factors as competition

Athletes

- Using some common sense and good practices will keep athletes from getting injured

Implements

One of the easiest ways to get an athlete injured is to have faulty equipment. We can reduce the chance for injury to the athlete by routinely inspecting the implements that they are using. We don't want a shot putter to tear up his or her hand from a burr on a shot. A plate that comes loose from a discus and fly off at any angle, potentially injuring someone.

In this listing, we look at some of the things that should be inspected on each implement. Please make note that such inspections should be carried out **ESPECIALLY** when the implement has come in contact with a hard surface (concrete, macadam) or the cage.

Shot put

- Examine for burrs or protrusions on the surface
- On indoor implements, look for loose or missing core plugs
- On indoor implements, look for cracks or splits in the outer shell

Discus

- Look for burrs or protrusions on the rim
- Check for loose or missing core plugs

Safety Guidelines Mark Heckel - NTCA Safety Program Chairman

- Look for split or cracked body plates
- Check that the body plates are secure

Javelin

- Look for loose or frayed grip cord
- Inspect points for cracks or splits
- Inspect the body of the implement for cracks or splits
- Look for broken points (both front and back)

Hammer/Weight

- Look for unbound wires
- these can cause an errant throw to hang up in the cage or to tear the cage material
- Inspect wires for nicks or cuts
- Look for loose or missing cores (weight implements)
- Inspect handles for cracks, or so see if they are sprung and no longer useable
- Inspect gloves for smoothness
- Inspect indoor weights for loose, cut or broken straps

Practice

As the coach, YOU control practice – not the athletes

- You decide how the practice will be conducted, who will be throwing what, when and where. The responsibility, and the liability, lie with you as the adult to take necessary precautions to insure student-athlete safety.

Set time, set place

When practice is over, it's over! Put the implements away for the day

Regulate practice – keep your eyes on everything!

If in a crowded/busy venue, use an airhorn

Competition

On meet day, the head official is in charge, not the coach

- even on your home surface, the official is in charge from the time that they arrive until the time the event is over and the area has been cleared

If you have concerns about the competition venue, air them

- approach the head event judge first
- If not satisfied with the resolution to the situation, ask for the head field judge or throws referee or field referee

If you can help my marshaling people to keep them out of potentially dangerous areas - DO IT!

- Work with the officiating crew in creating a safe environment for everyone

When talking with your athlete, even in the unrestricted area, use the "over the shoulder" method

- You never know when an athlete may lose control of the implement

When the circle is closed, it's CLOSED!

- Don't try to throw from the pad or any other area when the circle is closed
- Officials may be taking care of something or attending to another matter. Don't assume anything!

Don't warm-up in any area UNLESS it's designated for warm-up

- The extra circle or runway may pose a hazard to something or someone you had not thought of

Coaches

If you practice good safety habits, so will your athletes practice what you preach

- Athletes should do what you do . . . and what you say when it comes to safety

Control the environment

- You set the practice time, and the practice schedule
- You decide the work out
- Be observant of weather and field conditions

Know when to say "when"

- structure practice to get the most out of a fresh thrower, not a tired one
- Don't allow the "just one more" mentality to take charge - this is when injuries, sloppy technique and safety problems

Officials

You are in charge!

- It's your responsibility to look out for the fans, coaches and athletes

Practice the 3 P's for safety: Preparation, Patience and Professionalism

- Be prepared for any potential safety problems
- Be patient with athletes who are there to compete, and may lose sight of safety issues
- Be professional, not personal, when dealing with individuals and throws safety

As a chief, YOU control the tempo of warm-ups and competition

- Don't allow coaches to push you so that you compromise safety

Establish a warm-up procedure for each event

- Be prepared with how you will handle warm-ups before and during competition
- Know how you will deal with bad weather
- Assign an official to be a "range safety officer" during warm-ups
- put a "bouncer at the door of the cage to watch the sector during warm-ups , and regulate the flow of athletes into the cage or onto the runway

Be proactive - Don't let the unsafe situation evolve. If you see it coming, head it off

Athletes

"Look before you launch"

- Even if no official is watching, look to make sure that the landing/impact area is clear of any hazards or potential victims

Circle conditions

- If you don't like the conditions of the circle, ask the head event official about them
- Ask BEFORE you enter the circle
- If you want to wipe the circle out, ask AS SOON AS POSSIBLE so that the trial clock isn't running

Who's in charge?

- Remember who is in charge in the setting you are in
- at practice, it's your coach
- at the meet, it's the official

Remember . . .

- Rule #1 - Never turn your back to the circle or runway!
- Stay out!
- Allow the officials to retrieve and return the implements

Stay out of the sector!