

Track and Field



3000-m Steeplechase



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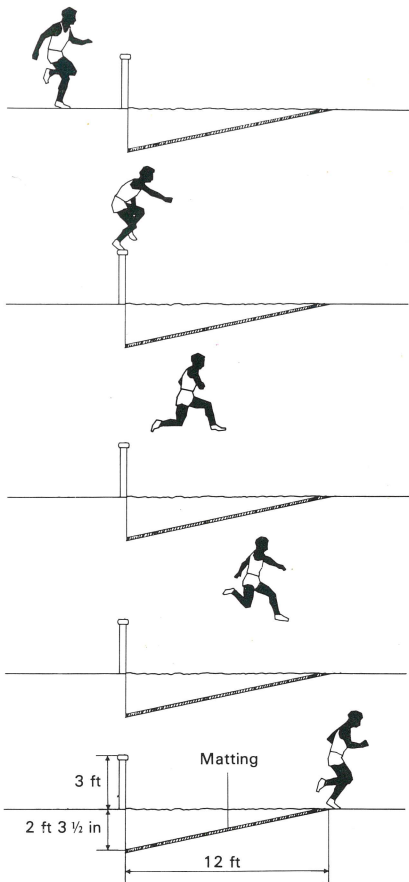
Taking the Water Jump

One of the oldest races in the athletics program, the steeplechase, had to wait until 1954 to be finally codified. The major attraction is still the water jump, which is taken seven times. The water jump is the fourth obstacle on each lap. Every competitor must go over the water. He is disqualified if he passes on either side of the ditch, or if his foot or leg goes outside one of the hurdles.

The water jump is the most difficult obstacle in the 3,000-m steeplechase. Some runners manage to clear the water altogether. They think that the water reduces the suppleness of the muscles. In addition, the sloping ground of the water jump causes a loss of balance on landing, and thus makes it tiring. Other runners, on the other hand, prefer to land in the water a foot or two from the edge, being of the opinion that this technique enables them to save precious energy.

Technique of taking the water jump

About 20 yards in front of the jump, the athlete regulates the length of his stride to gather an impetus which will enable him to put one foot on top of the cross-bar with his body leaning forward. He jumps off smoothly, so that he loses as little time as possible before he resumes running.



Taking the water jump in the final of the 3,000-m steeplechase in the 1978 European Championships