

# Track and Field



## *The Straddle*



*The run-up  
The elevation*



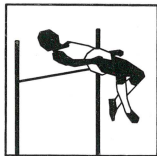
*The take-off  
The clearance*



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## The Straddle



### Soviet Mastery

Displayed by the black American Dave Albritton (2.07 m in 1936, the year in which he was high jump silver medalist at the Berlin Olympics, with 2.00 m), the "straddle" could have been invented back in 1927 by the Russian B. Vzorov. Whatever its origins, which are of necessity debatable in so far as various researches inevitably lead to different conclusions at any given time, it goes without question that this "straddle" technique was carried to the highest degree of perfection by the Russians. Here is a brief description of it:

*The run-up:* this usually comprises 7 to 9 strides, at an angle of between 25 and 45° to the bar. Momentum should be progressively increased and the strides lengthened until the penultimate stride.

*The take-off:* the final stride is shorter, with the pelvis leading. The position of

the take-off foot is made with the heel well advanced. The arms swing back and the shoulders are lowered. The eyes are fixed on the bar. The free leg is thrown forward fully stretched. The body begins three rotations which bring it up and forwards, making it turn on itself. The shoulders and the elbows are raised.

*The elevation:* for a right-handed person, the right shoulder is raised, while the left arm, bent, is withdrawn across the chest. A sort of "drawing-in" is effected before clearing the bar.

*The clearing:* the free leg is stretched out along the bar. The take-off leg is bent. Then follows the clearance. The free leg clears the bar, while the stretched-out right arm aids clearance of the bar by the left leg.

*The landing:* the jumper usually lands on his side. Thick mattresses will effectively diminish the shock of landing.

*Demonstration of the straddle by the world record-holder, the Russian Yaschenko*