

Vault Summary by Tom Wilson, Anti Gravity Pole Vault Club

1. Pre-Run
 - a. In practice and meets always prepare for jump
 - b. At top of runway, pause, envision what you are to do
 - c. Watch the run, vault and landing in your mind
 - d. If you watch it in your mind just before you try you are much more likely to do what you want. Your subconscious will try to emulate what you just visioned.
2. Run
 - a. Work to develop consistency in the run
 - b. Hand spacing should be approximately same as your shoulder spread
 - c. Always start same pattern, typically left foot at mark, right back, pole tip high (75 degree angle)
 - d. Top hand loosely holds pole near hip bone
 - e. Bottom hand chest high, pole in vee of thumb and forefinger with thumb pointing up
 - f. High Knees
 - g. Chest high
 - h. Look Forward
 - i. Run should become floating on runway
 - j. 1st 4 steps, exaggerate bound with high knees, don't go for speed yet
 - k. Then transition to build speed
 - l. Speed is leg turnover, not stride length, keep knees high
 - m. Last 6 steps maximum controllable speed, stay tall, accelerate
 - n. Pole tip does gradual drop throughout run.
3. Plant
 - a. Start plant with hands going forward and up on 2nd from last step
 - b. During plant hands stay in line with body, do not swoop hands away from body
 - c. Top hand near ear on next to last step
 - d. Both hands high at takeoff
 - e. Hands to end high and in direct alignment in line with runway and overhead
 - f. Allow glancing view to see pole tip enters box, keep head forward, not down
4. Take-off
 - a. Accelerate at take-off, very aggressive, explode, attack-attack-attack. The take-off is key to pole vaulting. Pole vault, don't pole jump.
 - b. Take-off foot toes should be directly under your top hand. Toes a couple inches further from box even better.
 - c. Push both hands high at take-off
 - d. Drive lead knee up with foot tucked as high as possible under leg/bottom
 - e. Focus eyes on lower hand as you drive off ground
 - f. Take-off leg should stay reasonably straight

- g. Drive off ground similar to a long jumper take-off. Pole vaulting is a jumping event
 - h. Top arm stays straight
 - i. 80% of your success in the vault is done by now. Focus on the aggressive, tall take-off. Technique in the air cannot correct any errors up to this point.
5. Swing
- a. After takeoff keep eyes on lower hand
 - b. Push pole high and forward with both hands.
 - c. Maintain the high lead knee, resist letting it drop. Dropping will slow your swing/inversion
 - d. Delay almost imperceptibly swinging the trail leg, hold a reverse 'C' position for milliseconds. This causes an elastic stretch of the body from top hand to trail leg toes
 - e. After the delay, bring trail leg forward in a long, powerful, straight leg sweep.
 - f. Top hand stays straight. You are pole vaulting, not pole climbing.
6. Inversion
- a. This is a continuation of the swing
 - b. Allow eyes to change focus from lower hand to become a top hand focus. Common flaw is focus becomes crossbar. This kills the jump at the height you start peeking. Don't Peek!
 - c. Keep the leg swing going to bring the trail leg to the pole over your head
 - d. Leg sweep done right is a beautiful, graceful sweep of the leg with tremendous power
 - e. Maintain pressure with arms along the pole trying to push it forward and up. Attempt to keep pole bent and moving forward. Control the pole, don't let it control you. Be tough and maintain your confidence.
 - f. When trail leg foot gets to pole, you should be in a pike position, drive shoulders down toward box and press hips/legs/feet up. Think of pinching shoulders together in your back.
 - g. Top hand should push toward inside of leg at leg/trunk joint
 - h. Bottom arm must bend at this point. Top arm is still straight.
 - i. Keep pole close to body
7. Pull-Turn-Push
- a. Once body is straight and alongside pole, pull body upward along pole.
 - b. Lower arm elbow will come inside pole as the pull starts.
 - c. Direction of pull to be top hand coming to opposite shoulder.
 - d. Pull continues and becomes a natural push as top hand gets to shoulder.
 - e. Turn will happen automatically as pull transitions to push
8. Clearance
- a. At end of push you should be traveling upward and the turn will have caused stomach to be facing crossbar
 - b. At peak allow legs to fall
 - c. Rotate body around crossbar
 - d. Pull hands up and back as you rotate around crossbar to prevent them from inadvertently hitting crossbar.

9. Landing

a. Land on your back with big smile!

10. Help others, your best understanding of the vault will come from helping to understand it in a way you can help others.

Concerns

1. Always be aware of where you land in the pit in relation to coaches box.
 - a. If short,
 - i. run faster
 - ii. hold lower
 - iii. use softer pole
 - iv. check takeoff step to see if under (too close to box)
 - b. If to the side of your top hand, (right side of pit for right handed jumpers)
 - i. you likely did not have plant high over your head
 - ii. you might not have run down middle of runway
 - iii. you might not have driven knee directly forward
 - c. If to side of your lower hand,
 - i. You might have pushed top hand to far over toward lower arm's shoulder
 - ii. You might be running on side of runway and jumping crooked
 - d. If behind,
 - i. Use heavier pole, first at same grip and then possibly raise grip
 - ii. Focus higher with take-off jump
 - iii. Hold lower to stiffen pole
 - iv. Hold pole with hands closer together
2. Missing the coaches box is a serious safety concern. Any time you land outside of the coaches box analyze why.