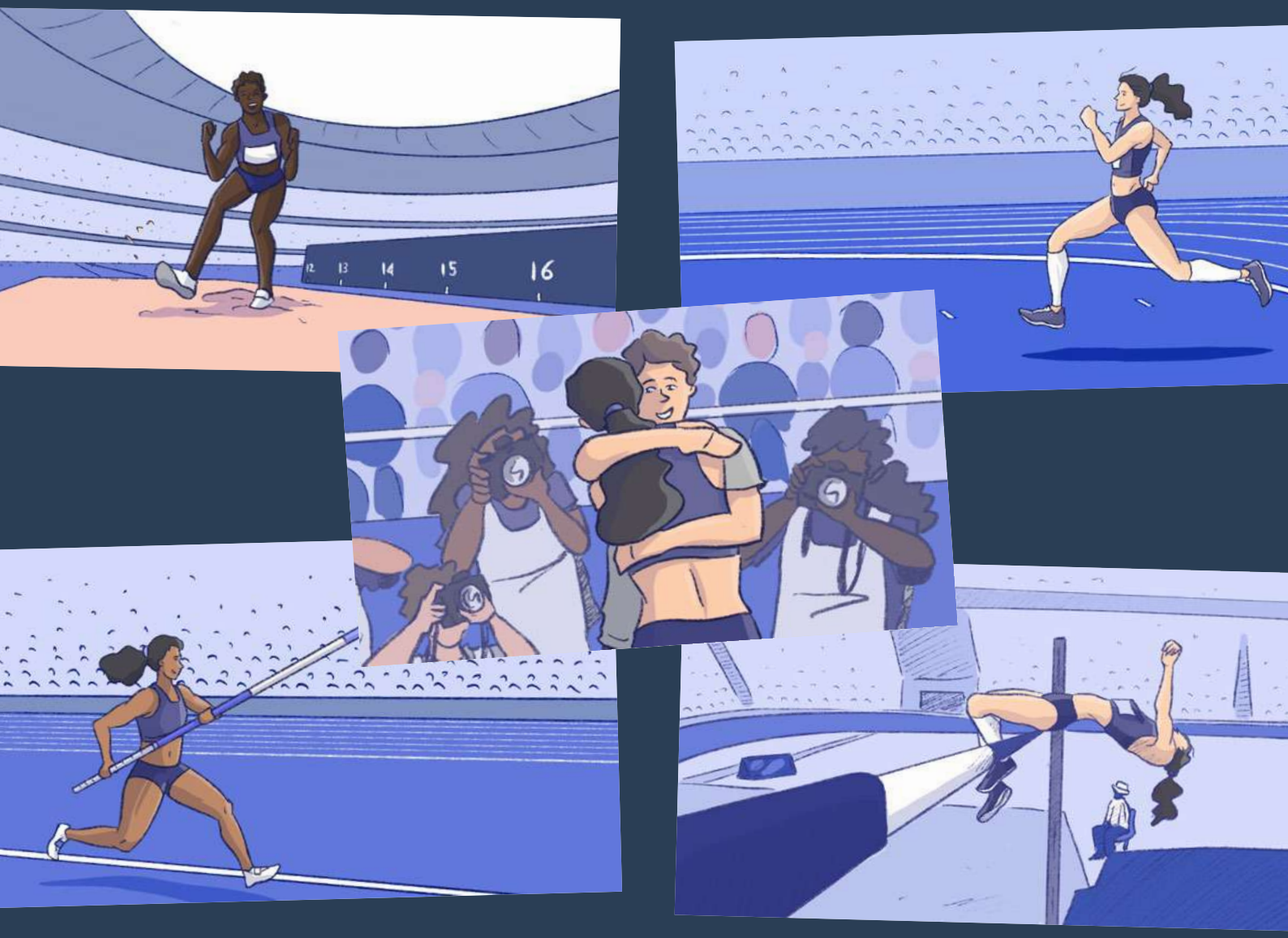
EBU Sport

RAISING THE BAR

GUIDELINES FOR RESPECTFUL MEDIA COVERAGE IN WOMEN'S ATHLETICS



At EBU Sport, we are committed to ensuring that all athletes are portrayed with fairness, accuracy, and respect. Our coverage should reflect the skill, dedication, and excellence that define athletics, and uphold the trust placed in us by audiences and competitors alike.

The sexualization of women athletes through selective camera angles and editing choices continues to be a significant concern across many sports broadcasts. Lingering shots on bodies, low-angle cameras that capture revealing views, and excessive slow-motion replays that serve no technical or storytelling purpose are among the issues observed in the media coverage of women's athletics competitions today.

These choices carry profound implications. They shape audience perception by diverting attention from the remarkable achievements and technical skills of women athletes, and risk perpetuating harmful stereotypes.

Coverage of this kind also has far-reaching consequences for athletes themselves. Many have consistently spoken out against these practices. This publication has been created in consultation with three world-class competitors: Holly Bradshaw, Ivana Spanovic, and Blanka Vlasic. Their personal experiences and insights have enriched our understanding, and we are grateful for their contributions.

We recognize the urgent need to strengthen broadcasting standards to ensure coverage that consistently respects and reflects sportswomen's skill, strength, and dedication. This is a shared responsibility across our EBU Membership.

This publication provides practical guidelines for camera work and broadcast direction, establishing clear standards that prioritize athletic performance, editorial integrity, and professional dignity in women's athletics coverage.

— **Glen KILLANE,**
Executive Director, EBU Sport

At European Athletics, we are committed to ensuring that our sport is presented in a way that respects and empowers all athletes, regardless of gender, nationality, race, religion, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic background.

Our longstanding collaboration with the EBU has been instrumental in raising broadcasting standards and expanding athletics viewership, reinforcing our sport's position as the number one Olympic sport.

The development of filming guidelines is a crucial step toward eliminating harmful portrayals of women in our sports while maintaining the highest level of storytelling and technical excellence.

I applaud the EBU for taking this initiative and thank all directors, camera operators and athletes for their involvement. The only way forward is through collaboration, dialogue, and mutual understanding among all stakeholders.

Together, we look forward to presenting our sport in a more engaging and respectful way, strengthening our connection with audiences, and ensuring a lasting, positive impact on athletics.

— **Dobromir KARAMARINOV**
European Athletics President

Introductory note

The guidance that follows is not intended to prescribe a single way of covering athletics. The sport is visually extraordinary, and the broadcasters and directors who cover it are highly skilled professionals.

What we hope to demonstrate, through examples drawn entirely from real broadcast coverage, is that many of the camera angles athletes find uncomfortable are simply avoidable without any loss of storytelling, technical insight or visual quality.

As Olympic medallist Holly Bradshaw has described, the consequences can be tangible. Athletes arriving at major competitions can become more focused on camera positions than on performance, or on footage later being misused online. That is a problem our industry can help address.

Importantly, athletes themselves consistently point out that the camera angles which best showcase the power, precision and technique of their events are often the same ones that treat them with dignity and respect.

While many of the examples included here come from larger-scale productions, the same principles apply equally to smaller crews working with fewer cameras and more limited resources.

We hope these guidelines feel less like a set of restrictions and more like the beginning of a conversation between broadcasters, directors, camera operators and athletes, that we can continue together.

"How our sport is displayed during live broadcast can be incredibly powerful yet sometimes harmful to the women competing and the women/girls watching. I first-hand have received social media abuse and witnessed inappropriate videos online of myself and colleagues when slow-motion content of us competing is captured.

Athletes want to enjoy themselves doing the sport they love without feeling uncomfortable or anxious about the footage being shown live. Many athletes, myself included have been in competitive scenarios where they are more focused on the cameras instead of their own performance.

There are so many different angles to be shown of our sport that can highlight how technical and impressive these field events and athletes are, however on too many occasions cameras are zoomed in, showing super slow-motion action replays of athletes in undignified positions."

— **Holly BRADSHAW**
Olympic Pole Vaulter

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In athletics, every movement tells a story—one of strength, precision, and years of dedication.

When we step onto the runway, track, or field, we showcase the very best of our sport: a fusion of power, technique, and passion and the only thing we want is to execute our best jumps.

However, certain camera angles, combined with gender stereotypes, not only cause discomfort for athletes and unnecessary distractions during competition but how it is broadcasted can also have serious long-term effects on athlete’s mental health, sometime even the position of the camera is not in the right place and can cause risk of injuries during warm-up etc.

As members of the global athletics community, we share a responsibility to present our sport in a way that engages, informs, and uplifts. By focusing on the skill and strength of the sport, we can create a more respectful and inspiring viewing experience. Commentators also play a crucial role in enriching broadcasts by highlighting athletes’ performances, strengthening audience connections, educating and motivating the next generation.

We look forward to working together to elevate athletics broadcasts—ensuring they respect athletes while inspiring and engaging fans around the world.

— Ivana ŠPANOVIĆ
Olympic Long Jumper

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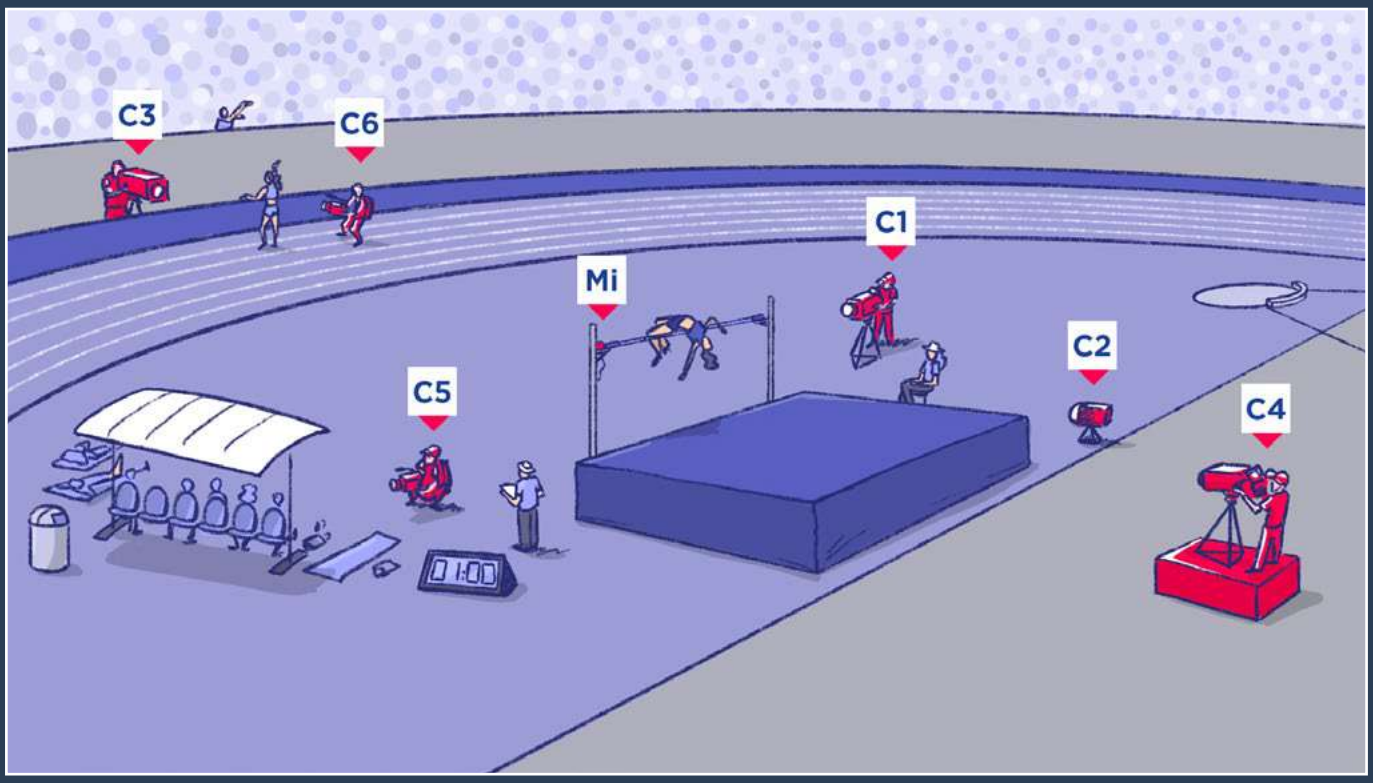
HIGH JUMP

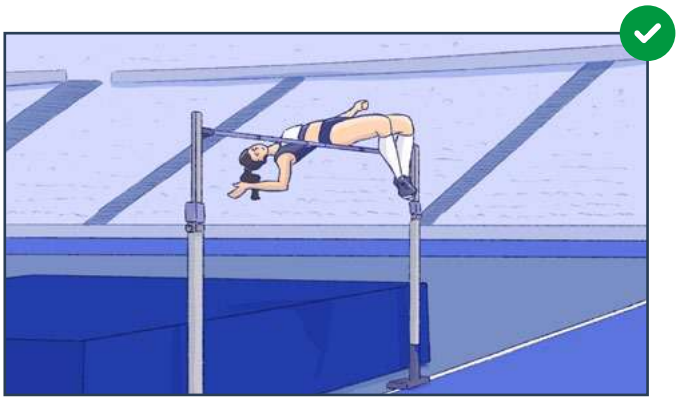


An example of a camera plan

Camera 1 - C1

Positive Angles:

This wide angle is the main angle for showing the run-up and jump over the bar. It is also a popular angle for commentators and coaches, as it shows the final few strides before take-off.

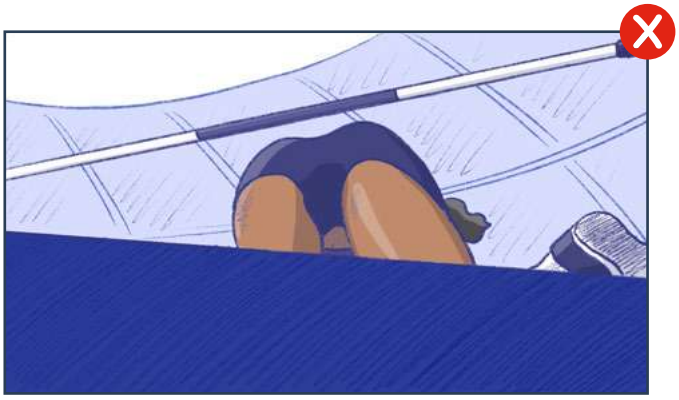


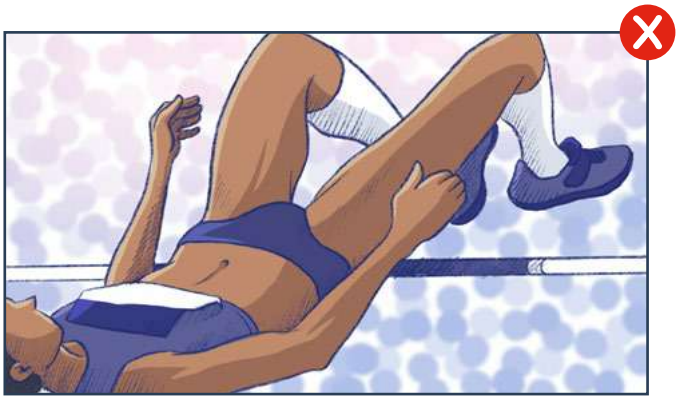
Camera 2 - C2

Negative Angles:

A low camera angle underneath the athlete has a high chance of generating compromising images.

Maintaining a close view and providing slow-motion replays of the athlete clearing the bar diminishes technical insight and may produce compromising images.

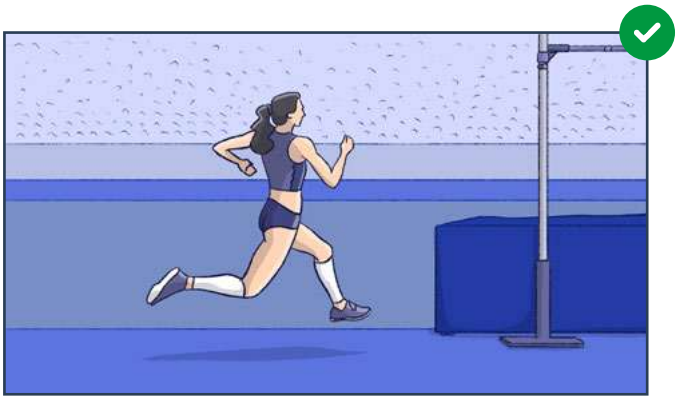




Camera 3 - C3

Positive Angles:

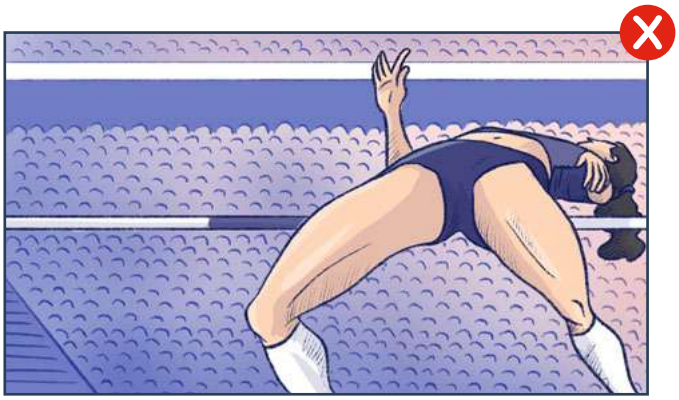
Remaining wide for the replay highlights the technique in the final few strides; this provides an excellent angle for both the commentators and the coaches.



It's also a great angle for observing the athlete celebrate if they have successfully cleared the bar.

Negative Angles:

By zooming in, you not only risk compromising the images, but the angle does not provide any insightful view for either the audience or the commentator.



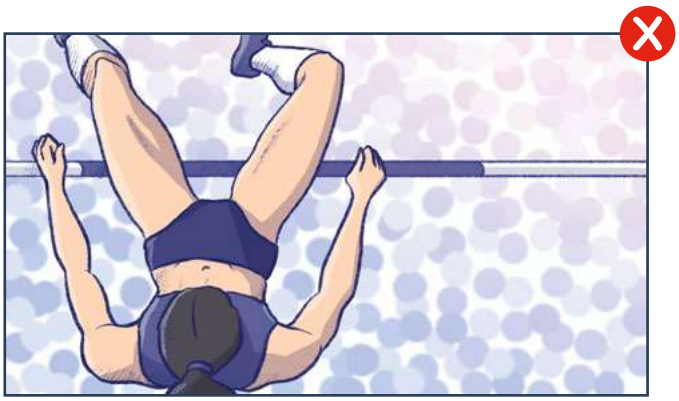
Camera 4 - C4

Positive Angles:

This angle can be used to animate the data graphic for the athlete, whilst also providing a close-up of their face, revealing their emotions before a jump.

Negative Angles:

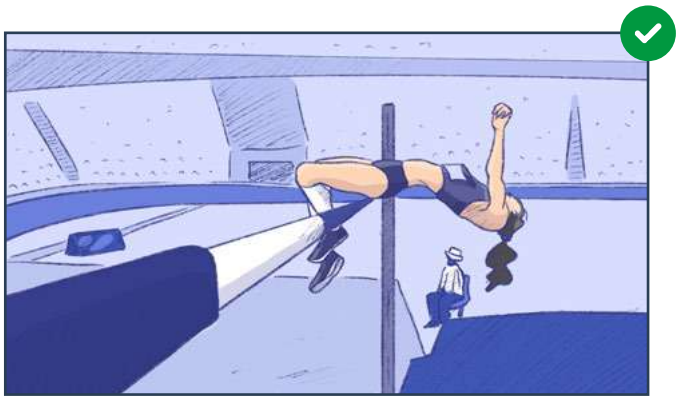
Zooming in or using slow motion of the athlete going over the bar diminishes technical insight and increases the risk of compromised images, not only as they clear the bar but also immediately after they land on the mat. If wider replays from this angle are employed, it is advisable to cut off the replay before they touch down.



Mini Cam - Mi

Positive Angles:

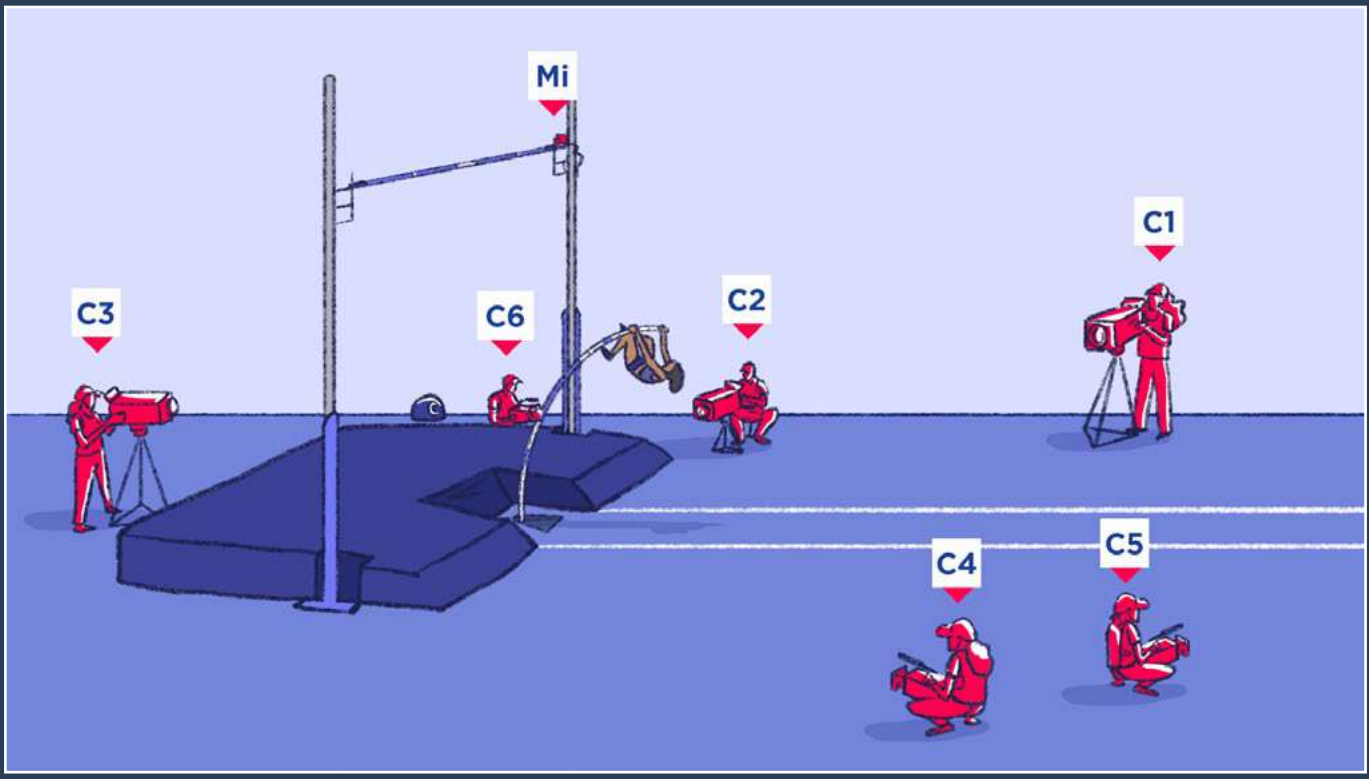
This angle can not only show the audience the reason why the bar might have been knocked off but also, if it was cleared, how much space was left.



In high jump, the position over the bar is a direct result of the run-up. Success depends on having the right rhythm, maintaining high hip position during running and take-off, running the bend properly, and launching from an ideal distance. For educational coverage, Camera 1 and Camera 3 are excellent for showcasing running technique, while Camera 5 can capture the critical body position in the final steps—where the jumper must tilt toward the mat to harness the centrifugal force that makes successful jumps possible. It's essential for viewers to understand why we run the way we do, and and why properly running the bend in the second part of the run up is so crucial to performance.

— **Blanka VLAŠIĆ**
Olympic High Jumper

POLE VAULT

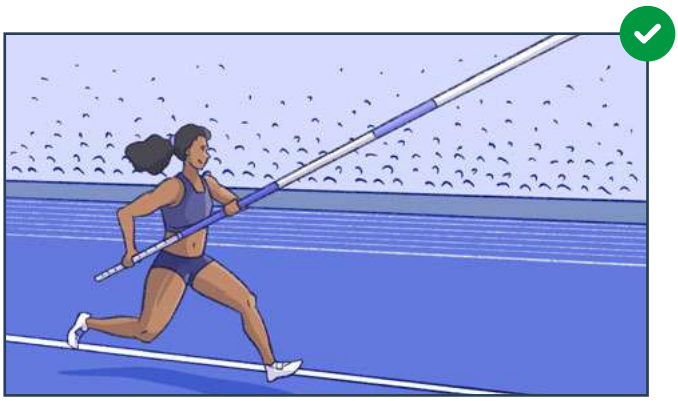


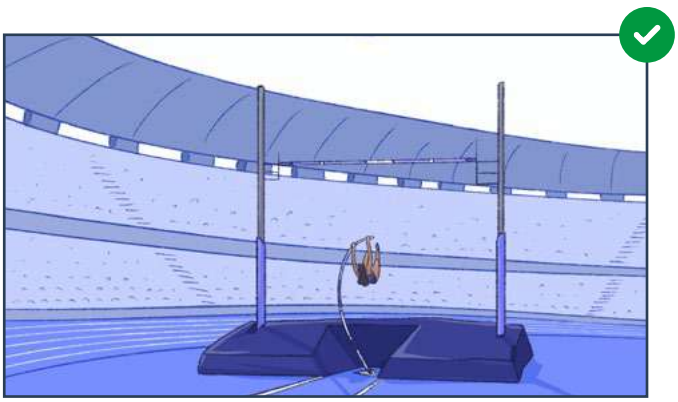
An example of a camera plan

Camera 1 - C1

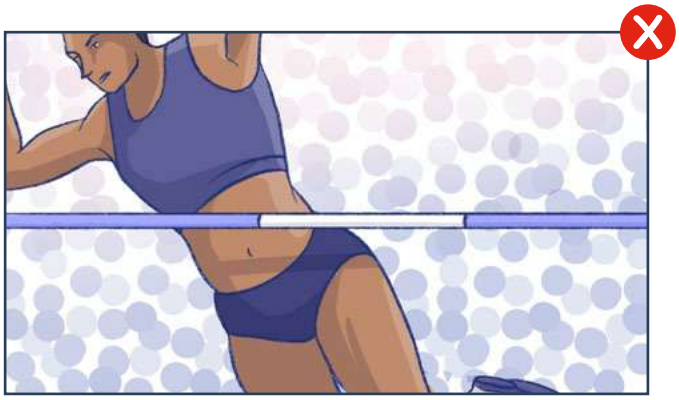
Positive Angles:

This camera is frequently the primary angle for capturing the run-up and vault over the bar. It is positioned adjacent to the runway and maintains a wide view as the athlete vaults. When slowed down, this can also serve as a crucial replay angle, revealing the last six strides before they plant the pole.





This angle is sometimes used for a replay angle but when zoomed in it can offer shots like this. This replay doesn't offer anything to the commentator or the audience.



Camera 2 - C2

Positive Angles:

This angle can be used to offer artistic shots without being compromising; it can also be an alternative shot to Camera 3 for the 'name and previous heights cleared' graphic.

Negative Angles:

At times, it's difficult to anticipate when an athlete will bend over in front of a camera, and sometimes it's impossible to avoid; in this instance the athlete is lifting the pole, and a closer shot of her face beforehand or the camera operator moving to the side of her might have helped avoid this image.

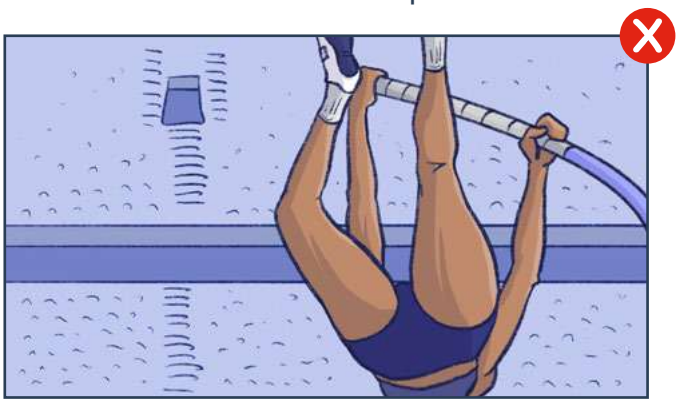
Camera 3 - C3

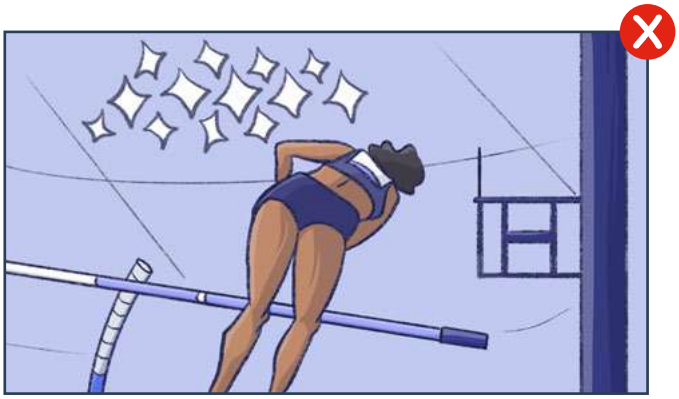
Positive Angles:

This angle is often used to animate the athlete's name before the run-up. It can also provide an alternative head-to-toe angle for the start of the run-up.

Negative Angles:

Often, this camera has a SSM lens and can be used for replays. Staying tight on the athlete can result in compromising images. Offering a wider shot and getting off the replay once the athlete is over the bar is preferred.

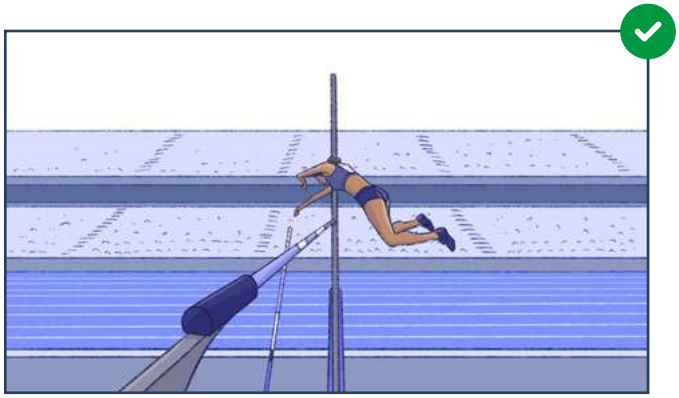




Mini Cam - Mi

Positive Angles:

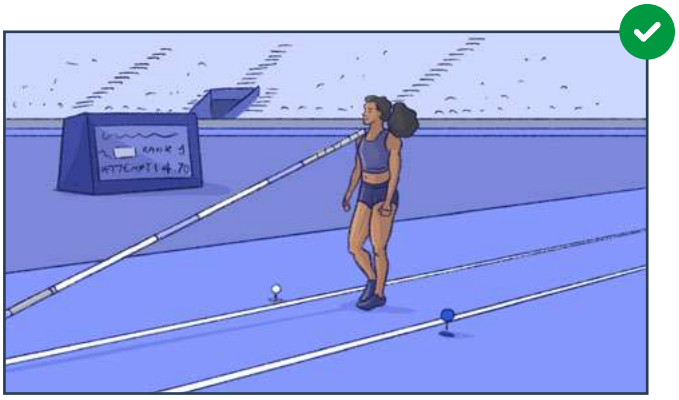
This angle is used to show the distance between the athlete and the bar. It's a great angle for commentators and coaches.



Camera 4 and 5 - C4 C5

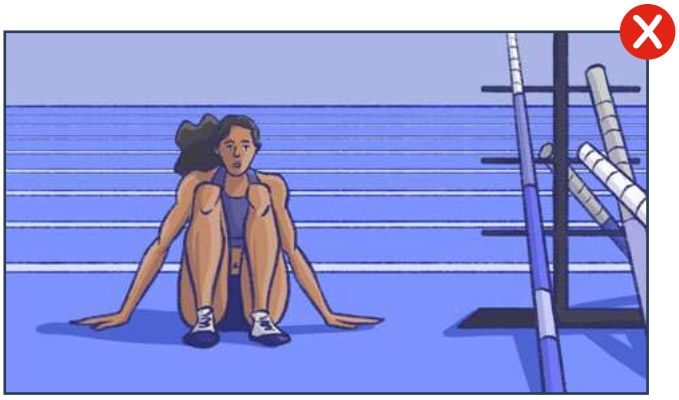
Positive Angles:

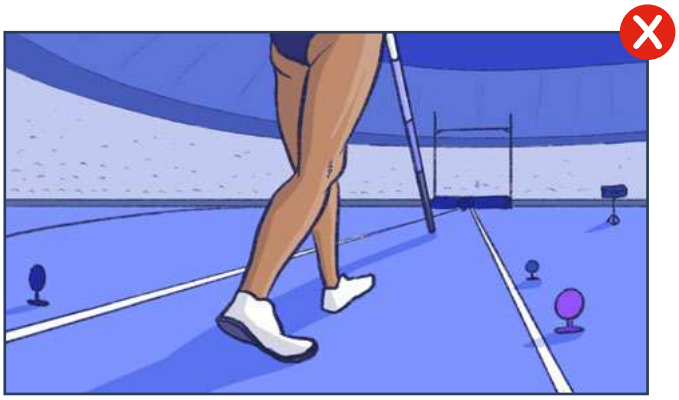
Handheld cameras provide the opportunity to get close to the athlete, whether they are celebrating with coaches or sitting nervously. They can also be used to animate the clearance/fail graphic after a vault.



Negative Angles:

Often, the roaming cameras provide artistic shots of the athletes; however, there are times when these angles can be compromising and uncomfortable for the athlete, particularly when the camera is positioned low or behind them.





Camera 6 - C6

Positive Angles:

This angle can offer a clean shot of the athlete after they land, showing their emotion.

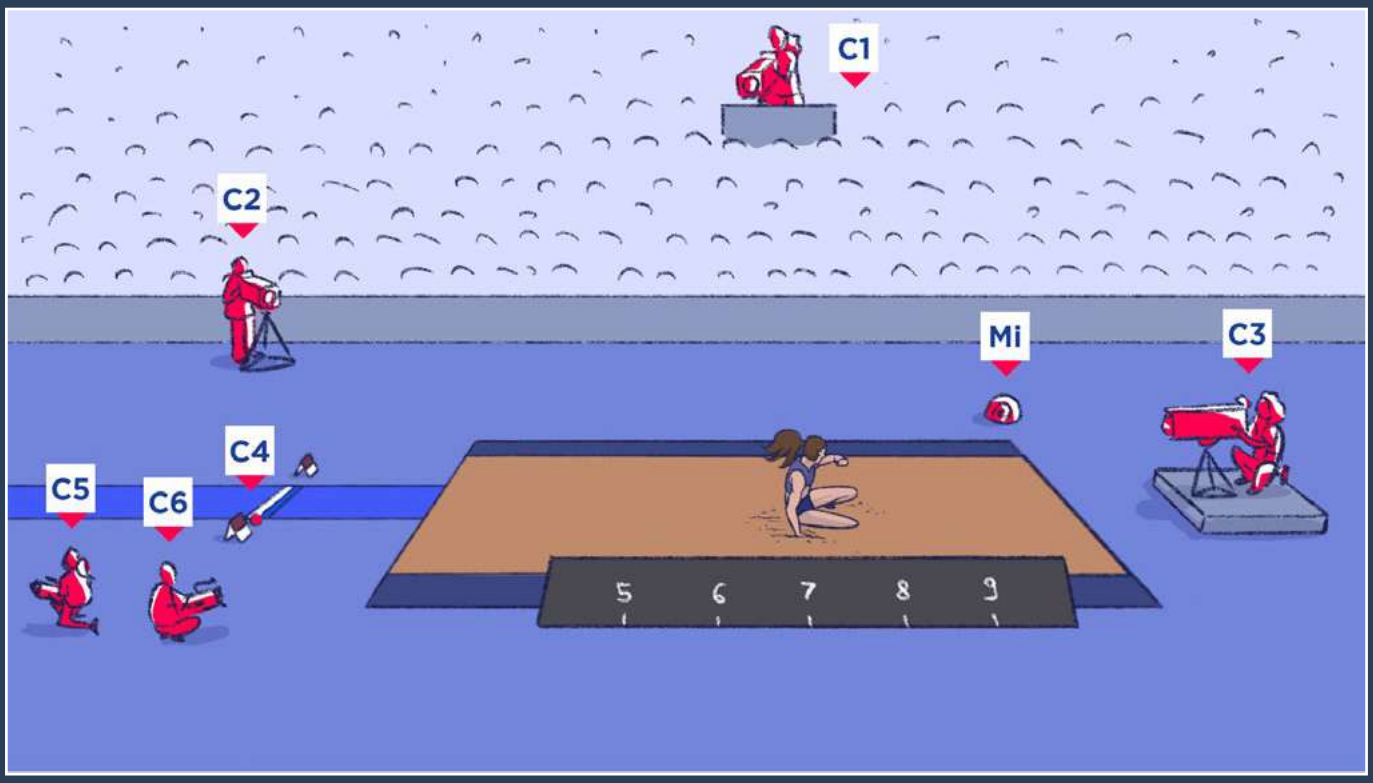
Negative Angles:

This image was taken from a SSM replay; the angle doesn't offer anything to the commentators or audience; it only offers a compromising image.

"The most educational camera angles for pole vaulting focus on the approach and take-off: those crucial last 6 steps, the penultimate stride speed, and the position at take off. Then showing the invert technique after leaving the ground. Commentators can discuss these technical elements at length with the right replay angles. By focusing on these aspects that make up 90% of the jump, rather than just the bar clearance and landing, we not only provide more valuable insight but also naturally eliminate potentially compromising camera angles.

— **Holly BRADSHAW**
Olympic Pole Vaulter

HORIZONTAL JUMPS



An example of a camera plan

Camera 1 - C1

Positive Angles:

This angle is used as the main angle for the run-up and jump. It shows each of the steps from a side view, usually with AR graphics showing the distance to where the athlete lands. Staying full-length on the athlete gives the audience and commentators a technical view of the run-up and landing. The last 6 strides before take-off are most relevant for technical analysis.

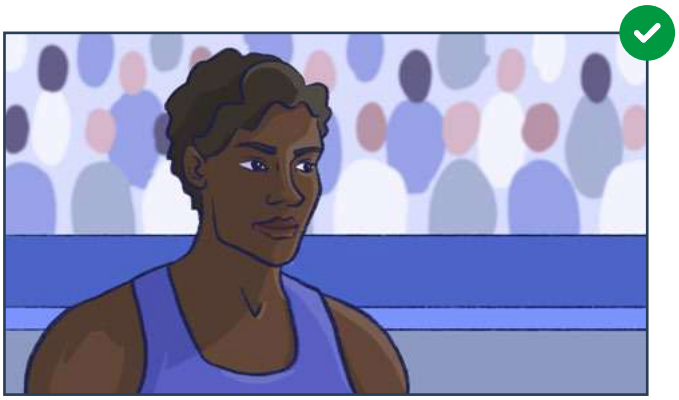
Negative Angles possibilities:

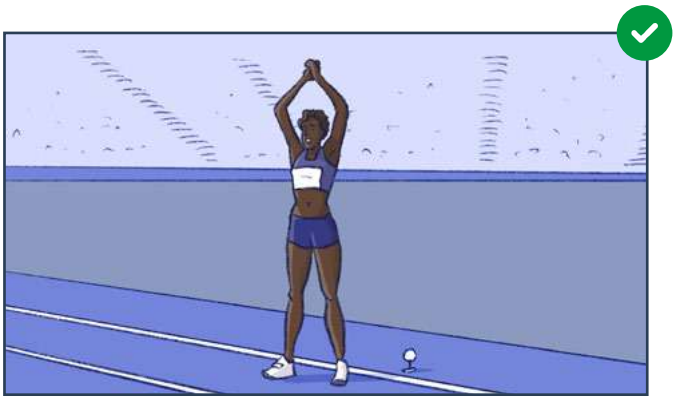
Although this does not occur often, if you zoom in on an athlete exiting the pit with their back facing the camera, it can result in a compromised image. Maintaining a wider shot or zooming in on their face (if you are cutting back to this camera as they exit) will be helpful.

Camera 2 - C2

Positive Angles:

This camera is positioned at the start of the run-up. It's often used to animate the athlete's data graphic or to identify the crowd or other athletes waiting on the benches.

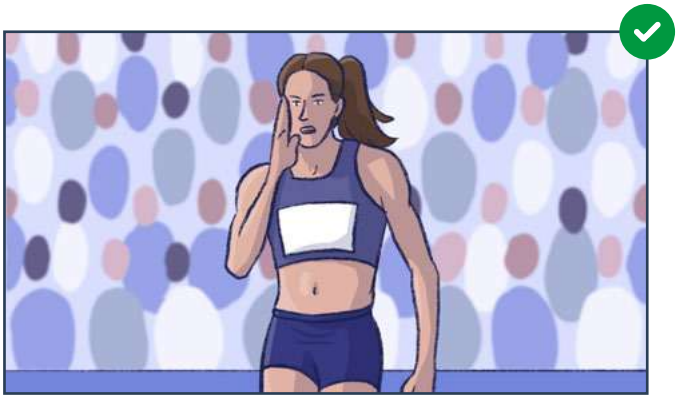


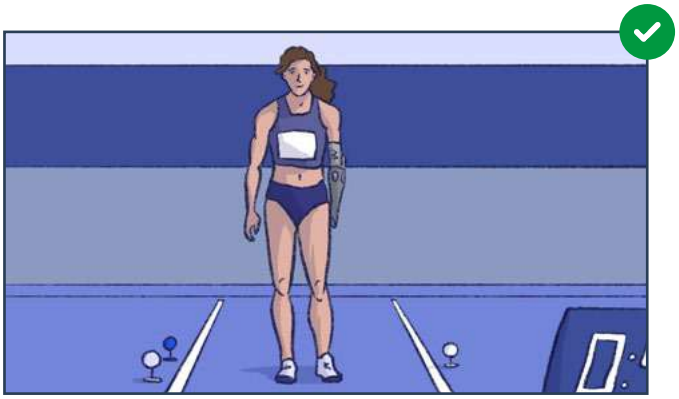


Camera 3 - C3

Positive Angles:

This angle can be used for the animation of the athletes' data graphic before the run up. It can also give an alternative angle for the start of the run up.





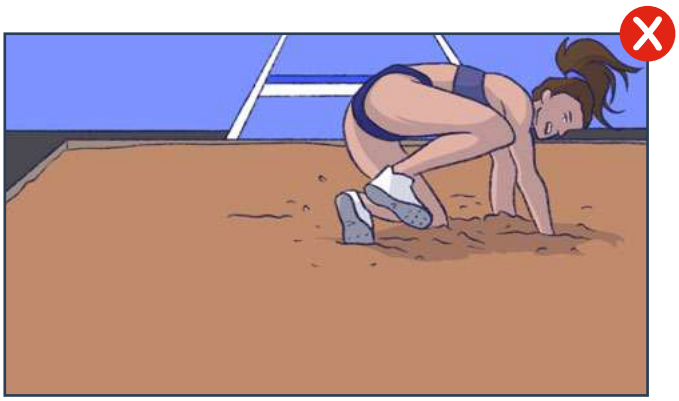
Negative Angles:

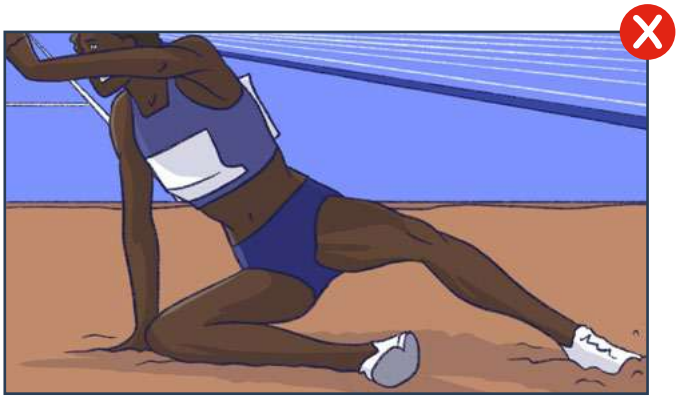
Although this angle is suitable for the beginning of the run-up, once the athlete has commenced running, it does not provide any insight for the commentators or coaches.

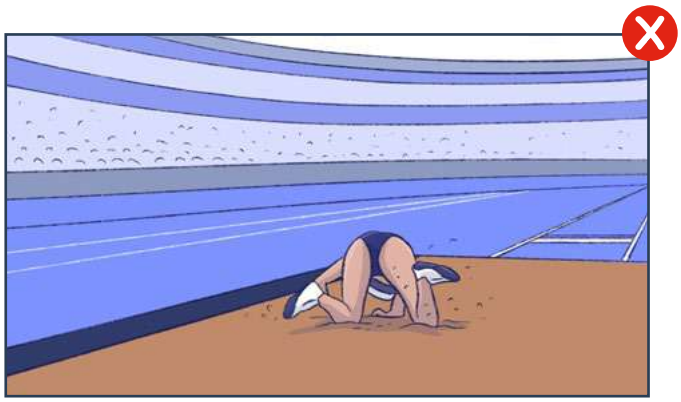
Remaining on this angle for the landing and exit from the sand pit is likely to produce an unflattering image; it is crucial that any slow-motion replays are reviewed first to ensure that compromising images do not air.

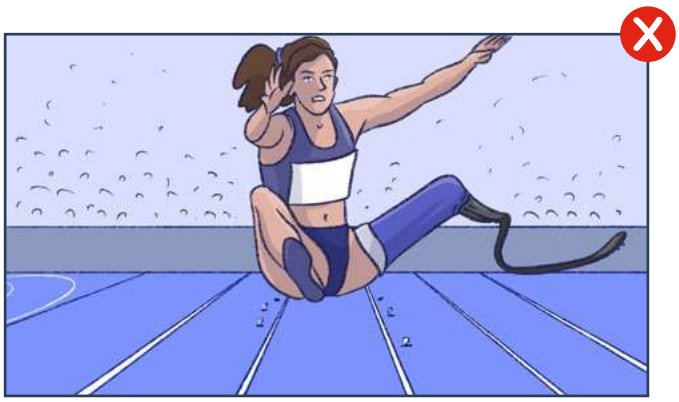
Slow motion replays from side-on are preferable for technical analysis.

Additionally, Camera 3 is often a hazard for athletes doing run throughs in warm up. If used, optimising mobility by having Camera 3 on wheels or a pole cam would be favourable.





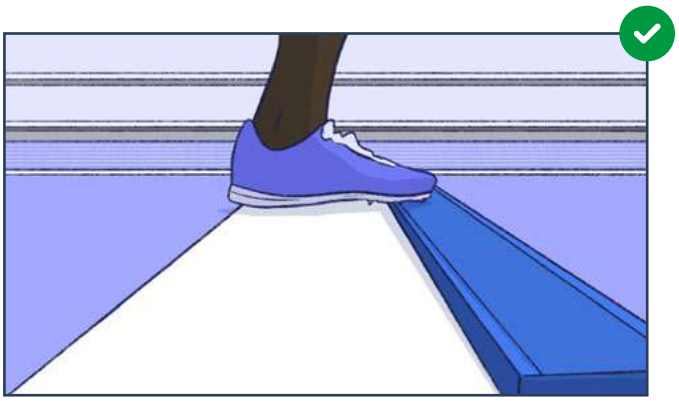


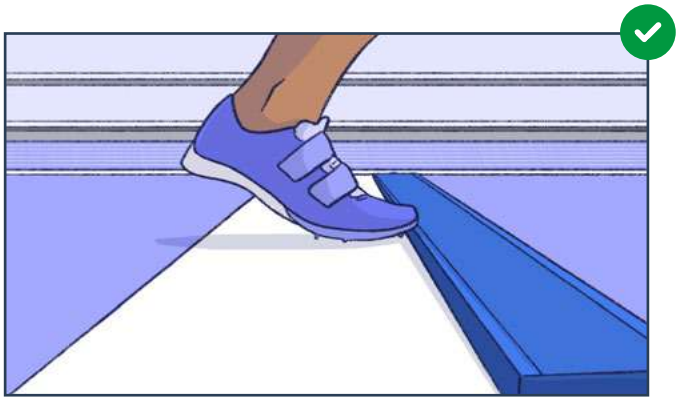


Camera 4 - C4

Positive Angles:

Using this angle to illustrate foot position on the board is highly informative for spectators and commentators.





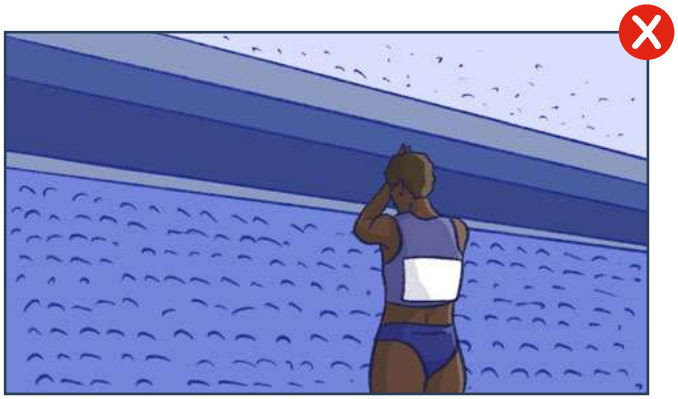
Camera 5 and 6 - C5 C6

Positive Angles:

Handheld cameras effectively capture interactions between coaches and athletes, including technical exchanges and celebrations.

Negative Angles:

Often, the roaming cameras provide artistic shots of the athletes; however, there are times when these angles can be compromising and uncomfortable for the athlete, particularly when the camera is positioned low or behind them.

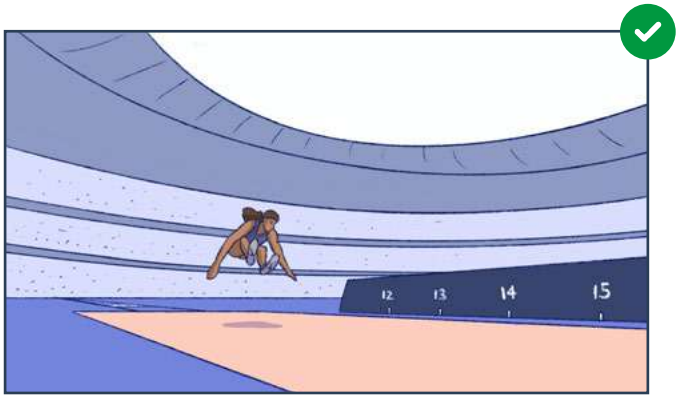


Camera Mi (Pico-H/H-pole cam)

Mi

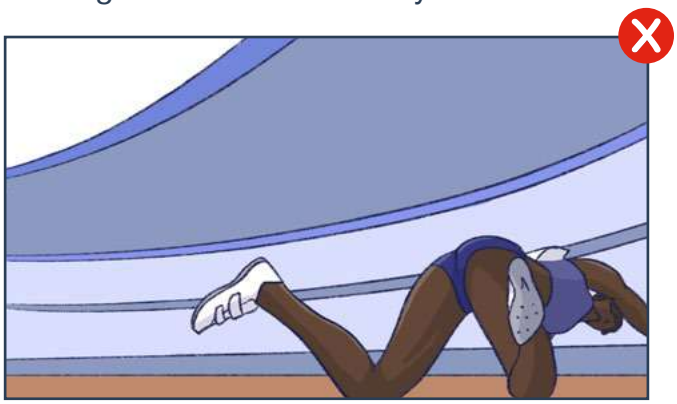
Positive Angles:

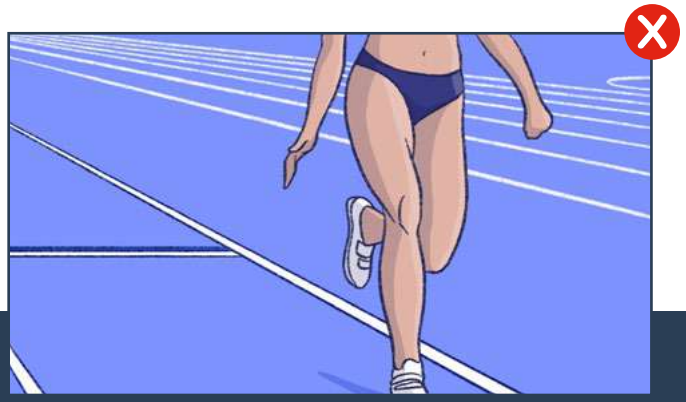
This angle can show the perspective of how high the athlete is in the air, sometimes this replay angle can just be of the celebration after the landing.



Negative Angles:

This angle is usually from a pico but sometimes a handheld camera resting next to the sandpit or a pole camera have been used. Any camera shooting from below an athlete has a high chance of producing compromising images. Zooming in and using slow motion replays from this angle needs to be carefully monitored.





Our sport offers numerous opportunities to showcase technique and the beauty of movement:

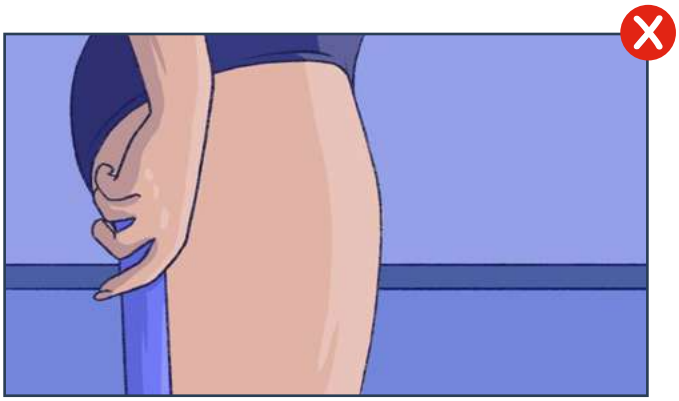
- Displaying slow-motion shots that highlight technical precision, such as the take-off moment or the perfect stride.
- Using innovative camera angles (e.g., aerial perspective) to emphasize the dynamics and strength of the event.
- Introducing educational graphics during broadcasts, where possible, to explain key success factors and biomechanics.

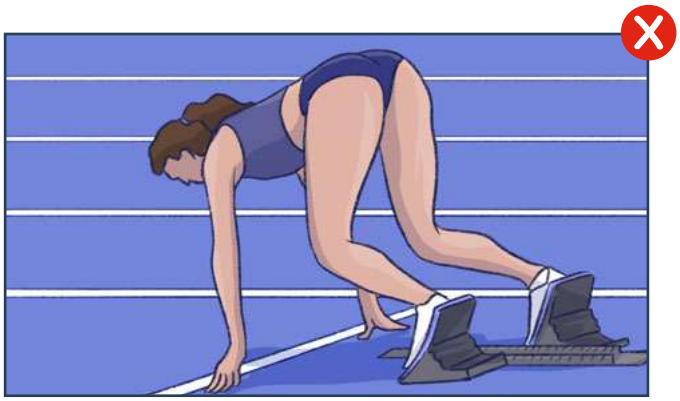
— **Ivana ŠPANOVIĆ**
Olympic Long Jumper

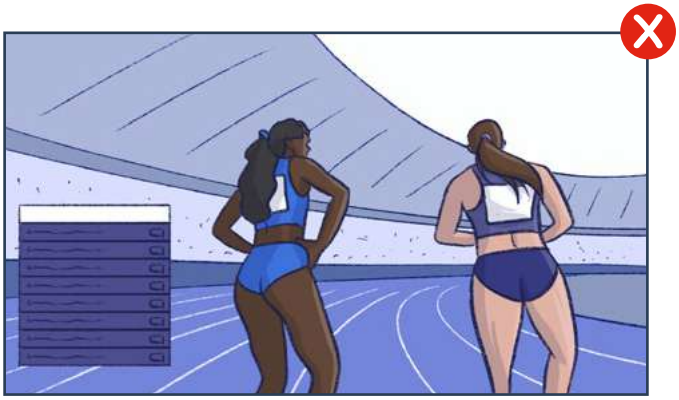
RUNNING EVENTS

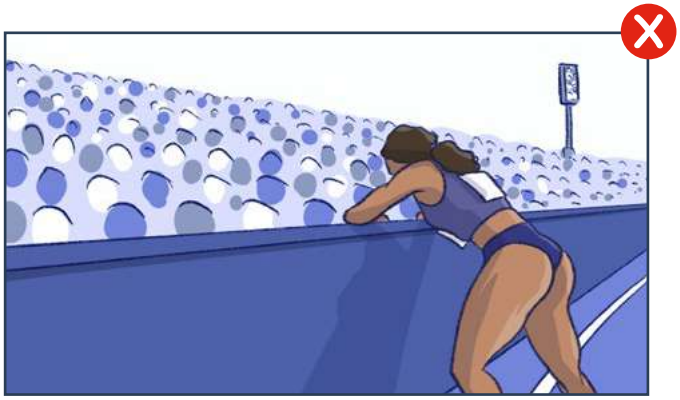
Negative Angles possibilities:

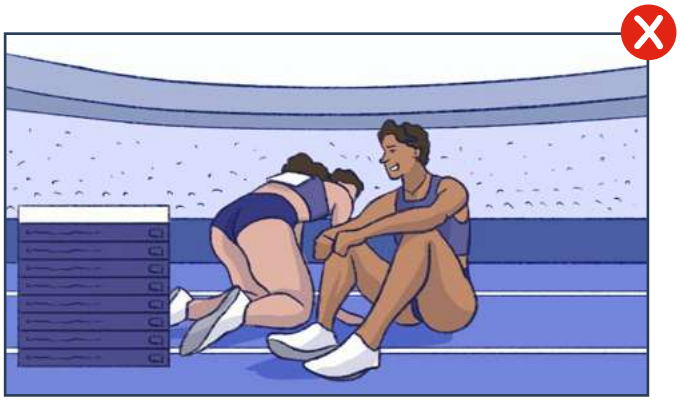
On the track, various excellent camera angles provide the audience and commentators with a technical and competitive view of the races. However, these angles can sometimes compromise the view of the athletes. Capturing athletes from below the pelvis is more likely to result in unflattering images. Therefore, it is preferable to stay in front of the athlete whenever possible or avoid very tight shots, especially during their final preparations at the starting line and in moments of fatigue when they may collapse onto the track.











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