

Place: Robbinsville NJSIAA Headquarters

Date and Time: June 10, 2014 – 9:30 am

Members present: Ed Colona (Meet Director South Section –Egg Harbor & Group Meet at Egg Harbor) Bill Milone (former coach and Meet Director of North 2 at Plainfield), Rich Refi (active coach and Meet Director of Central at Hillsborough), Carl Rickershauser (State Track and Field Rules Interpreter), Jared Wexler (Meet Director North I at River Dell), John Schwartz and John Tonerio (Co-Directors of North 2 at Ridge), Pam Willson (Coach at Hackettstown), Len Pietrewicz (active coach and Meet Director of North I at Randolph), Shemayne Williams (Coach at Immaculate Heart), Al Stumpf (represents athletic directors), Bob Byrnes, (Head State Clerk), and Donald Danser (NJSIAA Staff)

Members absent: Jay Demarest (Meet Director of Central at Monmouth), Lou Fraulo (Assistant Director and Tournament Assignor of Officials), Bill DePonte (Executive Committee representative), Tommy Mason (Coach Penns Grove).

Observers: Pat Montferrat and Robert Kellert (NJRunners)

I. General items.

A. It was generally agreed that, for the most part, the tournament went as well as could be expected with a new system for seeding the sectionals being put into place and Mother Nature interfering with some of the sectional meets. Speaking of which, since this does not come up that often, we may need to put into the regulations what should happen when a meet is “suspended” and resumed the next day. Some referees did not interpret this situation correctly.

When a meet is suspended and resumed the next day, only events in progress are continued where they left off at the time of the suspension. For any event (track or field) that had not started, clerks and field event judges should re-seed these events, i.e. let the coaches take back or change any entries they wish from the previous day and any withdrawals would not count as an entry against that athlete.

If the meet is resumed the same day, all seeding that has taken place before the suspension stand and any withdrawals would count as an event for that athlete.

With all new procedures, there were glitches, some very serious ones. One mistake made was not to force all timer/scorer companies to run the meet as if it were not seeded. Six out of the nine did so and had minimal problems. Next year, they will be handed an unseeded data base.

Because the system was new, we anticipated that some schools would fail to follow instructions and would not have any seeds. Treating them all as NT's would not make for a good meet. That was the reason for only protecting the top 8 performers for those who did follow directions. Also, to allow for other problems, clerks were to accept times supplied by coaches for all places below 8 in each event. Since trials are run in the 100 and HH, only two individual events are truly “troublesome” to a good athlete did not get a seed for whatever reason: the 200 and 400. The worse seed a good athlete should have gotten in these two events is the 2nd fastest section. And the same would hold true for the 2 relays run in lanes (4x100 and 4x400). In the 200 we protected 12 on a six lane track and 16 on an eight lane track. That would make the 3rd section the worst seed for a good athlete.

We also wanted to maintain as much flexibility for the coaches as possible, so any preprinted card could be changed. The only caveat for coaches is that they need to remember that on the sectional level, the first four athletes are assumed to be the actual runners. If they weren't they would need to indicate on the card who was actually running.

Another unanticipated hitch was one site interpreting the Rules Interpreter's directions on how many performers there should be in a given race (not run in lanes) (800 and up) with how many runners are protected. We will work harder to make sure this miscommunication does not happen again.

We had no one suggest that we do away with this procedure and we will work hard to make it function as smoothly as possible. Robert Kellert at Milesplit (NJRunners) will try to get the programming at Milesplit changed so that anytime we update the performances all entered athletes will be looked at, not just those who had a performance already in the system at the time the coach entered them. This flaw caused many NT's that should not have been.

B. Another misconception that some officials and meet management personnel are inadvertently perpetuating is what can and cannot be appealed. No disqualification can be appealed to the jury of appeals or to Robbinsville that is based on a judgment call. Especially false starts. Out of zone, interference and the like are judgment calls. Of course, any coach who wants can write and question such calls, but there is no way they can be overturned. Misapplication of a rule is another matter, but even this has to be resolved at the meet within the time limits of the rules. Appeals for advancement based on called fouls or official errors are the only appeals that can be heard.

C. Contrary to what some people think, when advancing runners from preliminaries to finals based on TIME ONLY, those attempting to qualify under these conditions should run "head to head" to quote the rule. When asked should we change this, no one suggested we should, after a lengthy discussion of alternatives of using place and time. Therefore the practice this committee put into effect last year will continue next year.

II. Correspondence

1. First letter questioned the wind readings at Egg Harbor for the group meet.

Those who were there said it was definitely a head wind and the wind readings should have been negative for most of the races. They were reported as positive (i.e. tail winds). The wind gauge being used did not have automatic feed to the computer and therefore we concluded the person recording must not have seen the minus sign and ignored it when reporting the readings.

2. Next e-mail had 4 items in it:

a. Coordinate the results from both group meets on line, having results being reported as they happen.

This would require another person working and would require about \$400 to pay the operator. Instant results are nice but not necessary. However, this being said, there is no excuse for the timing company at South Plainfield for not reporting any results (Friday's or Saturday's) until after 7 pm on Saturday. They promised this won't happen next year. As far as knowing who the wild cards are the same day: This is not an automated process and the present program (Hy-Tek) cannot help with it. It becomes tricky in the 4x100 and in the 100 and HH where trials are also used to determine wild cards.

b. 4x800 sections at the group meet level should have been more than one section.

The correspondence on this issue was 50-50. However the committee established the following guidelines for the Group Meets next year which will be added to the tournament regulations:

800 – two sections – split down the middle

1600 – 19 or fewer, one section, 20 or more, 2 sections, split down the middle

3200 – one section

4x800 – 19 or fewer, one section, 20 or more, 2 sections split down the middle

c. Eliminating the 4x100 and 4x800 from sections and groups, and just have qualifying teams in the MOC as when these events were first introduced

Coaches asked for these events and the system of advancement used this season. No one else has asked they be dropped. The committee felt most schools are satisfied with the system as is.

d. Create a reasonable time frame for clerks to have athletes report for hip numbers and lined up.

We always stress with our clerks to make calls as late as possible but a "reasonable time frame" has so many variables like number of athletes in the event, the event itself (events run in lanes takes longer than other events) –

even where the events are clerked plays a role. But as already said, the best we can do is to remind the clerks to pace the meet as best they can.

3 – Two officials proposed making changes in the order of events.

Two years ago when the 4x100 and 4x800 were voted in by the membership, we had a marathon meeting to determine the order of events, using a lot of written input from coaches – data collected at the sectionals of that year. Since then not one coach has suggested we change the present order. Therefore the committee felt no need to act on these proposals.

4. This writer wants a more definite start time for the field events at the meet of champions. He was especially concerned with the indefinite time the event would start not just for his athletes, but for their parents and spectators.

Again, at the request of throwing coaches, we established the principle that no athlete would be throwing two implements at the same time, so the schedule read as follows:

Boys would start the Discus and the girls the Javelin. When the girls finished the Javelin they would move to the Shot while the boys would go to the Javelin. The girls would go from the Shot to the Discus and the boys would move from the Javelin to the Shot.

This meant that the boys shot would not start for several hours into the meet. The above schedule was also predicated on the premise that the shot and discus were lighted venues as they were for years at South Plainfield. Sandy destroyed one of the light towers at the field and when the field lights were replaced this year, the discus lights were not part of the new lighting system. Meet management did not know this until the day of the meet. If we had stuck to the schedule, the discus venue would be in the dark before the girls would get a chance to throw. Therefore we were forced to start the girls discus at 5:30 before they had finished the shot.

Next year, if facilities are the same the schedule will be the following:

2:30 Boys Javelin, Boys Shot, Girls Discus

Boys discus will start as soon as the Girls discus is over.

Girls Javelin and shot will start as soon as the boys are finished at their respective venues.

5. Four items

a. Quotes the NFHS rule concerning forming heats.

The rule quoted only applies when advancement is based on places NOT ON TIME. See I.C above

b. Quotes NFHS rules about two runners in the same heat.

Again, rule does not apply when advancing on time since the rule requires the runners to be seeded head to head by time. Granted, this is NOT the preferred method of seeding but since the committee does not want to use place for advancement (at the sectional level, it could take up to 4 races to find the qualifiers in the larger groups) the committee wanted to stick to the present system. One of the meet directors suggested we use place and time in the groups since we could do that with three heats taking 1st and 2nd and the next 2 fastest times, but the committee said to stick with the same procedure throughout the tournament.

C – 4x800 should have been more heats.

Already discussed, - see II.2.b above

D – Would like the starting heights for HJ and PV lower than the 12th best height.

Egg Harbor has two venues for HJ and PV but South Plainfield has only 1 for HJ. To do three groups each day with lower heights would take too long. Also – at this level, the best athletes in these events should not have to wait as long as they did at sectionals before the bar reaches the heights they normally come in on. In actual practice the starting height is lower than the 12th place, especially in the girls HJ where the field is not as competitive (i.e. such as when only 6 or seven would have cleared higher than the proposed 12th place starting height) Remember the rule is “no higher than the 12th seed.” This gives the coach a good advance notice as what to expect for starting height and plan the use of his/her athletes according. No change in the present procedure was made.

6. Can we make a rule for the future if ever a meet gets suspended, all events that have not yet started can be changed?
See I.A. above – Yes!

7. Against the 4x800 at Groups run in one section

II.2.b above

8. This writer would like to see a different venue for Meet of Champions

And as is the case, no research of the facilities suggested was done by the writer. Rutgers has no lights or bleachers and no double venue for pole vault. Princeton has made it clear for several years that we are not welcome to use their facilities, and I am not sure they have a double venue for pole vault. Some committee members suggested John F. Kennedy of Iselin and Franklin High School. To be considered, they must have an 8-lane track and a minimum of a double venue for Pole Vault – need lights and if discus and/or Javelin are not double venues then they need to be lighted venues. And most importantly, they must indicate a willingness to host the event.

9. Observation about Monsignor Donovan – Shot Put sector needs to be made bigger. Throws over 55' went outside and made a measurement more of a guess than an accurate reading. Egg Harbor facilities were top notch. Too many dq's in the HH at Egg Harbor. Although a couple of dq's were overturned by the meet referee. I agree with him that more than one official needs to see the hurdle infraction for it to stand.

Our state rules interpreter was the meet referee at Egg Harbor and will stress again hurdle infractions at the next rules interpretation meetings. We also discussed the possibility of a new site that could host all 4 non-public sectionals. Shemayne Williams (Coach at Immaculate Heart) will explore that possibility further and hopefully will have a site before next year.

10. This e-mail was a complaint about two incidents at a sectional meet. The first involved a passing out of zone call in the 4x100 and the second was the misapplication of a rule in the high jump.

Coach just wanted us to know about the two incidents.

11. Another e-mail from an official with three suggestions:

a. Designate 4 shots to be used by all contestants to save time of weighing each shot before each attempt.

Coaches on the committee did not like this proposal. We do it indoors to protect the Intermediate East gym floor, but outdoors with more throwers, and two distinctly different shots (brass and iron) many thought would actually slow down the event while contestants waited for either the brass or iron shot to be brought back.

b. Sand in the pits at South Plainfield not the correct sand which makes accurate measurements harder.

Len P says it's the correct sand, but it's too dry. It just needs to be dampened a little. We will pass this information on to South Plainfield.

c. At the back of the field toward the left side of the Score Board the lack of grass in this area makes that shot put area (*and the clerking area*) too dry and dusty with any kind of wind. If it can't be paved perhaps a substance like Calcium Chloride, CaCl₂ could be sprinkled on the bare dirt surface to greatly reduce the problem.

We will pass this suggestion on to South Plainfield.

12. This coach described what happened at Monmouth where the timing crew and meet management did not fully understand the new system. As a result the timing crew was changing coaches' seeds to fit what they thought was a pre-seeded meet and would not accept any handwritten times. The coach also wanted a clarification who can challenge seed times.

Of course, the coach was right and we discussed this situation at the beginning of the meeting (see above). What concerns the committee is the alleged changing of times by the timing crew. NO ONE, OFFICIALS OR OTHERWISE, EXCEPT ANOTHER COACH can challenge a seed time submitted by a coach. This has been the standing policy for several years. No official or timing crew member can change a seed without the coach approving unless the coach loses the challenge. The challenged coach must show proof of the seed if challenged. If he/she cannot, then the challenged seed must be changed.

13. The annual letter asking for a change in qualifying from the Group Meet to the Meet of Champions.

The last time this possibility was proposed, it was surveyed and turned down 75% against changing the present system to 25% in favor of changing the system of six auto-qualifiers for each group + 6 wild cards per event.

14. Complaint about the officials being sloppy in the way they were measuring the shot at the Meet of Champions. E-mail was forwarded to the assignor of officials. This was the only complaint about this officiating crew.

15. This writer had two items

a. It is recommended that a protocol be put in place to deal with the number of participants in both heats and flights. This information should be made available in the regulations and should be consistent and transparent.

See II.2.b above. We don't mention flights in field because NFHS rules cover them (5 to 12). Regulations already cover how hj and pv will be conducted (5-alive system) and LJ and TJ (open pit at sectionals – flights in Groups and MOC)

b. Revisit the scoring system from a year ago.

The biggest reason the scoring system of a year ago was not continued was the difficulty to configure the computer to carry it out. None of the advancers could be done automatically and all the schools that were in the meet required something be "clicked" on to make the scoring system work. If these were there only reasons, however, we would have continued it. The pv and hj took a lot longer to run – not much of an issue at Egg Harbor with two HJ venues, but a big issue at South Plainfield – and the scoring of the HH and 100 was a big problem. As was said at the meeting, a different scoring system that could be implemented without all the extra man-hours and aggravation the other caused and one that had little or no effect on the running time of meet would be considered by the committee.

16. Athletic.net has offered their services in place of Milesplit. If Milesplit can improve its updating process we will stay with them, if not, we will give Athletic.net a much closer look.

17. A letter concerning the shot and discus at the Meet of Champions

See letter 4 above

18. Two Items

a. Do you think it's possible to pre-seed the MOC so we can publish heat sheets and go to a time schedule?

The coaches did not like a time schedule because it leads to trouble if the meet runs early or late and may cause athletes (and parents) to miss events. Also, to declare early where the athletes will run takes away flexibility from the athlete who wants to see how the 800 goes before deciding whether to run in the 1600, or 3200 or relay.

III. Change in the Meet of Champions date.

Because of the length of the Meet of Champions, the committee has recommended the meet be on a Saturday, starting at 11:00 am. The present 2:30 Start on a School day means students are missing at least ½ or more of Wednesday and many are probably not making morning classes on Thursday if they are leaving South Plainfield on a school bus at 8:00 pm or later.

Therefore the meet of champions will move to Saturday June 4, 2015. This gives schools who do proms, or other such activities the chance to plan accordingly.

IV – Changes to the tournament regulations.

1. Changes noted above.

2. Dates: Sectionals May 22-23, 2015
 Group Meets – May 29-30, 2015
 Meet of Champs – June 3, 2015

3. Entries due May 1, 2015

4. Boys will go first in running events, with the larger schools going before the smaller schools at sectionals

5. Randolph javelin will throw off a turf field

6. All sites will be inspecting spikes ¼" pyramid on all tracks and runways

7. Group Meets – South Plainfield will host Groups 2, 3, and Non-Public A
 Egg Harbor will host Groups 1, 4, and Non-Public B

8. Order of Events Boys before girls and Groups 2, 3, A at South Plainfield
 Boys before girls and Groups 1, 4, B at Egg Harbor