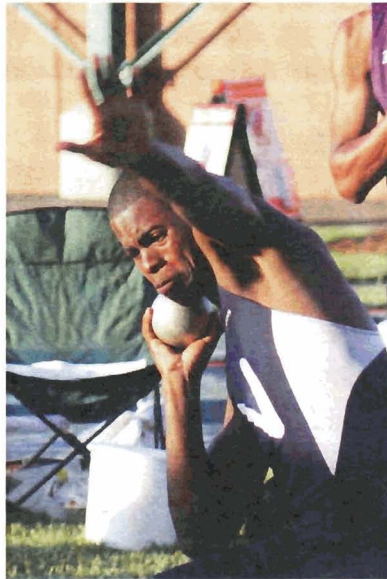


Mentoring the 1st Year Official

A checklist of Best Practices
And procedures to official a regular meet



Pre Meet Duties

- 1) Inspect the track and request removal of any debris that would pose a safety problem. Also, become familiar with the markings on the track for starting lines, exchange zones, break lines, hurdle marks, etc.
- 2) Inspect the field event areas to confirm the areas are properly marked, landing pads meet the rule book specs and extra padding is in place where required by rules.
- 3) Conduct a pole vault inspection before permitting any warm ups. Check weight certifications for each vaulter, poles for weight specs and proper taping. If a vaulter's pole is below his/her weight or is to be DQ'd for another reason, inform the vaulter that they must get permission to use another vaulter's pole in order to compete.
- 4) Do not allow warm-ups in any field event until there is adult supervision.
- 5) Ask the head coach of the home team how heats are to be organized and run. Ex: first heat only is the scoring heat for varsity, how many places will score. This will assist the starter in placing runners on the track or in lanes as well as the finish line judge in recording results.
- 6) When time and conditions permit, call all teams together to inform them of the jewelry rule and sportsmanship rule and any adjustments allowed in the uniform rule where weather is a problem.

The Starter

- 1) Request the home team's coach for the shells and the starter's pistol. Become familiar with the loading and reloading of the pistol. Always keep two shells in the chamber before starting any race in case a false start may be called.
- 2) Know which events are 2 command starts and which events are 3 command starts. Know the arm signals for each. Arrange with the finish line official the signal you will need to receive to know the finish line is ready for the next heat or race.
- 3) Know which is the preferred position to place your self to get the best view of all of the competitors on the starting line. This will vary by event.
- 4) Use a steady cadence with a firm voice when issuing the starting commands. Project loud enough to be heard without shouting. Don't rush the delivery, but also don't hold the runners in the set position more than one to two seconds. Otherwise, if runners are not "frozen" on set, recall them up and start over again. An amplifying device may be used particularly for the staggered start events.
- 5) If a false start is to be called, immediately inform the runner and ask him/her to step off the track.
- 6) For all events, recheck uniforms especially for relays. Also for relays, inspect each baton to be sure no dents or hand holds are evident.
- 7) Instruct runners when they may cut to the inside after the start. This will vary by event.
- 8) For relays, instruct each runner by their position when they may accept the baton (where the exchange zone markings are) and when they may or may not cut to the inside.
 - a. For the 4x100m R, request exchange zone judges to go to a zone. Coordinate with each judge the signal you'll need to receive from them to know all is ready before the race can start.
- 9) After the start, keep an eye on the runners for the first part of each race to be sure no one falls or is otherwise interfered with. If so, recall the start when an infraction of the rules occurs. Most of the time, this is a judgment call (as a false start is a judgment call).
- 10) At the end of the meet, return the unused shells and starter's pistol if it's not your own. Assist the finish line official if any final help is needed to wrap up the recording.
- 11) If field events are still going on, observe the event(s) to their conclusion. Offer assistance when you see it's needed or offer to relieve a volunteer to finish the event. Never leave the meet until the last event has been concluded.
- 12) If requested, sign the scorebook.

The Finish Line

- 1) Obtain an order of events if different from the rulebook's order. Also receive the entry sheets for each event.
- 2) Have a clip board, pencil with a good eraser and a stop watch and whistle to use as minimal equipment to officiate the finish line.
- 3) Always carry the rulebook or have it easy to refer to when needed to clarify a rule.
- 4) Confirm the number of places that score and the # of heats to be run in each event. If both boys and girls are competing, ask which events are run first and if any events will be combined (usually distance events get combined to avoid darkness or impending bad weather).
- 5) Coordinate with the starter the signal you will use to indicate the finish line is ready for the next start. No signal=no start.
- 6) Get acquainted with the judges/timers and determine if any or all have had experience in being a judge/timer before. Assign places of finish to each judge/timer according to their experience or preference as they offer.
- 7) Direct that if a timer/judge cannot stay to work the entire meet, they must tell you they are leaving early. Ask that a replacement take their place or reassign the judges accordingly.
- 8) If fewer runners or relay teams are on the track than the number of place finish judges, then direct lower place finish timers/judges to double up on first, then second, etc depending on the # of original assigned places to judge.
- 9) Conduct a "mini clinic" on reading a stop watch emphasizing rounding up from the hundred's digit. (I like to call this being in "Track class, not Math class", when everything is rounded up except for when the time reads zero in the hundreds column.) All final times are recorded to the highest tenth.
- 10) Have each timer practice starting/stopping their watch so you, as the official, know they can both operate the watch and can read the time.
- 11) Demonstrate that when the runner's torso reaches the nearest edge of the finish line or "breaks the plane" of the finish line is when the runner has finished the race-not after the runner has crossed the line. It is at that point the timer stops the watch.
- 12) Instruct judges/timers to get the name and school of the place finisher they were assigned. Caution the timer to not reveal the time to the runner until results are official.
- 13) The head finish judge needs to know the order of finish. The judges are to report who they picked for their place of finish to confirm what the head judge determined. Emphasize place of finish is more important than time of finish.
- 14) Once the order has been determined, record the times accordingly. If a lower place timer has a faster time than a higher place timer, adjust the times as you determine. A discussion with the whole group of timers can help determine a proper finish time when this happens.
- 15) Always keep runners and coaches away from the judges and timers when determining the results of a race. Once the final order is written down, have the results sent to the scorekeeper.
- 16) Instruct the timers to start their watches on what they see (spark/flame/smoke) from the starter's pistol. If they wait for sound, the time will be less accurate. Always ask if timers have reset their watch before the next heat or race.
- 17) Also, instruct the timers to not clear and reset their watch until told to do so.
- 18) Have the timer's stand where the starter can be seen. Announce what the event on the track is and how many laps will be run. Caution timers not to stop their watch early.
- 19) If a timer reports they missed the start or their watch failed, then offer them the head judge's watch to use if started.
- 20) At the end of the meet, instruct timers to return their watches. Thank everyone for their good help.
- 21) If field events are still going on, coordinate with the starter which events to observe/judge. Stay until the meet has concluded. Thank the coaches before leaving.

Field Events

1) MEASUREMENTS

- a. Measure to the lesser 1/4 " for LJ, TJ, Shot Put. Measure to the lesser full 1" in the discus. Keep the tape straight, taut and level when taking a measurement,
- b. In the LJ.TJ, measure from the mark made in the landing pit nearest to the take off board, even if the jumper fell backwards when landing. If there are 2 marks made that appear to be the same, measure both of them and record the shortest one.
- c. In the Shot Put and Discus, measure from the nearest edge of the mark made back to the ring extending the tape through the middle of the circle. Measure from the inside edge of the circle/stop board to the mark made in the sector.

2) FOULS

- a. In the LJ and TJ, it's a foul if the jumper:
 - i. Takes off beyond the take off board (toe extends over the edge of the board)
 - ii. Fails to reach the pit.
 - iii. Leaves the pit by coming back towards the take off board and/or the mark made in the pit.
Exit out beyond the mark made in the pit.
 - iv. TJ step sequence is illegal
- b. In the Shot Put and Discus, it's a foul if:
 - i. The competitor does not start from a stopped position
 - ii. The competitor incorrectly handles the shot put (i.e., drops below the shoulder).
 - iii. The implement lands on or over the sector line.
 - iv. The competitor touches or goes over the circle or touches the top of the Shot Put toe board
 - v. The competitor exits from the front half of the circle (must exit to the rear).
 - vi. The competitor exits before judge calls mark or foul.
 1. The official will call "Mark" only when the competitor has come under control of his movements in the circle.

3) TIME LIMITS

- a. When called up, the competitor has 1 minute to initiate an attempt in the LJ, TJ, Shot Put, Discus, and High Jump. In the Pole Vault, 90 seconds (1 1/2 min.) is permitted. Competitors in multiple events may check out with the event official to go to another event. Record the time he/she left. Inform him/her when they must return to competition in order to remain in the event.

4) SCORE SHEETS

- a. Record all competitors/schools on the score sheet (unless entries have been pre-made). In the LJ, and TJ, record the take off board being used, if more than one is provided. Have a bright colored cone or similar marker set down at the edge of the board to assist the jumper to see the board as they come down the runway.
- b. In the HJ and PV, record the opening height for each competitor. Competitors have 3 attempts permitted for each height and may pass an attempt or a height as they choose. 3 consecutive failed attempts to clear the bar will eliminate the competitor from further competition.
 - i. Mark an X for an unsuccessful attempt (a miss) and a 0 for a successful attempt (make) for each height in HJ and PV.
 - ii. The last successful height cleared is what the competitor gets credit for when determining the order of finish. See the Rule Book for how to break a tie for first place and other places that score in the meet.
- c. In the Pole Vault, record on the score sheet the standards for each vaulter and have the uprights set accordingly. Vaulters may change their standards with each attempt as they choose, but need to report the change to the official.

5) ORDER OF COMPETITION

- a. In dual meets, an "open pit" is recommended for the LJ, TJ. Jumpers must complete their 3 attempts (or 4 if permitted when no finals are held) within a set time period as announced. Otherwise, the official calls out 3 jumpers in a row (see Rule Book) for each attempt to be made,
 - b. The "5 Alive" system is used when there is a large field of jumpers/vaulters in the HJ and PV.
- Note: This method is used by only experienced officials or former jumpers who are familiar with its use.

6) STANDARDS

- a. Always mark the position of the HJ standards before competition begins-chalk or tape will do. If standards get knocked or moved, they can be reset In the PV, set the standards at zero and then back to at least 18" as per Rule Book.

7) PRE MEET

- a. Always inspect the pits for LJ, TJ, for safety. All rakes and shovels should be laid teeth down when not in use. Instruct the pit crew how to rake the pit properly to avoid previous marks being shown and no high or low areas appear that would cause an attempt to be shorter or longer than the competitor's true attempt.
- b. Inspect the landing pads for the HJ and PV as per Rule Book dimensions and needed surrounding area padding.
- c. Clean the circles for the Shot Put and Discus. Check to see if the sector lines are clearly marked and accurate as per Rule Book.
- d. Refer to info in Starter's checklist for PV inspections to be performed.

