

1 Role of Competition Officials (Volunteers)

1.1.1 Arena Manager

The Meet Manager/Arena Manager is responsible for the overall conduct of the meeting, and must ensure that all events are kept moving and start and finish on time. When it is apparent that an event will fall behind time because a group of competitors are occupied elsewhere, it is the Arena Manager who must decide to bring in another group that is ready.

1.1.2 Announcer

The Centre should aim to attract a person to the position of Announcer who can be in regular attendance at the weekly competitions and special meetings. The Announcer is a key official who can make or mar an athletics meeting. The importance of the job in communicating information to officials, team managers and competitors cannot be too highly stressed. They should be seated in a comfortable position with a good view of all competition areas and sheltered from wind, rain and sun.

1.1.3 Starters Marshalls

The Starters Marshalls are in control of the preparation of heats ready for the starter. Until the heat comes under the starter's orders, they remain under control of the Starters Marshall. The Starters Marshall places athletes in lanes either selected at random, or a quick draw of numbered marbles made by the Marshall. The athletes should wait in their heats, well behind the starting line. The first heat should move forward to the Assembly Line, three metres behind the starting line. They are then ready to come under the control of the Starter.

1.1.4 Finish Marshalls

Finish Marshalls act in conjunction with the judges and the timekeepers. Their function is to gather the athletes at the finish of an event and group them in order in which they finish, as decided by the judges. The Finish Marshall then conducts the competitors, still in finishing order, to the recorders, before returning to the finish line to receive the next heat.

1.1.5 Starters

The Starter should be raised above the general level of the track, on a portable stool, in order to obtain a good view of the competitors and so that the timekeepers can see them easily. A pair of ear plugs should be worn at all times during the process of starting track events, preferably the personal property of the Starter. A special cap gun has proved to be a very suitable and economical starting gun for Little Athletics events. Great care must be taken when handling the caps for these guns. This gun has two trigger positions, the first fires one cap to start the race. By pulling the trigger further, the second cap is fired to recall the athletes, in the event of a false start.

1.1.6 Timekeepers

All timekeepers should be placed on an elevated stand (if possible), at least 5 metres from the track and in line with the finish line, so that a good view is obtained of all lanes and the starter.

The Chief Timekeeper should attend to these duties:-

- a) Issue each timekeeper with a stopwatch in working order and make sure they are familiar with operating and reading the watch.
- b) Control the transceiver, or other means of communication with the starter.
- c) Ensure that all timekeepers and judges are in position on the stand and ready, before notifying the starter that they may proceed with the event.

All timekeepers must start the watch at the instant the smoke or flash of the gun is seen - NOT when the sound of the explosion is heard.

1.1.7 Track Judges

Track Judges should be placed on an elevated stand (if possible), at least 5 metres from the track and in line with the finish line, so that a good view is available for all lanes. For six lane events, at least six Judges should be used, one per athlete. The Judges at the finish line shall be responsible **only** for deciding the order in which the competitors finish. In judging any track event, an athlete has finished a race when any part of his/her TORSO crosses the first edge of the finish line. Head, neck, arms, legs, hands or feet are **not** considered in deciding the finish of track events.

NB. In small Centres timekeepers can also act as track judges.

1.1.8 Walk Judges

Up to six officials can position themselves equally around the circular track during the walking events. They must have some knowledge of racewalking, as their duty is to 'judge' the action of athletes and determine whether this action complies with the rules. A chief walk judge co-ordinates all judges and tallies the number of reported infringements.

1.1.9 Referees and Umpires

Separate Referees may be appointed, as required, for track and field events. The Referee is responsible to see that the IAAF rules, Association rules and local Centre rules are observed. They are responsible to decide any technical points which arise and for which provision has not apparently been made in the rules. Umpires may be appointed to assist the Referee, by reporting incidents which, in their opinion, break the rules.

NB. Such positions are not always required in smaller Centres.

1.1.10 Long Jump & Triple Jump Officials

Before competition begins, the officials should make sure that the sand in the pit is level with the run up.

When the sand is very dry, it is advisable to dampen the sand to make it easier to judge the exact break made by the athlete. The duties of the relevant officials are:-

- a) Two officials to manipulate the measuring tape and ensure that the jump is legal.
- b) One official to record results.
- c) One official to rake the sand after each jump.
- d) If possible, one official to marshal the competitors ready for competition (possibly an age manager).

After a successful jump has been completed, one official selects the break in the sand made by any part of the athlete's body which is closest to the take off board or mat and marks it with a steel spike or similar object. A second official reads the measurement and either notifies the recorder or records the performance themselves.

As soon as the measuring is complete, the first official rakes the sand the next competitor is called to make a jump. Three rounds of trials are conducted, with athletes competing in the same order in each round.

The best performance by each athlete should be recorded on a field event ticket and handed to the athlete as a personal record of his or her achievement.

1.1.11 High Jump Officials

Make sure that all equipment is safe for use before each competitor jumps.

Sufficient bags must be available to prevent an athlete falling between the bags and striking the ground. This can only be done by overlapping the bags. At regular intervals the overlapping must be checked. Mattress type landing areas are now available and these eliminate the problem. The platforms which support the cross bar should face the opposite uprights so that the bar may fall either forwards or backwards if touched by a competitor.

The duties of the relevant officials are:-

- a) Two officials to replace the bar.
- b) One official to record results.
- c) If possible, one official to marshal the competitors (possibly an age manager).

The greatest height cleared by each athlete should be recorded on a field event ticket and handed to the athlete as a personal record of his or her achievement.

1.1.12 Shot Put & Discus Officials

Prior to the event, officials must ensure all competitors are well behind the throwing circle. Only when it is their turn, may the competitor approach the circle.

The specific duties of the relevant officials are:-

- a) Two officials to manipulate the measuring tape. One official should check that the throw is legal and the other should check the position where the implement first hit the ground.
- b) One official to record results.
- c) If possible one official to marshal the competitors ready for throwing (possibly an age manager).

One official takes the zero end of the measuring tape to the point where the shot or discus first landed and holds it at the edge of the mark made by the implement nearest to the circle. This official should stand at a suitable point outside the sector, with enough slack tape to be able to reach any point of the sector quickly, so that they do not lose sight of the point where it first landed. The tape is straightened through the centre of the circle by a second official. A third official reads the distance where the tape crosses the inside face of the stopboard (in shot put) or the inside edge of the mark forming the circle and records it against the athlete's name. All the implements are then carried back to the circle. Three rounds of trials are conducted, with athletes competing in the same order in each round. The best performance by each athlete should be recorded on a field event ticket and handed to the athlete as a personal record of his/her achievement.

1.1.13 Javelin Officials

Before the competition begins, officials should ensure that the competition area is completely clear and that all competitors are well away from the throwing area. Special officials required are:-

- a) Two officials to manipulate the measuring tape. One of these officials must also check that that the throw is legal.
- b) One official to read the measurement on the tape where the tape crosses the inside edge of the arc. They also record results.
- c) One official to check the position where the javelin first touched the ground.
- d) All implements are then carried back.

1.1.14 Recorders

All track recording is done by track recorders (usually one or two) sitting at a table about 15 metres past the finish line. Children's times may be taken initially in several ways, some of the more common ones being:

- a) Judges give each child a number indicating the placing in that particular event.
- b) Timekeepers give the first placegetter a ticket with the times of all children in that race; this is then given to track recorders who will write a ticket for each placegetter and the time as per the timekeepers ticket.

2 Education of Officials

The education of parents in their duties as officials is extremely important. The benefits to the Centre are twofold, in that the parents with a better knowledge of their duties as officials are more willing to assist and they also provide a better standard at the events which is beneficial to the children who are participating.

Associations also conduct Officials Accreditation Schemes throughout each season.

The Centre Officer for Officials should actively encourage parents with the Centre, and also older children, to take part in the officials education programme.

For details regarding the content and availability of these courses, contact your own Association office.