

The Official's Bulletin

Athletics Alberta (Track & Field, Cross Country, Road Running) Association

Fall 2010

OFFICIALS' SUB-COMMITTEE

Ian Gordon
Chair

Darlene Kowalchuk
**Training Group
Coordinator**

Irene Gaudet
Statistician/Upgrading

Philippa Fairbairn
Northern Zone Coor.

Bud McInnis
Central ZoneCoor.

Cathy Simpson
Southern Zone Coor.

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A Year in Review

by Ian Gordon

It has been a very busy year for athletics in Canada. The World Masters' Championships took place in Kamloops in March, and the World Junior Championships in Moncton in July. Alberta was well represented with officials at both these competitions.

Registration of officials is fairly constant in Alberta, with 145 registered this year. Communication is almost always through e-mail, so it is important for the Athletics Alberta office to have your current e-mail address.

Very few national-level meets were held in Alberta during the past year. This creates a challenge when it comes to trying to get our officials mentored for levels 4 and 5. We have well over 20 Alberta officials who are currently waiting to be mentored for upgrading purposes. Next year, however, the Canadian Senior Nationals will be held in Calgary, so this should provide us with a few more opportunities.

In the meantime, we have many who are upgrading to levels 1, 2 and 3. This is encouraging as we need these relatively new officials to help maintain the quality of officiating here in Alberta.

Athletics Alberta's web site was down for a period of time this summer, and is still being rebuilt. It continues to be a valuable resource for the whole athletics community.

The Officials' Sub-committee will be meeting later in September. Please send any upgrading requests and related materials to the Athletics Alberta office by **SEPTEMBER 10**. The Officials' AGM will be held on October 24 at Red Deer College, and we hope to be able to answer any questions you might have with respect to next year's National Seniors in Calgary.

Officiating out-of-Province: The View from Different Angles

**2010 World Masters Indoor Championships:
March 1-6, Kamloops, BC**

by Ray Deere and Ian Gordon

Twenty officials from Alberta attended the World Masters Indoor Championships which included, in addition to the usual indoor events, non-stadia running and walking, plus some outdoor throws. The Alberta officials were a good cross-section geographically, with 11 from northern Alberta and 9 from southern Alberta.

Javelin, discus and hammer were held outdoors while the shot put and weight throw took place indoors. Ray, as the chief of one of the three throws teams, spent four of the six days outdoors. Fortunately the weather in Kamloops in early March was very cooperative this year with no snow and the only rain fell overnight. Even the temperatures were quite pleasant.

Ian officiated at the non-stadia events, which included a cross-county race, a race walk, and a half marathon. He also spent a large amount of time at the indoor events.

All the officials were required to arrive in Kamloops by February 27 for orientation, team meetings and, for those interested in or seeking their level 4, officials' clinics/workshops. Sunday, February 28, was a very busy day, with six clinics/workshops in various disciplines in the morning followed by a general meeting for all officials and individual team meetings. This general meeting was scheduled at essentially the same time as the Winter Olympics Canada/USA gold medal hockey game! The dedication of the officials was clearly demonstrated by the fact that all (most?) officials attended the meeting, although a few were observed to sneak out to the room next door where a television had been set up. They then reported back with the scores.

Alan Bell was the meet director. He is currently the chair of the International Panel of Starters and gave a master starter clinic. With regard to the starting rules, one statement stands out: "The rule has not changed, only the penalty."

During the meet, we were very fortunate to have four Alberta officials mentored. All were successful.

From an "outsider's" perspective the meet ran very well the entire week with only a few glitches due to some scheduling issues. The Masters athletes are always a joy to work with as their enthusiasm is infectious and they cheerfully acknowledge the presence and efforts of the officials at every opportunity. The most memorable incident for Ray occurred during the women's discus throw when he was advised that one of the competitors was celebrating her 91st birthday that day. Following the completion of the event the entire officiating crew, volunteers and competitors gathered to sing a rousing "Happy Birthday." Needless to say, she was thrilled!

A word of acknowledgement should also be given to John and Carol Cull who were the Officials' Managers for the meet. Their efforts were outstanding! They made a large contribution and were later named Officials of the Year by the National Officials' Committee.

**The 2010 IAAF World Junior Championships Experience
July 19–25, Moncton, New Brunswick**

by Jack Leman

Five Alberta officials attended the 13th IAAF World Junior Championships, held in Moncton, New Brunswick. Including me, they were John Takahashi and Eric Wittenberg from Edmonton, and Ian Gordon and Bob Wade from Calgary. Bud McInnis was also invited to officiate but unfortunately was unable to attend.

Sunday, July 18, was devoted to meetings (what else?) plus a four-hour-long rehearsal event to let us see how we would be exiting and entering the competition area for specific events.

On Monday we played tourist in the morning and early afternoon when we visited the Irving Eco-Centre: La dune de Bouctouche and from there on to Le Pays de la Sagouine, an Acadian Cultural Centre, also located in Bouctouche. Both were enjoyable experiences.

As you may have discerned from the previous paragraph, there is a considerable French component to the New Brunswick culture and, in fact, the province is significantly and officially bi-lingual – something I did not realize prior to this trip.

Competition started on Monday evening with the women's 3000m final as part of the opening ceremonies. Officials participated in the ceremonies by parading onto the track along with the teams/athletes from each country. The Tuesday to Friday competition sessions were held in the morning and evening. Saturday and Sunday featured single afternoon sessions followed by the closing ceremonies late Sunday afternoon. On Saturday evening, the medal ceremonies (normally done in the stadium) were moved to be part of a festival held in the downtown core. Along with the presentation of medals, there was a live concert and the evening ended with a fireworks display.

While it is obviously enjoyable to work at a meet with such a high calibre of athletes in most events, what stood out for me during the week of competition was the almost total dominance of the Kenyan athletes in the distance events – to the extent that they seemed to be toying with a good portion of the fields in a few cases. Rather impressive!!

The new competition facility, Stade Moncton 2010 Stadium, seats 10,000 (a number that can be expanded to 20,000) and has incorporated some of the newest Seiko electronic timing advances into the construction of the track. For example, primary lap scoring at this meet was done electronically by Seiko with the lap scorers acting solely as back-up for almost all distance events. As a member of the lap-scoring crew, I was able to take part in a "training" session with the Seiko timing people where they explained the workings of their lap-scoring system. Each athlete's bib had a small transponder attached to it. Sensors built into the track at the finish line and at the 200m mark registered each time an athlete passed over them. Information from these sensors was displayed, on a real-time basis, on a computer terminal set up for the lap scorers inside the track at the finish line. The data displayed by lap identified the individual athletes, showed their position in the field (in real time), the number of laps remaining for each and whether or not they were down a lap from the leader or had dropped out. Further, the system could be programmed to display the potential finish order, based on the current pace of each athlete, as the race is taking place. If you would like a more complete explanation of how this system works, feel free to ask me for further details.

On Sunday evening, after the conclusion of the competition, the local organizers arranged a banquet specifically for officials at one of the downtown Moncton restaurants. This was appreciated by all as it gave everyone a chance to relax, unwind, eat, drink and take lots of photos to help preserve memories of the experience.

Unfortunately, from my perspective, there was one less satisfying aspect to the Moncton "experience." A change in IAAF policy meant that, in almost all circumstances, no umpires could be placed anywhere in the infield. No umpires monitored the inside lanes of the track for sprint hurdle events. For the 400m hurdle events, two umpires only on the inside of each bend to monitor the inside lanes...and no umpires allowed in the infield to monitor the inside hurdles on the back and finish straight sections of the track. This had a direct (and significant) effect on some results as I know there were several trail leg infraction reports that were not acted upon as they "only had single reports" on the infractions. One umpire to monitor the area, one report. Seems obvious. Early in the meet I heard one ITO comment in an aside that he "hoped they weren't making a mistake with this decision." Time will tell.

As you might expect, there are many tales to tell from a meet of this length that are best related verbally. However, if you want a good laugh, ask me about my landscaping activities while lap scoring.

**2010 Canadian Track & Field Championships: Part 1
July 28–31, Toronto, Ontario**

by Louise Buskas

This was the second year that the event was held at Varsity Centre on the University of Toronto campus. The Alberta group of officials comprised Irene Gaudet, Darlene Kowalchuk, Cathy Simpson, and me. There was also a delegation of organizers from Calgary checking out the set-up, etc. in preparation for the 2011 and 2012 versions of this meet.

The facility was not spectator friendly in that all the throwing events were held in an area separate from the main stadium, but at least there was no threat from stray implements. All jumps were on the infield, with horizontal jumps immediately beside lane one. This created some congestion on the inside of the track when sprint events were being run. Underneath the stadium seating was an area that did not provide the best view, but it was in the shade and gave shelter from the rain. One evening we had a half-hour delay because of lightning in the area. The track had a very slight slope and it was impressive to see how well the rain drained off. Last year, spectators could also watch, without paying admission, from behind the barrier and fence along the back stretch of the track. This year the fence was covered, with the bonus being the shade it provided officials along that area.

Wednesday and Thursday were considered qualification rounds for those athletes who had not met national qualification standards. With fewer athletes than originally anticipated, some of these events did not take place. This, plus the fact that a couple of track officials cancelled at the last minute, created an "opportunity" for Cathy and me to redo all our umpire placement diagrams.

In Alberta it seems we have very few opportunities to work with Paralympic athletes, so it was a pleasure to be at a meet with IPC events. There were a couple of instances where heats with wheelchair athletes were brought out in the wrong order. This was a source of irritation for those in results who were trying to coordinate with the CBC. In one of the heats, the T11-12 athletes (visually impaired) were placed in lanes 4 and 6 contrary to IPC Rule 163.15, which states the start lines should be lanes 1, 3, 5 and 7. This created more controversy. There are those who think it is rather boring to be an umpire, but at times like this there are advantages to just standing back and watching.

For those who watched the live broadcast (trying to recognize our officials) it was reported that the winner of the men's 400m was disqualified after an infraction report for four steps on the line. In fact there were two other reports – one with another six steps and also one on the second bend of the track. The athlete protested, and the jury even watched the CBC footage, which unequivocally confirmed the umpires' reports. This reinforces the fact that every umpire needs to write up what he or she sees. Although one report is technically enough, it makes a stronger case with three reports and the TV camera coverage.

Last year the race walk events were started outside the stadium. This year the organizer was told it was too expensive to do that and therefore all the race walk events would be held within the stadium. However, they did not provide photo finish! There were three races (20km, 10km and 5km), and the first one started at 7:00 am. It took the whole umpire crew and more to do lap scoring, hand timing, splits etc. With only two umpires on the track and no track referee, any infraction reports could not be acted upon. As a result, there were no disqualifications, and it was a lesson learned.

The highlight of the meet was the women's 100m hurdles final. It was intentionally run as the last race of the day. Five of the competitors are world ranked. Wow!

It was great to meet officials from different parts of the country. We shared ideas, and discovered we all have similar struggles. It provided reinforcement that Alberta has a group of officials that are indeed amongst the best in the country. And next year we can prove it when Senior Nationals comes to Alberta.

2010 Canadian Track & Field Championships: Part 2

by Irene Gaudet

The weather, in general, cooperated for the meet, after a rude welcome on the first day with very hot and muggy weather. The rain *mostly* held off, with a few notable exceptions.

All of us had a real learning experience working with crews mostly made up of officials we had never met before, let alone worked with. Paramount for working an event like this is the ability to adapt and change and keep things moving, all the while remembering we are there for the athletes! A lot of advice is freely handed out – you need to decide which to accept (if any!) as they can be conflicting at times! Above all, be on time and keep your event running smoothly!

One thing we did learn in the field came to us via the officials who had worked at the World Juniors in Moncton just a week or so before. They told us that when marking sheets we were not to use F (for fault or fail) or P (for pass). Instead, the event sheets were to be marked X (for fault or fail) and – (dash or line for pass). This took a bit of getting used to but I think by the end of the meet we had it down pat. Darlene and I will be stressing this to all officials we work with in the next while.

Something new for many officials was the combining of Para-athletics into the Championships. This meant some different rules and events and, for the throws officials, learning how the tie-downs operate as the officials were expected to tie down all throws competitors in the appropriate categories. Much discussion ensued on the wisdom of this as the officials were not necessarily the best trained with the tie-down equipment.

All in all, it was an exciting learning experience for us, on the competition field and off. Off the field we forged new friendships and acquaintances, listened to many stories about past competitions, met some people whom we had heard stories about, and now we each have our own stories to tell!

National and Provincial Upgradings

During the past year, we had two Alberta officials upgraded by the National Officials' Committee. They were:
Heather Climenhaga, Edmonton – Starter's Assistant 4
Norma Morgan, Edmonton – Horizontal Jumps 4
Congratulations to both of you.

Additionally, we had a number of officials who completed the requirements for the various provincial levels. Congratulations also go to them and we look forward to their continued participation as track and field officials.

For level 1:

Trudy Aucoin
Donald Chartrand
Sheila Chartrand
Pat Chizek
David Dashwood
Gillian Drever
Denise DuPlessis
Belle Magilton
Mary Beth Meeuwissen
Glen Mori
John Tyrrell
Doug Weber
Laura Weber
Jennifer Welchman

For level 2:

Sherry Clarke
Jeff Davis
John Goldsmith
Garret Haubrich
Charmaine Johnson
Cammie Kannekens
Karen Kusler-Young
Pat March
Victor Rodriguez
Cindy Stephen

For level 3:

Joan Barnett (Photofinish)
Jessie Ching (Racewalk)
Carl Cooke (Throws)
Roger Hazlewood (Starter)
Darlene Kowalchuk (Vertical Jumps)
Norma Love-Pankonin (Starter)
Roy Simmons (Umpire)
Brenda Spitzer (Starter's Assistant)
Graham Steacy (Field Referee – Throws)
Sandra Wigg (Starter)



Alberta Officials' Annual Meeting

Sunday, October 24, 2010
10:00 AM – 12:00 noon
Red Deer College, Room 2002A,
Red Deer

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes of October 18, 2009
4. Business arising from the Minutes of October 18, 2009
5. Reports
 - 5.1 Chair – Ian Gordon
 - 5.2 Northern zone coordinator - Philippa Fairbairn
 - 5.3 South Zone Coordinator – Cathy Simpson
 - 5.4 Central Alberta / Small Communities Coordinator – Bud McInnis
 - 5.5 Training Group Coordinator – Darlene Kowalchuk
 - 5.6 Statistician / Upgrading Coordinator – Irene Gaudet
 - 5.7 Liaison with Athletics Alberta
6. New Business
 - 6.1 Meet safety issues
 - 6.2 Number of officials at meets
 - 6.3 Canadian Track and Field Championships - 2011
 - 6.6 Alberta Track diagrams – posted on website
7. Nominations and Elections
 - 7.1 Northern Zone Coordinator
 - 7.2 Training Coordinator
 - 7.3 Provincial Chair
8. Other Business
9. Adjournment

