



# Athletics Alberta Officials' Bulletin

## May 2017

*By Jack Leman*

After a **very** busy indoor season, we are once again ready to head out into a (hopefully) sunshine filled spring and summer outdoor season.

Outdoors 2017 will not be quite as busy as it was last summer however we have the usual mix of meets across Alberta plus Edmonton is hosting the ASAA High School Championships in early June.

And speaking of last summer, the Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance recently named the 2016 Canadian Track and Field Championships as recipient of the **2017 CSTA Canadian Sport Event of the Year Award**. The program for this award presentation read as follows:

- **Canadian Track and Field Championships and Selection Trials for the 2016 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games (Edmonton, Alta.)**

The Canadian Olympic and Paralympic Selection Trials hosted the deepest, most talented pool of Canadian Track & Field athletes ever to compete for berths in the 2016 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games in Rio. The event surpassed all expectations for the 1,135 athletes, 235 coaches, and 135 officials and was run on an overall budget of \$513,383. Over 18 Edmonton/Alberta organizations partnered with TrackTown to be part of the Olympic dream and to showcase the City of Edmonton with over 250 volunteers helping to stage the event. Hundreds of young athletes from over 15 Edmonton and area local Track and Field Clubs attended and volunteered at the Trials, sparking their own internal Olympic flames.

Continuing on the topic of awards, presentations were made in February 2017 at the Athletics Alberta Awards Banquet to John Takahashi as 2016 Official of the Year and to Alix Steward as 2016 Novice Official of the Year.

The program for these awards read as follows:

### **John Takahashi—2016 Official of the Year**

He can be counted on to be at every meet in Edmonton and often at outdoor meets in Calgary. The only time he will leave a meet early is when the Edmonton Eskimos are playing at Commonwealth Stadium. John Takahashi's dedication is unparalleled. For almost 40 years he has worked primarily as an umpire on the track but also at throws in the field. His commitment has spanned international, national, provincial and local meets. To each one he brings the same desire to do a good job. He offers help and encouragement freely to other officials and does his best to ensure that all athletes compete under the fairest conditions possible. John Takahashi is truly a worthy recipient of the 2016 Official of the Year award.

### **Alix Steward—2016 Novice Official of the Year**

One year ago Alix Steward attended an introductory officiating clinic. Since that time she has worked at both track and field events but her main focus has been to train as a starter's assistant. In order to pursue this aspect of officiating further she worked several shifts as a volunteer in the call room at the 2016 Olympic Trials in Edmonton. Alix recently fulfilled all the requirements to become a level 2 official and is now looking forward to pursuing further qualifications as an SA.

Well deserved awards for both these individuals.

## **Jogging**

And now for something completely different. I received the following from Cathy Simpson. While it is not directly related to track and field activities, it does illustrate the usefulness and value of the skills we master as technical track and field officials.

### **Calgary Officials Go To the Dogs**

Well actually, it was only one dog! Toby the Whippet.

Early in December of last year Doug Lamont received an email request from Christie Springs. She was looking for a couple of people that could time an event for a Guinness World Record Attempt.

Doug forwarded the email to me and the rest became history.

The record Toby was attempting to break was fastest time to pop 100 balloons by a dog. I immediately thought of Marilyn (Mouse) Fraser as she is always up for a new adventure. We attended the first attempt on December 18 but due to a clerical error, Guinness did not approve that attempt. We did enjoy however watching Toby celebrate his birthday.

Subsequently, on Sunday, March 26, 2017, Guinness finally approved an official attempt.

Special thanks to Ian Gordon, Mark Rowe, his wife Joan and Deirdre Choate who assisted with timing at the final two attempts.

If you would like to see more, here is a link to a website.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/toby-whippet-world-record-balloon-1.4043082>

No one ever mentioned to me that the officials' coordinator position included responsibility for staffing "doggy" events however it was interesting, fun and I was happy to be involved.



Toby, Mark & Joan Rowe

Cathy Simpson

The minutes from the April 22, 2017 Athletics Alberta Officials' Annual General Meeting held in Red Deer are now posted in the Officials' section of the Athletics Alberta website.

## **Recruiting**

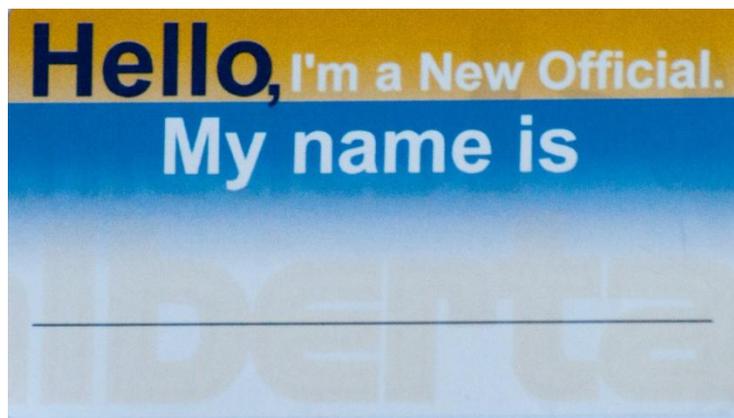
During our recent Officials' Committee Executive meeting, there was a considerable amount of discussion on what we could be doing as officials to encourage more people to become involved in athletics officiating. One of the points that came up was that many of our meets do not function without the assistance of a considerable number of parent/volunteers and perhaps we could/should be doing more to encourage these individuals to become actively involved as officials.

As officials, in situations of this nature, we spend a bit of time explaining to the volunteers the nature of their tasks and in my experience, if it seems that they are enjoying what they are doing, it's relatively easy to casually move the conversation over to "you should think about becoming involved as an official".

It's likely not going to be successful a lot of the time but if we even just get a few over the period of a season, it's a move in the right direction and ultimately, if we don't at least ask, it surely won't happen.

## **Retaining**

Our policy in the past has been that we provide formal AA name tags to our officials once they reach level 2. With the increased emphasis on recruiting and retaining new officials, we have decided that it makes sense to also provide those who have gone through our intro clinic process with name tags to wear at each meet. We've therefore printed off new name tags and have provided a supply to the Edmonton and Calgary Officials' Coordinators. A sample of the new tag is shown below.



## **Upgrading**

The following Athletics Alberta officials were upgraded at the recent Alberta Officials' Committee meeting:

### **Level 1**

Maegan Ciesielski                      Daniella Clonfero                      Dave Keenan

Graham Overn                      Brenda Sallis                      Mark Seville

Nadia Tanguay

### **Level 2**

Sean Baynton                      Janet Dixon                      Leigh Garvie

Sherry Heschuk                      Daniel Lauzon                      Harry Liu

Doug Wilson

### **Level 3**

Henry Charrois – Vertical Jumps

### **Level 4**

Chris Baker – Umpire

Mary Wittenberg – Combined Events Referee

### **Provincial List**

Rob Fisher – Competition Secretary

Congratulations and thanks to the above officials for the many volunteer hours required to achieve these designations!

## **Athletics Alberta Officials' Committee**

At the recent Officials' Committee meeting, a discussion took place as to the duties of the various members of the committee and as a result, the titles and responsibilities of some of the positions were changed slightly.

A few of the positions were also up for re-election and the make-up of your Committee is now as follows:

**Chair** – Louise Buskas

**Vice-Chair/Secretary** – Chris Baker

**Edmonton Coordinator** – Philippa Fairbairn

**Calgary Coordinator** – Cathy Simpson

**Medicine Hat Coordinator** – Liz Haubrich

**Provincial Upgrading Coordinator** – Eric Wittenberg

**National Upgrading Coordinator** – Ian Gordon

**Education Coordinator** – Ken Phillips

**Communications/PR/Awards** – Jack Leman

May 16, 2017