

USATF Officials Training Subcommittee Convention Meeting
Wednesday, November 29, 2006
Minutes

[Note: Minutes reflect the order of the agenda. Topics were covered in a different order.]

Members Present: Rex Harvey (Iowa) – Vice Chair – Training
Rob Buzaitis (Michigan) – Secretary
Shirley Connors (Pacific) – Chair, Championships/Convention Clinics Group
Dave Bowers (Indiana) – Chair, Initial Training Group
Mike Armstrong (Arkansas) – Chair, Continuing Education Group
Susan Petrelli (Colorado) – Chair, Advancement Training Group
Mike Maryott (Nebraska) – Chair, Outreach Training Group

Others Present: Bill Boyd (Virginia) Bob Podkaminer (Pacific)
Bruce Colman (Pacific) Raymond Pierre (Southwestern)
Dick Connors (Pacific) Patrick Pretty (Wisconsin)
Carroll DeWeese (Michigan) Bill Price (Potomac Valley)
Sharon Good (Potomac Valley) Joe Scecina (South Texas)
Dennis Grue (Montana) Gordon Scruton (Hawaii)
Bob Langenbach (Pacific Northwest) Jim Skelly (San Diego-Imperial)
Bruce Long (Three Rivers) Eric Smith (Florida)
Jim McGloin (New England) Bob Springer (Pacific Northwest)
Lloyd McMillian (Potomac Valley) Eugene Stemm (Southern California)
Al Minturn (Southern California) Jimmy Stuart (Southwestern)
Mike Olsen (Oregon) Reginald Weissglas (Metropolitan)
Bill Ott (Long Island) Eric Zemper (Michigan)

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes from the November 30, 2005 Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes as written made by Maryott, seconded by Petrelli. Motion passes without objection.

2. Approval of Minutes from the August 20, 2006 Conference Call

Motion to approve the minutes as written made by Connors, seconded by Buzaitis. Motion passes without objection.

3. Group Reports

a. *Championship/Convention Clinics Group:*

Connors reports that the group started its work at the end of summer, followed a suggest timeline from Buzaitis, and by November 1, had three clinicians. It was noted that there will be two drop-in sessions for Laserlynx: Wednesday from 6-7 and Thursday from 3-5 in Suite 1032 of the Westin.

For the convention clinic sessions, there will be evaluation forms for participants to complete and also requesting suggestions for future clinics. The Group will also keep a log of clinics presented and the handouts from clinic sessions will be posted on the USATF Officials' website.

The Group states it is going to collect suggestions for clinic topics, set up a timeline for the Group's activities, posting clinic handouts on the USATF Officials website (with title, subject, and date), look at other possible times for clinics. Two suggestions on clinic topics were Electronic Recording Judge (e.g. FieldLynx) and Electronic Measurement Device Judge (e.g. LaserLynx).

b. *Initial Training Group:*

The Group discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the current training and what the needs are. It decided to gather materials, processes, and trainers in order to determine best practices to make available to officials. Kleeman suggested that Group collect materials and distribute in electronic copies instead of paper to avoid being overwhelmed with file cabinets of paper. Harvey said that all materials will be available on the website; Kleeman suggested charging a nominal fee to send paper copies to those who request it because they have no computer access. The group planned to take 6 months or more in this gathering process. It would then provide the information in some fashion to those officials interested. The Group was also going to do a survey of new officials to find out what was good about the training they received and what could have been done better. Harvey suggested that the Group work towards developing a package that could be given to every new official.

One question the Group raised was who would train the trainers. Harvey said that was a question that would need to be answered for all the Groups.

c. *Continuing Education Group:*

The Group had two conference calls: one on August 10 and the other in October. It discussed trying to standardize training, but questioned what the Group's niche or role is. The Group planned to meet at the convention on Friday at 2:00 p.m.

The Group would be responsible for "getting the word out" on rule changes. Harvey said this Group's mission can also include looking at new technologies and preparing people for its use. Podkaminer said that there may be a need for subgroup to handle the new technology, which include starting blocks, photo finish, horizontal jump board video, laser measurement, electronic recording, and possibly pole vault.

Harvey noted that this Group's mission probably does not include training a current Long Jump official to be a Pole Vault official – this would fall to the Advancement Training Group.

d. *Advancement Training Group:*

The Group had an August 20 conference call. It looked at the description of the Group and did a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis for direction on what the Group should do. It then set a 2007 goal of establishing consistent national criteria for advancement to national and master level certification. Harvey noted that this Group, and its work, may be somewhat dictatorial by trying to make uniform criteria for advancement in certification. Podkaminer stated that a lot of what has been discussed during this and previous meeting had "danced around" making national certification criteria truly national and uniform across all associations. He suggested the idea of uniformity be mentioned at one of the officials general session and seek consensus about a resolution or forming a task force.

Harvey mentioned this Group is more esoteric and its materials will be more detailed and focus on more narrow areas.

e. *Outreach Training Group:*

The Group held two conference calls. It (like the Continuing Education Group) was trying to define its focus and noticed a lot of overlap with other Groups. It stated that it was going to look at high schools and getting volunteers more involved. It noted that people who work as volunteers have different tasks and would require training separate from what is provided to new officials. Harvey noted that Becky Oakes from the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) would be visiting the meeting and speaking later.

Harvey stated that the Officials Exchange Program would probably be part of this Group's responsibility. Raymond Pierre gave a brief report on his and Tiffany Banks' experience this past summer in the UK. He discussed the criteria and stated that, overall, there was not much difference between the US and the UK. His report is on the Training Page of the USATF Officials website. There are also a couple hundred pictures on the Central Texas officials' website. Harvey stated that the UK Exchange would probably continue and other exchanges (especially with NACAC countries) were possible. Linda Melzer confirmed that there would be a 2007 UK Exchange and it would involve two field event officials. The UK officials will work at the Masters Outdoor Championships in Maine. Any questions should be directed to Harvey or Melzer.

It was mentioned that some colleges have a 3 credit course on officiating track and field. Springer mentioned that USATF President Bill Roe teaches such a course. Price also mentioned he would report the progress of a course he knew about. It was mentioned that the Group should look into collecting course outlines.

4. Review and Approve Group Goals

Harvey said that the groups should set small, obtainable goals for next year. The subcommittee discussed and developed the following 2007 goals for each Group:

a. *Championship/Convention Clinics Group:*

- Create a database of evaluations for clinics presented.
- Create a list of suggested clinic topics.
- Add message to USATF Officials website requesting clinic topic suggestions.
- Investigate the possibility of offering clinics at venues other than the convention and Outdoor Championships.

b. *Initial Training Group:*

- Gather data on effective training information, materials, and input on initial training.
- Establish proficiencies for each event for entry-level officials.
- Produce an initial training CD for distribution to the Associations.

c. *Continuing Education Group:*

- Produce PowerPoint presentations on rule changes in NFHS, NCAA, and USATF.

- Build a bank of situations to create a case book – working with the Officials Rules Subcommittee.
- Research and report on new and emerging technology.

d. *Advancement Training Group:*

- Look at and develop consistent national criteria to upgrade officials.
- Develop consistent national criteria for mentoring officials.
- Upgrade training materials in at least one skill area.
- Draft an outline for a sample chief officials training program (using Oregon’s “Training by Committee” as a model).

e. *Outreach Training Group:*

- Continue with the UK Exchange (in a field event area).
- Look into arranging a training program “roadshow” at high schools and write appropriate training materials.
- Contact at least one other sports organization and discuss officials training methods used; in 2007, NFHS.

5. **LaserLynx – Update on Training Development**

Heckel and McGloin made the presentation. It was stated that four years ago, there was a push to get people trained and certified in electronic measurement judging (e.g. LaserLynx). The problem then was why should officials get certified if there was not a possibility of getting selected to work that area at the national championships. Heckel and McGloin were asked this year by Melzer to create a proposal for certification

Heckel stated that he has created training modules for FieldLynx. These modules, with links from the USATF Officials website, allow for Association level certification in FieldLynx to be completed on the internet. For National or Master, an official would have to perform before other officials. Then a recommendation would be sent to either the Association certification chair or a committee to determine the level of certification.

With electronic measurement, training by video was not feasible because the technology is changing. Also, officials would need to demonstrate proficiency. There would be no Association level. National level officials would be able to use the equipment; Master level officials would be able to set-up the equipment. McGloin and Heckel mentioned that training would take place at major meets (i.e. NCAA Division I, USA Outdoor Championships, etc.)

The comment was made that the cost to rent the electronic measuring equipment for two meets (around \$8000) equaled the cost to buy the equipment. A question was raised asking how many currently certified officials are professional surveyors. The answer was not known.

6. 2007 Budget

The subcommittee discussed and decided to request \$16,000 from the Officials Committee for its 2007 budget. The following is a Group breakdown and notes about where expenses will go:

- Championships/Convention Clinics Group:\$3000
- Initial Training Group:\$6000
 - Survey (mailing and printing costs)
 - Video
- Continuing Education Group:\$1000
 - Rules Updates
- Advancement Training Group:\$2000
- Outreach Training Group:\$4000
 - UK Exchange Program (about \$3000)

7. Other Discussion Items

- a. *Officials Rules Subcommittee*: George Kleeman (Officials Vice Chair – Rules) mentioned that his subcommittee met earlier that day. It will begin starting work on the rules reviews for the 2009-2012 Olympiad this year, planning to have a draft for review at next year’s convention. The reviews will be finalized and hopefully available in August 2008, current through the 2008 USATF rules. He also noted that rules changes will be included in updates. He mentioned that Associations are not required to use the general reviews, but are required to use the Weights and Measures and National Master Referee reviews.
- b. *NCAA Rule Changes for 2007*: Bob Podkaminer (NCAA Secretary-Rules Editor) gave a presentation highlighting the NCAA rules changes for 2007.
- c. *Presentation by Becky Oakes (NFHS)*: Oakes gave a brief resume of her former positions. She said that the goal of the NFHS sports, and its rule-writing, is educational. As it relates to officials, that includes recruiting, retaining, and training. However, there are some different purposes. USATF has elite athletes and officials of a high level. In high schools, student participation is key and there are only one or two registered officials working a meet supplemented by volunteers (which sometimes includes coaches). NFHS writes rules for a education-based, high school setting, focusing on a safe environment, considering fairness and individuals reaching their highest level of achievement, and the ability of officials to fairly and consistently enforce the rules. Springer mentioned that some athletes who compete under NFHS and USATF Youth rules get confused because of the differences. Oakes said that when NFHS rules differ from other levels, it looks to make sure there is a reason why it is different. The NFHS rules committee seeks annual input and rule change proposals should be submitted through the state association offices.

Oakes detailed the NFHS publications for track and field, which includes a rule book, case, book, officials manual, annual exam, and rules interpretations; many states also have rules interpretation meetings. NFHS and Human Kinetics published a textbook and CD/online course for track and field and cross country officiating.

A question was asked about the jewelry rule. Oakes said the jewelry rule is still alive. One reason is safety – high school associations are sued all the time.

- d. *Updated Training Materials:* Zemper mentioned that he has updated the Starter's Monograph he wrote and an Initial Training PowerPoint presentation with video clips. Harvey told Zemper to forward those materials to the Initial Training Group.
- e. *National Master Referee:* Skelly (chair of National Master Referee committee) stated the program is in place and certification chairs have the information. The prerequisites are being a master referee in any discipline (track, field, combined events, race walk, or LDR) and submitting four letters of recommendation, three from people outside the official's association.

8. Next Meetings:

The next subcommittee meeting or conference call was not determined.

The meeting concluded at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rob Buzaitis
Secretary, USATF Officials Training Subcommittee