

2007 NJSIAA Outdoor Track and Field Committee Meeting

June 12, 2007

9:30 am – 1:00 pm

Robbinsville, NJ

Page 1 of 2

- I. Members present: Frank Calise (Guest – Computer Consultant), **James Camburn** (South Section Director at Buena High School), Bill Collins (Guest – Representing South Jersey Track Coaches Association), **Lou Fraulo** (North I Director at Wayne Hills), **Marty Holleran** (Coaches' Representative – Metuchen High School), **Matthew Jelley** (Coaches' Representative – Toms River North), **Bill Milone** (North II Sectional Director and Coach – South Plainfield), **Rich Refi** (Central Sectional Director and Coach – Hillsborough High School), **Carl Rickershauser** (State Rules Interpreter), **Dr. James Sarruda** (Executive Committee Representative – Superintendent Northern Burlington County School District), **John Schwartz** (North II Sectional Director – Parsippany High School), **Pam Willson** (Coaches' Representative – Hackettstown High School) and Don Danser (NJSIAA Staff).
- II. Correspondence
 - A. Large volume of correspondence dealt with an incident at the South Sectional at Buena over jewelry. After reading and discussing the material presented, the committee drew the following conclusions:
 1. The rule about hairpins and other hard objects in the hair has been “on the books” since 2002, as documented by a 2002 written ruling by the State Rules Interpreter. The coach should have been aware of the rules. The official was enforcing this rule. No one was disqualified. One of the two girls ran in the race, the other ran in two other races after the incident. The coach also knows that if there is a special problem or concern, the coach could have asked for relief in advance of the meet, as this coach has done in the past.
 2. The coach's behavior at the meet is best summed up by a third party who had no connection with any of the parties involved: “That was an interesting show about hair pins. I agree that the rule may not be the best one, but it is a rule and the referee did the right thing. Unfortunately, the coach made his statement at the wrong place and time and did put on quite a show. That certainly wasn't the best thing for his kids to witness.”
 - B. Robert O'Dell asked to have the wheelchair events expanded to include the discus and javelin. A circle is not needed, even for the shot and discus. According to the rules, and the wheelchair sport specialists who attended, often a circle and sector are drawn on a field and all three events are contested from the same spot, from the same throwing chair (which Nutley will provide). The Committee approved the request and the conditions stated above.
 - C. The 3200m Run's place in the schedule (It is presently on Saturday) was the subject of at least 4 e-mails. The 3200 used to be on Friday. Many coaches wanted it to be on Saturday with the 1600 on Friday, because it allowed for better “natural” doubles: 1600m & 3200m, 1600m & 800, and 800m & Relay. The coaches on the committee and the representative from the South Jersey Coaches Association felt that it should remain as is. Also concern was that if running on a warm day, meet management should have supplied “misters” during the race to help cool the contestants. There are two problems with that: 1) finding the appropriate equipment to do the job safely, and 2) who decides when it is hot enough to use the equipment if it were available? One person's perception of heat can and usually is very different from another. It was suggested that perhaps a “mister” could be available, let's say on the infield so any contestant could cool off in it before or after competition as he or she so desired. Meet management will look into that possibility for all sights next year.
 - D. 400IH – The Committee decided to return the 400IH in the Group Meet to the same place in the schedule that it was in the past: It will be the first event on Friday in both the Sectional program and the Group Meet Program.
 - E. Non-Public Classification is a problem. The NJSIAA Constitution requires that when schools are divided into groups for the purpose of championships, the groups must be of equal size. While on paper, this looks fine, in practice, the groups are not balanced. Non-Public A was averaging 40+ entries per event, while Non-Public B averaged around 18. On paper, there was the same number of schools in each group. The Non-Public schools themselves must come up with a solution to this situation.
 - F. There were a few requests to change how athletes qualify for the Meet of Champions to get the “best” athletes into the meet. The NJSIAA philosophy concerning Meets/Tournaments of Champions has never been to get the best teams or individuals into these events. They are designed to get the GROUP winners into a tournament. All NJSIAA Tournaments have state group titles. To achieve the goal of getting the “best athletes” into the final round, the group titles from sectionals on up would have to be abandoned. There would only be boys and girls events throughout the tournament. The Committee felt the present system is what most want.
 - G. Qualifying for the Meet of Champions in the pole vault was also well-represented in e-mails and letters. Presently only the top 18 medal winners, with ties for the 18th position being broken where possible by using misses is used only in the Pole Vault. All other events, all 36 medal winners automatically advance, plus six additional athletes take from the best performances in the Group Meets from all Groups advance, making at least 42 athletes eligible per event in all events but the pole vault. The Committee decided to advance pole vaulters the same way as all other events. This means that the Meet of Champion site must have two pole vault pits. If this requires a site change, then that will have to happen.

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Page 2 of 2

- H. Track and Field meets on the scale of the NJSIAA tournament will always have problems. There are over 400 officials working the sectional meets. As hard as we try, we can't seem to get all sites "on the same page." To help solve this problem, in the Group Meet and Meet of Champions, all legal attempts in all field events will be measured. In entry level meets (Sectionals for Public, Group Meet for Non-Public) the MINIMUM STANDARDS will be used. In these cases no measurement will be made unless they make these standards. The problems at the Group A meet was caused by officials using the wrong procedure to determine the cutoff for measurement distance. Hopefully, this will make it clearer.
 - I. With many things going on at once in a track and field meet, officials must be aware that the press are an important part of the process, especially for the athletes and schools. We should all be aware that they have a job to do also and should help them as much as possible, especially photographers at the finish line. By the same token, photographers need to know that they cannot stand on the inside of the track between the starting line and the starter which blocks the starter's view of the inner lanes. Timers/Judges should be aware that photographers are present and do their best not to obstruct picture taking whenever possible.
 - J. Again, in attempt to help standardize procedures and practices, the Committee asks that all sites used in the tournament have takeoff boards in the triple jump at 24', 28', 32', and 36' to accommodate all athletes in all groups at any site.
 - K. One advancement was made from the Group Meet to the Meet of Champions. A disqualification in a 1600m run was upheld, but the Appeals Committee felt that there was enough doubt about whether or not the correct athlete had been disqualified, to allow the athlete to advance, unseeded, to the Meet of Champions.
 - L. This year was the first time we were able to have fully automatic photo timing at all 11 meets of the tournament. However, the Central Sectional at Hillsborough would have been a total disaster if the officials and coaches (Marty Holleran of Metuchen in particular) had not stepped up to save the day. The company from Pennsylvania passed our interview about their abilities concerning both photo-timing and meet scoring. They were adequate at photo-timing but totally inexperienced when it came to scoring the meet. I apologize to the officials, coaches, parents, spectators, and especially to the athletes for what they went through, especially on Friday. Again, if it weren't for the help, patience, and understanding of all involved in this section, the meet would have been a total mess.
- III. Tournament Regulations
- A. Dates
 1. Sectionals – Friday, May 23, 2008 – Saturday, May 24, 2008 (Wayne Hills will not be serving as a North I Sectional Site.
 2. Group Meets – Friday, May 30, 2008 – Saturday, May 31, 2008
 3. Meet of Champions – Wednesday, June 4, 2008
 4. Entries will close Friday, May 9, 2008.
 - B. Times
 1. Sectionals and Group Meets – Friday Meets will start at 4:00 P.M., with Saturday at 10:00 pm
 2. Meet of Champions – 3:30pm Field, 4:30 pm running.

Every year we get comments about proms and testing with requests that we change starting times to accommodate these problems. To accommodate Friday night proms, some have suggested we start Friday's schedules at 2:00 pm instead of 4:00 pm. Besides causing athletes to lose more class time, this would make it very hard to get officials (most who work) and sites. Since the sites are at schools, having a large event on Friday before the school day is over would make it very difficult for getting everyone in and out of the site.

To accommodate the testing, it has been suggested that Saturday's schedules start at 2:00 pm. Everyone on the committee felt that this was not practical or fair to the vast majority of the athletes, especially since both the test dates and times and meet dates and times are known well in advance. Guidance departments need to advise their athletes of all the other possibilities for taking these tests when there appears to be a conflict. Seeking a solution a week before the test date won't work. It takes advanced planning.
 - C. Groups – Assuming both sites are the same and both sites are classified the same as this year, Egg Harbor will host Groups 1, 2 and 4, while South Plainfield will host Groups A, B, and 3.

Respectfully submitted,
Don Danser
Tournament Director