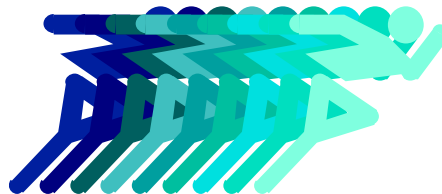


# COMMUNIQUE

## NEWSLETTER OF THE SEAOA

*AUTUMN 2006*



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**Editor:**

**Ian Booth**

**[www.seaoa.co.uk](http://www.seaoa.co.uk)**

## Letter from the Chairman

Well, there goes another outdoor season and I hope that you found it as enjoyable as I did. We are lucky to have as a hobby such a wonderful sport to be part of.

Things move slowly, as always, as far as Officials are concerned within UK Athletics and I was personally disappointed when Liz Patrick left her post at UKA as chief communicator with the Officials. Liz worked hard and always tried her best to resolve any problems and certainly had the best interests of the Officials at heart. She will be a tough act to follow.

The AGM of the Association will be held at the Thames Valley Athletics Centre in Eton on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2006 at 10.00. Before the meeting, there are workshops for each discipline where the sub committees report back on what they have been doing during the year and discuss any topics that are of interest to the members. It's a good opportunity to meet up with other officials and talk over any discipline specific matters and everybody would be delighted to see you there. Please try to attend if you can.

As a special incentive this year, if you attend the AGM you will receive another waterproof pen. I know that the pen was well-received last year, so here is your opportunity to get another. How can you resist!!

As this is my last letter of the year I would like to thank all members of both the main and sub committees for their hard work during the year, they give up their time willingly to help run what is a very successful association. They are always looking for new ideas and if you think that you could contribute to the development of our Association, please come along to the workshops and AGM and make your views known.

**Stan Burton**

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### **New Assistant Treasurer - Membership required from November 2006**

Bob Myers wishes to discontinue the job of membership secretary as soon as possible, so we are looking for someone to take his place. If anyone would like to be considered can they please let the Hon Secretary know on or before 19 November.

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### It's Your Choice!

Workshop 2 for timekeepers at Conference 2007 may be split into two if the demand is there. It is intended to run a "How Do I?" session either after or at the same time as "Preparing for the European Indoor Championships" depending on the numbers wishing to participate. The topics are:

- Timekeeping accuracy
- Multi timing
- Relay splits
- Ticks and crosses
- Lap chart/running watch

Should you be interested in attending this session please contact Doug Weir ([dougweir@seaoa.co.uk](mailto:dougweir@seaoa.co.uk) Tel: 01843 585957) with your name and which topics you would like to discuss/learn more about. All topics which people request will be covered. Please note that in order for "How Do I?" to go ahead the number of people interested and the topics to be covered must be known in advance!

Please register for Conference in the usual way using the application form.

#### ASSOCIATION LAPEL BADGES INCLUDING ENGRAVED NAMEPLATE

For those members wishing to purchase an engraved name badge incorporating the Association's logo in an acrylic centre, application should be made direct to:

FRED WOODING  
SPORTSFORM  
52 BROMHAM ROAD  
BEDFORD  
MK40 2QG

**Price £3.50 each (including Post, Packaging and Engraving)**

*Cheques should be made payable to Sportsform*

## SOUTH OF ENGLAND ATHLETICS OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION

In accordance with Article 5.1 of the Constitution, notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday 19 November 2006 at Tames Valley Athletics Centre, Eton

### **Timetable**

<b>10.00 -10.30</b>	<b>Coffee</b>
<b>10.30 - 12.30</b>	<b>Discipline Forums and AGMs</b>
<b>12.30 -2.00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>2.00-4.00</b>	<b>Annual General Meeting</b>

### Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of Annual General Meeting Held on 20 November 2005 (Minutes circulated with this Newsletter)
3. Secretary's report
4. Treasurer's report
5. Election of Officers of the Association and General Committee Members:
  - Chairman
  - Vice-Chairman
  - Honorary Secretary
  - Assistant Secretary (Minutes)
  - Honorary Treasurer
  - Assistant Treasurer (Membership) – see note on page 1
  - General Committee Members (4)
6. Appoint two Honorary Auditors
7. Confirm election of Sub-committees and Photofinish
8. Amendments to the constitution

### Notes:

- ❖ Nominations for Officers, General Committee Members and Sub-committee Members must be received in writing by Ros Alterman by **11 November 2006** and contain the names of the proposer and seconder together with the signed consent of the Nominee.
- ❖ A nomination form is included at the end of the newsletter
- ❖ Bar Snacks will be available at lunchtime for those who require them.
- ❖ Tea and coffee on arrival will be provided free of charge.

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### **Track Officials' Prayer**

Oh Lord, in the track meet of life, you know that though most of us are just obscure figures on the field of competition, we all dream of officiating and being notified for our deeds.

Help us, we pray, to be grateful for the gift of life and the many challenges it offers. Thank you for the thrill of seeing and measuring a new record in the pole vault, for the beautiful fluid motion developed by the sprinters we time and judge as they flash across the finish line. We truly appreciate the wonderful opportunity to be a part of such a team that judges the explosive thrust of the long jumper, to be able to witness the fitness of the smooth high jumper and we continue to marvel at the endurance exhibited by the long distance runner.

Please teach us to be alert and to possess a keen eye in order that we may render fair and equitable decisions. Help us to accept each and every assignment with the same dedication and motivation and, while carrying out our job, display great enthusiasm for the job even though it may be small in responsibility.

We pray that we shall be ever mindful of the grim thought of being injured in the performance of our officiating duties and that we will guide our destiny to the betterment of his service.

Help us to accept compliments for a job well done with humility and dignity and may we always be respectful to the authority of both our rule books, HIS and ours. And Lord, when the last event is over and all the results are in, though we suffer through either cold or rain or sun or heat, may we be able to turn to You, our Head Referee, and report that we gave our very best. Amen

Charles M Ruter  
USATF  
Courtesy of Denis Murphy.

## **Educating the Army**

Having run a few Level 1 courses we were approached by Liz Patrick in mid May to run Track and Field judging courses for the Army during the first week in June. We knew that, in the past, they did Grade 4 in all disciplines with exams and then the results on a third day and we also knew that the failure rate was somewhat high. We therefore told Liz (who fully agreed) that we would be prepared to run an extended Level 1 course over 2 days. Liz sent us a schedule which had been used before which included such things as planning a meeting! – What do we know about this!

On Bank Holiday Monday (29<sup>th</sup> May), just as we were going out of the door to a Young Athletes open meeting, the phone rang and Harry wanted to talk about his Army Level 1 course. Eileen agreed to phone him the following day to discuss this. We phoned each day (to his mobile) and eventually at 10.00pm on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> Harry phoned! He had suddenly been sent to Cyprus that week but the course was on for 4 days time – panic!

We officiated on Sunday and this was followed by 2 hectic days of preparation and photo-copying. We were both out all day Wednesday so Terry was making the last overheads at 8.00am on Thursday.

We met our group of 10 at the Aldershot track. They were very smartly kitted out in white shirts and shorts for a very hot day (which it was). We soon discovered that it was the very end of their course and they wanted to finish early on Friday to go to Blackpool for the weekend. (Why all the extra work?) We agreed to work longer on Thursday to try and fit in with this request.

After an hour in the classroom, followed by coffee, we walked around the track and asked if they knew which lines were which. Every start line brought forth the answer 1500m until we got to the actual 1500m start when every other distance was mentioned first! We lost count of the number of times we said “divide by 4”. Relay followed and we were informed they were good at this as they had all done a coaching course. We didn’t have 1 correct baton exchange, even when we asked them to do it right, and 1 candidate, whilst acting as an Official, said the team didn’t exchange the baton when they clearly did – eyesight test required.

Setting of hurdles was next and although they moved the weights mostly correctly height was somewhat variable! The candidates were amazed at the difference in height of hurdles of the same make.

The army, we discovered, have 90 minutes for lunch but when they returned they had missed all but 10 minutes as they had to attend a briefing on Afghanistan. So to the practical track judging, umpiring and timekeeping. We had arranged for a specialist timekeeper but he was late as he was having an after lunch snooze!! At one point, we looked up to the stand and there were all these candidates standing with one hand in front of them so that they didn’t anticipate the finish. We understand it worked except for the candidate who looked the wrong side of his hand! The candidates were horror struck when they had to run 500m at one point.

At the end of a very hot afternoon it was back to the classroom for the organising a meeting session (thanks to the rule books) which was completed amid snores from certain parts of the room (and we thought these guys were fit). To save time, we left the candidates with a programme which needed the times allocated, little expecting that they would do this homework.

Friday was another very hot day and we again met our immaculately dressed candidates to be told that they had to say goodbye to the catering manager at 10.00 for 30 minutes. To our surprise they had done their homework. We managed to complete the classroom session by 10.00.

The field practical was fiercely contended with 3 candidates wanting to have a multi event competition. However, we insisted that they took their turn as an Official. They were very sharp eyed although we did catch them with the athlete who walked back through the long jump pit!

Star of the show was undoubtedly Charlie who, according to his colleagues, was the top competitor and Official for all sports in Trinidad & Tobago! We just managed to get the debrief done before they hot-footed it to Blackpool. They loved the relaxed style of presentation, which they were not used to, and the practical work.

Eileen & Terry Williams

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### **Now here’s a thought!!!**

I was reading an article recently on the Internet that took me to an Australian sport and recreation website (as you do!). Only a few years ago, Australian sport in general was facing a crisis in the declining numbers of officials being recruited or retained and a survey of National Sporting Organisations by the Australian Sports Commission subsequently identified abuse and lack of respect as major causes of the declining numbers of people officiating. What was particularly interesting was the fact that 83% of those surveyed felt that not enough was being done within sport to reduce this harassment of officials.

So what did they do? Well, abuse is not a new issue and I am sure it will never go away completely. Having recognized that this problem was threatening the future of sport, 2003 was designated “Year of the Official” and was the basis of a campaign to attract, train and retain officials by acknowledging the importance of their role and to reduce the incidence of abusive behaviour towards officials. What transpired was a proposed programme of education aimed at the clubs, coaches, athletes, parents and spectators – education on the rules, officiating and ethics.

I rather like the following extract from the campaign but, to avoid any recriminations, I have removed the object of the statement!

“Xxxx must be sure that their conduct stays within the bounds of respectful disagreement and should generally refrain from challenging or protesting calls in an insulting or combative manner. Under no circumstances should a protesting xxxx touch an official, kick dirt or throw anything at or in the direction of an official!” I guess that means don’t upset an Australian with a javelin!

How many athletes receive any guidance on positive and negative behaviour and how they can support officials? One idea that came out was the concept of providing all club members with a Code of Conduct which must be read and signed at registration and even handed out to parents and coaches. What follows is an example of a code of conduct which I think sums things up rather nicely.

**SPORTS OFFICIALS...**  
**Respect the Role. Respect the Person**

Most officials are volunteers who do it for the love of the event  
Officials deserve your respect and support  
Abusing an official won’t change the outcome of the event  
Officials can see things you can’t because they watch the event from a different angle  
Officials aren’t perfect; they do make mistakes, just like players

**Without Officials there would be no event**

Our licence includes our code of conduct, so perhaps its time others in the sport had theirs!

**Now there’s a thought!**

Ian Friend – Track Official

(Editor – Any official wanting to put in a claim for \$500,000 to give up officiating?)

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*Raising the standards of South West Officials – a challenge !!*

Last year I wrote an article on ‘officiating in the West Country’ which highlighted the difficulties (and sometimes pleasures) of being an official in a rural back water of England.

Since then we have become a region in our own right. The South West region covers the counties of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire, Avon and Gloucester. If you know your geography then you may be aware that the area of the South West is 16 times that of Greater London but it has a population two million less.

This means that travelling is a way of life down here and there are less people to do the jobs as well.

I have been co-opted on to the new council for the South West which meets monthly in Exeter. Most of us have to travel 80 to 150 miles for an evening meeting which means a quick dash home from work and a late night.

We are all volunteers who work with the full time staff recently appointed and we are all involved in other areas of athletics either at club or county level (sometimes both).

We have been allocated tasks within the new structure. Mine is to develop the officials in the area, which is a challenge.

Earlier in the year we had a SW conference and a sub group of delegates looked at officials’ development. Below were the issues identified as a result of a brainstorming session.

- *Identify volunteers.*
- *Establish a pathway for official development in the South West (in conjunction with Midlands and South.*
- *Establish a SW database of officials which can be accessed/ linked with the UK:A database. This needs to be maintained for maximum efficiency and accuracy.*
- *Develop a pyramid structure for development – create opportunities and ensure everyone can take them.*
- *Look at other ways of recruiting officials – are clubs always the best. Can we look at wider community using 2012 Olympics as a “carrot”.*
- *Find suitable mentors to encourage new officials in their development. Support them (financial if needs be.)*
- *Appoint a SW Officials co-ordinator (PRIORITY.)*
- *Link Regional Co-ordinator to County Secretaries.*
- *Link to Schools and College organisations.*
- *Set up new courses on Regional basis.*

This session was extremely helpful and the issues raised were very much those expected. I am now at the stage of formulating a plan to take things forward as a region. One of the problems we have is that the South West covers parts of two territories, the South and the Midlands. It has become evident that both these territories work differently making the job even more difficult.

I feel it is very important to work with the territorial officials secretaries and the associations. We will need the expertise that they provide. It is possible that in the future the territories will not exist, and that the regions will be the providers of competition and administration as a whole, but I feel this is some way off in the South West because of our lack of expertise. We do have some very good officials but maybe not enough at the higher levels. This is why we will still need to work with the higher graded officials in the South and the Midlands. One possibility is to invite the higher graded officials to assist in our area to help with officials' development. This would need to be financed, but that should be possible. I would be very interested in what higher graded officials think about this.

Some of these issues may be being faced by other regions particularly if they have a rural geography. If anyone would like to offer a comment or some thoughts on the subject then I would be happy to hear from them.

I can be contacted by e-mail on [kreed@cleve41.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:kreed@cleve41.freeserve.co.uk)

Keith Reed  
Devon Counties Officials Secretary and SW Council Member

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## TRACK CHAT

We managed to meet in September, despite the M25 – John Peerless got the record with a 3 hour journey! (He should have used his motorbike). The main subject for discussion was the programme for Conference 2007 and we decided on the following sessions:

- 1 Clerk of the Course including Indoors for Grades 1 & 2 (John Peerless)  
Tips to improve your performance for Grades 3 & 4 (Presenter to be confirmed).  
We are in discussion with photo finish to look at the possibility of a session on Chiefing Photofinish for Referees & Grade 1s.
- 2 “Did you see that?” A series of TV clips with problems for reporting/discussion. (All).
- 3 “Can I have a word please?” Dealing with difficult athletes/parents/coaches for Grades 2,3 & 4. Ian Friend and Steve Snodden.  
Assessments for Grade 1s and Referees. A discussion session.

There will also be a session for all on future development with a panel of Senior National Officials.

<b>DIARY DATES:</b>	<b>Conference</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Feb 07</b>
	<b>AGM</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup> November 06</b>

The Track AGM only takes a short time and is followed by discussion. If you have anything you would like to raise please contact Terry.

As some may know Denis Murphy (SM1) was invited to the USATF National Masters Championships in North Carolina and my thanks to him for letting me reproduce the “Officials Prayer” from the “programme”! Also, thanks to Ian Friend for “Now here’s a thought”. My thanks also to Keith Reed for his excellent article on the challenge for West Country Officials and I hope you will all try to help him. I know he will be very grateful.

I hope you all had a good season and those looking for promotion achieve their aim. Any problems, please get in touch.

Terry Williams (Track sub-committee Chairman)

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### Notes from the Main Committee Meeting held on Monday 10 July 2006 at TVAC

- Stan Burton to write to SEAA and England Athletics re committee selection
- What are the problems at Reading and Basingstoke? Are track certificate displayed?
- Alan Bell, Chris Cohen, Moira Gallagher, David Vidler on National Officials Educaion group. Level 3 likely to stay as the top level. Request divisions within it
- Timekeepers committee are drafting a questionnaire to grades 3 and 4 TK's about conference as discipline seems to lack attendance.
- Worry concerning the number of officials not yet registered.

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## SOUTH OF ENGLAND ATHLETICS OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION 2007

I should like to \* **APPLY FOR / RENEW** \* my membership of the South of England Athletics Officials Association.

**For present members please fill in name and post code only unless other details have changed**

**If you would like to receive your Newsletter by E-Mail please include your e-mail address**

**\*(Delete as applicable)**

MR /MRS /MISS/ MS/OTHER.....

FIRST NAME .....SURNAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....POSTCODE.....

TELEPHONE.....(HOME).....(WORK)

.....(MOBILE).....(FAX).....(E-MAIL)

**Newsletter by E-mail Yes / No**

(PLEASE INCLUDE DIALLING CODE)

COUNTYAFFILIATION.....DISCIPLINE.....GRADE.....

### Subscription £10

The following may be purchased if required.

2006 / 2007 IAAF Handbook £5.00 **YES / NO**

(This will be the English edition unless you specifically request the French or Spanish editions)

**The 2006/2007 Rule Book is the same as last years, please make sure you have got one.**

2006 /2007 National Rulebook will be sent to all members at no cost when available .

**The 2006/2007 Rule Book is the same as last years, please make sure you have got one.**

The 2007 ESAA Handbook is available free to members.

Please indicate if you wish one to be sent when they are available. **YES / NO**

I enclose a cheque for.....made payable to **S.E.A.O.A.** **If you require a receipt please include a S A E or e-mail address stating requirement.**

Signed.....Date.....

**Please complete fully and return to:**

Mr R Myers  
'Resolution'  
Main Road  
Chattenden  
Rochester  
Kent  
ME3 8PP

### **AIMS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

- To act at all times in the best interests of its members.
- To maintain the high standards of officiating.
- To raise the status of Officials.
- To speak with one voice on issues concerning Officials (**Membership of the SEAOA automatically includes membership of the National Officials Association**)
- To monitor and raise the standard of facilities provided for Officials and to monitor and raise the safety of facilities.
- To produce and distribute a regular Newsletter.
- To endeavour through liaison and communication to ensure that athletic events are adequately staffed.
- To promote, in conjunction with the SOUTH OF ENGLAND OFFICIALS COMMITTEE, the technical training in all disciplines.
- To represent the views of the Officials Association on Officials' examinations and upgrading.

***SOUTH OF ENGLAND ATHLETICS OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION***

I WISH TO NOMINATE .....

AS\* ..... OF THE SEAOA COMMITTEE.

SIGNED: .....

SECONDED: .....

SIGNATURE OF NOMINEE: .....

Chairman

Vice Chairman

Hon. Secretary

Hon. Assistant Secretary

Hon. Treasurer

Hon. Assistant Treasurer (Membership Secretary)

General Committee Member

Sub-committee member      Track / Field / Timekeeper / Starter/Marksman

*\* Insert as applicable*

**IMPORTANT**

All nominations must be submitted in writing to Ros Alterman by **11 NOVEMBER 2006**. Names of proposer and seconder must be included with signed consent of the Nominee.