



Communiqué

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Summer 2008

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Letter from the Chairman

Summer is now with us, (hopefully!) and I trust that your season is going well.

Thank you to all those people who emailed or wrote to me with their comments on the Officiating Levels. Thank you also to those who have signed my petition regarding the need for more than just two Levels, 2 and 3, for the bulk of Technical Officials. Your efforts have not been in vain.

To bring you up to date, I have had a meeting with the Technical Committee of UKA and, with the benefit of your support, I have managed to persuade them that the whole issue needs to be looked at afresh. They have passed it over to the Education Committee to come up with options and alternatives by the end of September.

I know that at least one member of that

Attention: All Level 1 and 2 tutors

At a meeting of the South East COFSECS there was a long discussion about the problems concerning newly qualified Level 1 & 2s and the fact that they are not completing their log books and therefore not getting their pass and licence.

This also means that they are not obtaining a CRB.

In one County alone only 17 out of 70 who took courses in 2007 have actually submitted their log books to obtain their pass and licence. We have no reason to believe that the situation in this County is not typical

These people are supporting club events and we sorely need them or else these events would not run.

Committee agrees with the principles that I have been putting forward and so I am content for the moment to see what comes of their proposals.

It would seem that common sense has prevailed, and I have convinced UKA that quality time should be spent in thinking the issue through, but watch this space!

Just a reminder that the SEAOA is set up to help you, if you have any questions please contact your discipline Chairman or any other committee member, I am sure that they will be only too pleased to help. Have a good season.

Stan Burton

However, when new candidates apply for a course could you please advise them to start the CRB process so that they can bring the completed form to the course.

Also, could you please stress the importance of completing the log book so that they can receive a pass and licence.

It is also important to reiterate that they do not need to do anything other than support Club events whilst their children are competing and there is no requirement to progress further although they should normally be given every encouragement to do so.

Alan Vincent
Chairman SE COFSECS

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Why not have your Communiqué sent by email so that you can receive it in colour?

We are sure that a lot more Officials could do this. Please let the membership secretary know.

Also, please don't forget to let the Membership Secretary know if you change your email address.

Membership Secretary

Chris Lamport

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Committee Reports

Timekeepers:

The Committee are still working on outstanding projects. Time is the issue. Looking for new ideas for Conference 2009 with other disciplines. Early thoughts are for a training session for Level 2 &/or Level 3 with Timekeepers. This could bring in lower levels but formatting the Conference slightly differently as these courses take all day.

Photo Finish:

We wish to increase the number of Officials who can use a PF system without assistance. To aid this we wish that the SCAA system is used by more people so I am offering to train somebody, at appropriate meetings, to use the system for a complete meeting rather than over the short period of the Conference, say 50 to 100 races.

We also believe that starters/markers should be more involved in the electronic timing process so are willing to involve them at Conference and at other times.

We also intend to produce a booklet on the PF system at Lee Valley

Field:

Most recent meeting 12th March

Reviewed Conference feedback

- Funding initiative generally successful
- Intending to continue/expand multi-disciplinary theme of future workshops

Jim Kent confirmed he will be providing Communiqué articles, going forward. Could not make deadline for Spring edition, but full series of articles will be ready for the next one.

Current focus on training initiatives: EDM now arranged at several open and other early season meetings; trying to communicate this to those wanting experience.

New Officials' structure discussed: overall feeling is that we have to work within that, rather than try to re-create the old one.

Peter Crawshaw

Main Committee: Summary of main points

Chris Jones had given us a promotional push in the East Region Newsletter

Starter/Marksmen – Stan Burton has spoken to Denis Murphy who has been trying hard but has given up as no support

NAOF – Agreed that all reports on prospective Level 3s go to Cofsecs as they need to collate and then send full package to Region when all in place annually. Problems in this area with London.

Stan Burton said that East were holding small Conferences but also advertising our own. Also using Regional Championships for supportive practice for Level 2/3. All Regions planning Level 1 & 2 courses for Autumn and anticipating Level 3s in Autumn/Winter. South East Cofsecs meeting 15th April. London had nothing to report. Bob Smith stated that he had the names for the TRI-REGION Peer Groups which caused some concern. Apparently East Region names are out, E. Turner has SouthEast names but no discussion has taken place and London have not selected. There appears to be no basic criteria being followed and little communication.

Stan Burton raised his concerns with the new Level 2 and 3 system and had received 20 emails in support of his ideas. The feeling was that there has to be some distinction between the 'senior' Level 2 and new Level 2 or we will lose Officials and Terry Williams said that he already had 2 who had stated they would not be continuing after this season. Alan Tyler mentioned that this needs addressing at Level 3 as well. Terry Williams prepared to take a petition to SE Regional Cofsec meeting on 15th April and ask for colleagues to take to their County Championships.

This petition has received tremendous support— Thank you. Editor.

Date for your Diary

Conference 2009

**Sunday 1st February at St Mary's College,
Twickenham**

East/London/South East Tri-Regional group (ELSE)

Main outcomes from the meeting held on Thursday 22 May at London Regional Office

- The group will be known as ELSE, being the initials of the three regions.
- Chair: Alan Vincent
- Secretary: John Neale
- Discipline representatives who will be first point of contact for Secretary and relevant business:
Starter/Marksman Don Vickers
Field Peter Nicholson
Timekeeper Keith Flint
Track Wendy Haxell
- Terms of reference were agreed [and we are aiming to keep these more or less in line with those of the other Tri-Regional Groups].

East/London/South East Tri-Regional group (ELSE)

- Reports and upgradings: the South East will follow the East model, with reports from Level 3 upwards and their duty lists being dealt with on a regional basis. Level 2 reports and duty lists should be returned to County Officials Secretaries. We shall review the procedures in January 2009.
- Nominations for the Peer Group were made.
- Arrangements for future meetings were made: London office – 10/11/08 (indoor selections) and 05/01/09 (outdoor selections). Both meetings to be held in the London Regional Office.
- Ancillary selections still need to be sorted, as there is no real clarity as yet on the systems to be deployed.

In Memorium

Despite Denis and Stan's best efforts no Starter/Marksman has offered to serve on the main or Conference Committee.

Therefore there will be no specific sessions at the next Conference for Starters/ Marksmen.



Calling an Ambulance

At one meeting an ambulance was called for an injured athlete but would not come until the post code of the Stadium was given.

It would therefore be useful to know the post code of Stadia where you frequently work and to pass this on to local organisers.

TRACK CHAT

With the 'summer' season now well underway I hope you are all enjoying your officiating but don't forget, if you have any problems then please get in touch with me.

As far as the future of our booklets is concerned, in view of our Chairman's comments earlier in this issue, I am more encouraged to start looking at the re-write with the help of all our sub-committee. Hopefully the way forward will soon be clearer and we can get down to some serious editing to assist you all with your progression. For all of you who have attended the Level 3 Course you will recollect that it states that candidates must have knowledge of the differences between UKA and IAAF rules. There is evidence that this area is not being questioned by some reporters so I would ask you all to bear this in mind. This is only fair to the candidate to prepare them for operating under IAAF rules once they attain Level 3 (at present!!)

As you read this issue the sub-committee should have met to get to grips with Conference 2009 so that Robin Elford can move forward with his planning.

Terry Williams (Track sub-committee Chairman)

Na waszych markach (poziom)

'On Camp with Kelly' Race Day

A competition simulation was to take place on Saturday 5 April as part of the 'On Camp with Kelly' Educational Camp, supported by Norwich Union, in Loughborough. The event involved OCWK athletes taking part in the camp as well as some local guest athletes. It was intended to give the athletes a taste of what to expect at major championships, from departing the UK through to post race procedures.

After receiving an email, asking if John and I would like to officiate at this meeting, we were given the necessary details of where and when. So the morning of the 5th April arrived and we set off to Loughborough, it was a dull grey day, but that didn't dampen our spirits!! On arrival at Loughborough we went over to the registration table, well we assumed it was the registration table and had to have faith in the 'OCWK' team members who directed us to the table, as all the signs were in Polish, not only that one, but every single sign was in Polish!! Well, we *were* told, that athletes going to a foreign country need to be aware that English is not used everywhere (well it ought to be, I thought!). The World Juniors are to be held in Poland and a number of the competing athletes are hoping to attend.

Next thing after a long car journey was a visit to the loo, and yes you have guessed it, the toilet doors had Polish signs. Thank goodness for pictures, as some of you may be aware, I seem to have trouble identifying which toilet to use and have been known to enter the gents, but I knew I had to look for the figure with the legs closed and not open!!

Before the actual track meeting, Kelly Holmes and her Coach Margot Jennings, talked to the parents of the participating athletes, coaches and the officials. It proved very informative, as Kelly explained the pressure that athletes go through at big meetings. She explained that during the training camp, the athletes went into dinner one evening, after being told to pack their bags sensibly and to put essential items in their hand luggage. After dinner that is when the athletes came out to discover that all the signage had been changed to Polish and that after the 'flight' they were all now in Poland! All the athletes were then asked to collect their luggage, only for two of them to find that their baggage didn't arrive in Poland. Now they learnt the very hard lesson of making sure that things like spikes are packed in hand luggage. Kelly went onto say, that arriving at a major meeting, can be so distracting not having all essential items, and that it can impair their performance. Even missing out on a place in the final, or at worse not medalling, when expected.

Margot then spoke about how coaches are not allowed in certain areas and that that would happen here today, as only the athletes would be allowed into the call room, again giving the feel as to what happens at World championships. Margot told the coaches about not being too intense towards the athlete before a race and to let them 'chill'. Now we are ready for the first race, John as Starter was given a piece of paper and written on the paper was ' Na waszych markach (poziom)'. John was informed that it actually said 'On your marks' well at least he hoped it did! 'We would like you to give the commands in Polish' said one of the OCWK team. 'Would you!' said John, with a nervous laugh.

John sometimes has trouble stringing two English words together, let alone Polish. He wasn't sure how it was to be pronounced either and nor did anyone else. So he said it phonetically and just hoped he wasn't swearing at anyone!

So out came the athletes, the marksman set them up for the start and John stood on the rostrum. 'On your marks' said John. 'Oh S*@t' he thought as he realised that he should have said it in Polish. Time for the second race and as he mounts the rostrum he says to himself, think Polish, 'Na waszych markach' he commands, at which point every athlete on the track turned and looked at John as though he was mad. They then realised that this was all part of the Polish experience and went to their marks. By the time that the meeting was finished John was fluent, in one sentence of Polish, and after checking with one of the carers that look after his mum, who is Polish, she confirmed that he had been saying 'On your marks' and that his pronunciation was almost spot on.

It turned out to be a very informative and interesting experience, learning what athletes have to go through at major games; as officials we concentrate on things from our aspect, we don't always appreciate the athletes perspective. It was also great to watch a great Olympian such as Kelly Holmes passing on her experiences to the next generation.

Gill Freeman

Dutch Exchange Visit

So they were putting up the flags when we arrived in Holland... no it wasn't for us but the forthcoming Euro2008 Football. Paul Yates (a starter from the Manchester area) and I were collected from the airport by Paul Hoos and taken to his house for dinner and overnight. His family welcomed us warmly and in the morning we took a short visit to Alkmaar to see the cheese market. We also took a short boat trip around the canals there. It was a case of heads down or even kneel on the floor as the bridges were so low. After a snack lunch we headed for Gronigen over the big dyke road in the north.

Now we get to the purpose of our visit... to work as officials at the Dutch Junior Championships in Gronigen. Having booked into our hotel we walked to the track for the Friday evening session. Paul was issued with his red shirt and I was given a dark blue one. In Holland the starters wear red and the Referees a dark blue. I was also given an armband to wear. On the Track there are three referees... One for the start, one for the finish and one for around the track. I did the latter job and was positioned on the back straight watching for the yellow flags from the umpires. The umpires had previously been given maps and positions for the races. That evening they stayed in the same place but on the next two days they did move but not as frequently as we do.

All officials are given a badge with JURY on it. This is not the same as the Jury of Appeal who had different badges. Infringement sheets were also issued and the Referees said what the umpires should be looking for. At the end of the day the referees and chiefs all have a meeting to state any problems that may need addressing for the next day. One thing that did happen before the start of this meeting... the local organiser arrived with a crate of cold beer. This was much needed as the temperatures were very high and remained so all weekend. At one point it was 34C in the photofinish room.

Day two and I spent the first two hours watching the photofinish operations (Timetronics). Operated by a team who are employed along with the system.

After this I resumed my duties of the previous day. I

should add that no actual breaks are timetabled in for anyone!! Another end of day session and this was followed by a meal for all the chiefs at the track. It consisted of some nibbles as starters.... Smoked eel on black bread...very nice.... And then followed by a chinese meal. Wine and beer was also flowing.

Day three and we were down to two referees on the Track as one of the others had been swapped to do Referee Long Jump as that referee had not been able to come. In Holland the officials are trained and pass various exams so that they are multi-discipline trained. So I have now become Referee Start. I am watching the start area, the false starts and if there are any appeals from athletes then I have to deal with this. The Dutch athletes however do not tend to dispute matters and if there is a second false start (we are under IAAF rules) then the athlete automatically walks away.

I should also add that there is no Clerk of Course as such and although there is a ground staff it is the responsibility of the Referees to check their area especially when there are hurdles or steeplechase etc. The referees then give a signal to each other and start referee tells the starters when the track is ready. After another end of meeting session and another cold beer we headed back to the airport for an overnight stop and an early morning flight home. The Dutch had been so welcoming and we had been looked after very well indeed. It just remains now for me to write a report for UKA.

Wendy Haxell



Alkmaar Cheese Market

The Special Olympics – Lee Valley Indoor March 2008

Responding to a call through the officials requests section on the SEAOA web site for help at the Special Olympics this year I made myself available for timekeeping.

I wasn't really sure what to expect not having done anything like this before but I am so pleased that I did. Although this was a 2 day event I could only make the Saturday but what a great time it was. The fun and the joy expressed by the athletes as they competed would put many of our able body events to shame.

The Special Olympics, for those who don't know (like me), is for people with a learning disability and provides equality of opportunity for all athletes regardless of ability or degree of disability. Just to compete is a challenge.

I remember one particular girl running the 60 metre sprint. She came in last but crossed the line with a huge smile on her face and arms raised. As she passed the timekeepers stand she gave us all a wave! I think she also quite won the heart of Katherine Merry who as SOGB Ambassador was presenting the awards.

And there was an 800m run by one lad who would leave many U17 athletes in his wake.

Technically, I didn't particularly have a great day making a few silly mistakes and I am grateful for the forbearance of the Chief TK, Steve Baldwin and Jane (and the other gentleman whose name I'm afraid I have forgotten). I will try harder next time!

And if I am able there will be a next time and I would like to encourage other officials to join in also from all disciplines. There were really only just enough of us but it was well worth the effort of turning out.

Maybe see you next year?

David Baslington



John MacDonald (Timekeeper) is attempting to "clear the decks". One item which may be of interest to members that he still has in his possession is a large number of old Athletics Weekly although avid collectors have already selected "AW"s which were missing from their collections.

Should anyone be interested please contact the editor.

I would like to thank all of you who have contributed to this edition of the Communiqué. This is your magazine so please keep sending articles etc.

The next edition will be in early October .

Eileen Williams
Editor



Do any of you recognise this stadium?

Surely the health and safety inspectors, track certicators and Field Judges among you can come up with a caption!

Please send your ideas to the Editor

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Starters
Vacant

2008 The Year of the Steeplechase

At a certain County Championships in the South of England an athlete took the first water jump but, on the next 2 laps ran around the track in normal fashion, omitting coming in and taking the water jump. By the 4th lap he had again obviously plucked up enough courage as he again took the water jump.

When spoken to by the Track Referee he swore that he had taken the water jump on every lap!

At the Southern age group championships at Ashford an athlete refused the water jump on the first lap, turned, ran back some 15 metres, turned and this time managed to clear the water. Although he got no advantage some Officials felt he should have been given 3 seconds for a refusal!

The St Mary's Classic 3000 Steeplechase ended with the Track Referee having to apologise to the athletes as Hurdle 4 had been put out prior to the start resulting in the athletes having to take an extra barrier

Finally, at a YAL meeting all 4 barriers were put out prior to the start of the 1500 Steeplechase. When 2 were removed the athletes stated that they always took this one first. When asked if they also took the water jump on the first lap the answer was, of course, a resounding "Yes".

To compound this the Starter & Marksman wanted to start this race from the 1500 start line!

This really happened!

Hurdler to Marksman

"Can you hold my glasses during this race please?"

Marksman

"Of course"

Marksman to Hurdler

"Can you see the first flight of hurdles?"

Hurdler to Marksman

"I'd better have my glasses back."

During the course of a Track and Field Season many incidents such as those featured on this page occur which keep us amused.

If you experience any entertaining episodes why not share them through the pages of this magazine.

Please send to the editor at any time. They will be saved for the next issue!