



# Communiqué

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## Winter 09 A Happy New Year to all our Readers

Apologies, there is a certain amount of repetition due to the minutes of various meetings where the same items were discussed. Editor

### Letter from the Chairman

As you now know, the principle of splitting the new Level 2 into 3 sections has now been adopted by UKA, and you should have received copies of the details.

This is to be welcomed, and there will be further discussions within UKA, starting in early 2009, dealing with Technical Officials generally, to which I have been invited. It has been acknowledged that perhaps matters need to be considered in more

depth and hopefully this will evolve over the next year or so.

Don't forget the Conference on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2009, the reduced rate of £7 has got to be a bargain! See you there.

Stan Burton

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR CHAIRMAN



Stan Burton (pictured receiving his award from Chair of England Athletics John Graves) was honoured for his services to officiating at the England Athletics Awards Evening last October.

Stan has been a Timekeeper for almost 30 years and rose quickly to the position of Chief. He has always encouraged new Officials and supported so called 'smaller' meetings despite reaching the pinnacle of Chief Timekeeper at the Commonwealth Games in Manchester. He is quite happy to Officiate at the Crystal Palace Grand Prix and then the Aldershot Schools U13/14s with over 100 races coming down in a short space of time. He retains his sense of humour throughout and one Official has said that he would give his right arm to have one of Stan's so called bad days.

In 1999 Stan became Treasurer of the South of England Athletic Officials Association and took over as Chairman as well in 2003. During that time he has forged relationships with a number of senior Officers from both UK: Athletics and England Athletics in order to promote and protect the future of Technical Officials.

Stan's Peers, at their own behest, elected him onto the UK Athletics Members Council which says much for his standing with his fellow Officials from all disciplines.

There has been much unrest within Technical Officials circles regarding the way the new Levels system has been introduced. A petition was raised under Stan's signature and this had around 1000 signatures. Stan was asked to meet with the members of the UKA Technical Committee and the result of this is that they referred the whole matter back to the Education sub Committee resulting in the subdividing of Level 2. Stan gave no consideration to his own future but this was done solely for the good of all Officials throughout the UK.

Stan went on to represent England Officials at the UK Awards dinner in December but was beaten for the National award by the Scottish candidate, Alex Jackson.

Have you renewed your membership for 2009? Membership form attached with this Communiqué

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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**

**[chrislamport@seaoa.co.uk](mailto:chrislamport@seaoa.co.uk)**

### REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES :-

- a) **Timekeepers** – Conference 09: Our proposals for this coming year (running a Level 2/3 course) were not acknowledged with no comment of our proposal and don't know if this was a popular proposal. Feedback was somewhat disappointing as there was none. Alan Vincent has offered to represent us. Dougie leaves at the end of this month and the SC thanked him for all his hard effort put in over the years and wished him well. Stopwatches – We are currently trawling the Internet as we believe that Tesco £4.99 wouldn't be a suitable tool to use. Committee Chairman – we are asking for somebody to take on this role as the remainder of the committee have other commitments. A letter is going out in this month's newsletter.
- b) **Track** - Met on 4<sup>th</sup> August and, in the main, concentrated on Conference and made decisions on what we wanted and have arranged Presenters. Intend doing 'Track Tips' for the Communiqué in the future, just quick ideas on how to do particular jobs/duties. All prepared to stand for next year

### Field – Conference

Various ideas on cross-disciplinary workshops put forward: Tony Shaw has since attended subsequent 7<sup>th</sup> October Conference sub-committee meeting, and will liaise with the Regions / Ros Alterman re any further opportunities for obtaining additional funding. Ideas re guest speakers being pursued.

#### Sub-committee membership / AGM preparation

All existing members are content to stand for re-election, though Peter Lee feels he should be handing over to someone new, working his / her way up the levels. Peter now has a seat on the General Committee in his own right.

#### Communique

Jim Kent has now delivered the first of his previously promised articles (i.e. a "How to" series) and there will be further instalments in the series. Peter Lee has asked Mike Parmiter for an article re "Officiating over the years".

#### Health & Safety courses

It is recognised that these may need to be repeated, probably by Regions: some may need an update, even if they have already attended. Peter Lee is investigating in East and Tony Shaw contacting Regional Groups.

#### Leaflets update:

- a) Two items (Starter pack and "Oh no! You've been asked to be the referee") still on the list for updating: should be scope for addressing these now that the outdoor season is over.
- b) Still intended to replace "So you want to be a Field Judge" and "Progressing through the various levels" with a single document, but this needs to wait until there is greater clarity about the new structure of levels.
- c) Also looking for a Level 2 to join.

**Photofinish** – Met in September and looking at ways of improving leg numbers such as the circular ones used in Beijing. Conference arrangements confirmed. Offers made for PF courses but no take-up. All prepared to stand.

**NAOF** – Next meeting November.

### REGIONAL REPORTS -

**London** - Adverts out shortly for H & S and Level 2 & 3 courses. 46 A Level students taken the Level 1 course. Looking to recruit Level 1 Tutors and train School staff as Level 1 Tutors. Bursaries available for Tutors.

**East** - Cofsecs to suggest promotion candidates. Officials Conference 16<sup>th</sup> November which is intended as a feeder conference to our own. Officials Courses arranged and H & S in most Counties.

**South East** – Level 3 Crawley January 25th Please contact the regional office

**Health & Safety**      Kent April 5<sup>th</sup> venue tbc  
                                 Surrey - Spring 09 date & venue tbc

### Regional Awards

Congratulations go to the following South East Regional winners.  
Official of the Year- Pam Rogers, Hampshire,  
Services to Officiating -Stan Burton, Hampshire,  
Young Official of the Year- Calum Piper, Hampshire

### Endurance Officials Courses—Level 2

The SE region has 4 tutors trained and available to run the Level 2 course which will be ready in January to deliver - Pam Rogers,

Graham Jessop, Colin Gostelow and John Batty. The SE region will deliver 2 courses early 2009.

### **Risk Assessment**

This course is for Road Race Organisers and Referees. The region plans to run 4 courses in the next 6 months  
Haywards Heath - November 23<sup>rd</sup>, Portsmouth tba, Reading tba Kent(?) tba

The South East region is working to create a parallel group to the Regional Cofsec Group for Endurance Officials. This group will plan and oversee the running of courses and all matters relating to Endurance Officials.

TW mentioned that Alan Vincent has taken up on behalf of the SE Region Cofsecs the question as to how long you can remain a Trainee Level 2? No answer as yet from Moira Gallagher!

**UPDATE ON OFFICIALS LEVELS** – SB reported that he was told by Cherry Alexander that the report would be out in 2 weeks (as at 5<sup>th</sup> August). Arrived 3 weeks later for comments which SB went back with 6 – no response apart from an email from Alan Bell stating that was what was going to happen. Basic proposal that Level 2 be split into Level 2 – Club (L2 by transfer), Level 2 County (Level 3 by transfer) and Level 2 Region (Level 4 by transfer). Proposal was that only one report required from County to Region!! No indication on how it is all to be done and full details should have been issued by now. A number of concerns were expressed that there appears to have been little thought again on how this amended system will operate.

**CONFERENCE** – The format for next year has been changed to fall in line with the new system of levels. There will be 16 workshops, almost all multi-disciplined. RA is still waiting confirmation of a Guest Speaker. The cost will be £14 p.p. to include lunch or £3.50 without. SB proposed that we subsidise Conference in view of our England Athletics funding with acknowledgement of their assistance. Agreed that Lunch would be £7 and those bringing their own would pay £2.50.

**NEWLETTER** - The Autumn edition (14 pages) went out by email on 4<sup>th</sup> October. I still have one article left for the next issue and there should be another field article on the way.

**AGM 2008** Full minutes will subsequently be found on the website but notes from the informal discussions are below:

### **Main Meeting—Secretary's Report**

Our year began by inviting the Regional Managers of the South East, East and London Regions to attend our January meeting. Each of the Managers gave us an outline of their region and defined their roles. Various problems were highlighted and it was agreed that the Regional Managers will attend future SEAOA committee meetings on a rotational basis. It was agreed that good communication was the key and to that end the following were appointed as reps to the Regional Cofsecs Groups: East - Peter Lee, London - Jeanne Coker and the Southeast - Terry Williams.

In February the SEAOA Conference took place at Twickenham University College with over 140 Officials attending. Although a great success on the day, the numbers were at our lowest for several years. Our guest speaker, Peter Matthews, was very popular and our thanks go to him for his time. The raffle raised £253, many thanks to all those who generously donated prizes. I must also thank both the Southeast and London regions for their financial donations toward the day.

In the spring, our Chairman set up a petition regarding the need for more than just two Levels for the majority of Technical Officials. This culminated with Stan attending a meeting with the Technical Committee of UKA. They agreed that the whole issue needed looking at afresh and it was passed over to the Education committee to come up with alternatives by the end of September. Subsequently it was agreed to break down the new Level 2 into three sections so that senior officials would be recognised for their knowledge and experience.

For those that may not be aware, England Athletics are yet again restructuring. With effect from 5<sup>th</sup> January regional staff and regional offices will no longer be part of the structure. There will be a regional Council but no regional budget. In place will be a South Team Leader (the South being the South East, East and London) and a team of 7 Club & Coach Officers. It is envisaged that Regional Officials Groups will continue but support will come from HQ.

Whilst your discipline sub-committees and its members continue to work hard either putting on courses, updating booklets or making contact with new officials, I have to report that unfortunately, this year, we have failed to gain any representation both to the main committee or conference sub-committee from the Starters. There must be one or two senior level starters who would be prepared to sit on a committee and so ensure the future of the starting fraternity.

On a more positive note, whilst the governance of our sport continues to change, your Association and its committees will continue as ever to work on behalf of all technical officials.

Ros Alterman

## **OPEN FORUM**

**ELSE** – The Tri Region Officials Committee has now been formed as follows:-

South East – Alan Vincent (Chair), Wendy Haxell, Peter Nicholson, Don Vickers. London – Jeanne Coker, Keith Davis, Gerald Alterman. East – Keith Flint, Roz Randle, John Gandee, Martyn Harvey. John Neale is Secretary but only for one year. Policy on selections not really thought out and as EA will only pay for 2 meetings per year a lot has had to be done by email and a number of Level 3s by transfer have not been invited to the Indoors Meetings as the data was incorrect. South West are still receiving details from the Midlands.

**Tony Sach** – Tony mentioned that with the UKA Appeal procedure they require a £100 fee although it is not mentioned anywhere.

**South West** – Nick Higman said that with the SW now with the Midlands we lose a lot of members but Chris said they were now coming back.

**Stan Burton** – Stan gave a resume of his dealings with the Technical Committee following the dissatisfaction of Officials over the Levels and revealed the final decisions which should have been communicated to all Officials a couple of months ago. A vote of thanks was given to Stan for all his work in getting changes in the system.

**Gradings** – Sue Bishop mentioned that at National/International meetings where every Official is graded the form also asks for comments on each Official although the Official is not advised. This was felt to be wrong as this could have an effect on future selections without the Official being aware of detrimental comments.

### **Track Sub-Committee—Chairman’s Report**

Well another year has gone by and a rather difficult one as far as Officials are concerned. As a sub-committee we normally meet 4 times a year but with the uncertainty of the way forward we did not meet these targets.

The problem was that our main job this year was to redo the booklets and we managed to get the first one done quite easily and it is on the website replacing the old Grade 4 booklet. However until we know exactly what UKA are doing with the Level 2s following Stan’s petition then we cannot adjust the rest of the booklets. However we are ever hopeful that UKA will get their letter out soon.

My thanks to all the committee for their support, Ian Friend and Matt Witt with their new ideas, John Peerless for providing the hospitality, Robin Elford for taking on the Conference job and Eileen for keeping me sane.

We are hopeful of putting a series of quick tips onto the Communiqué and I am sure that the Editor will not let us miss a deadline.

All the Committee are willing to stand again for another term and we are still working one short and could really do with this post being filled by a lady.

Terry Williams

A long and fruitful discussion followed regarding the reporting system; the main points made are listed below.

- 1 It was felt that the report forms are inadequate and that the verbal debrief was of more benefit to the reportee as there is no space for advice regarding personal development.
- 2 Candidates require advice to create a learning plan.
- 3 There are still instances where reporters are giving different verbal and written debriefs.
- 4 Reports should start with the positives before the negatives.
- 5 There needs to be a course or information giving report writing guidelines.
- 6 It was suggested that the Main Committee should sanction guidelines on report writing for the SEAOA website.
- 7 It was suggested that the Track sub-committee should attempt to create these guidelines after Terry’s Conference presentation and feedback.
- 8 There appears to be an expectation among those looking to achieve Level 3 that 6 reports will guarantee upgrading whereas it is a **minimum** of 6 reports.
- 9 Many reports are still not being done or being completed very late. If very late they cannot be accurate and are of no help to the candidate.
- 10 A report on a Referee should be done by a Referee.
- 11 There needs to be a questionnaire regarding reports for the future development of both reporter and reportee. This could include a link to the UKA website. Ian to assess the report forms currently available and report back.  
This questionnaire could be available at Conference or sent with the Communiqué.
- 12 Officials need experience of report writing at lower levels. Hopefully this will be possible with the splitting of Level 2
- 13 There needs to be space for strengths and development areas which must be completed as too many reports give no advice. SEAOA could add their own sheet for this. Guidelines need to be given for this.
- 14 This could be circulated by sending to COFSECS; putting on the website; putting in Communiqué. Feedback should be requested.
- 15 It was felt that the number of reports required within Level 2 is insufficient.

## **Field Sub-Committee:**

### **Chairman's Remarks**

A minutes silence was held to remember the passing of David Phillips.

Funding was received to help with conference expenses and to fund other officials training. We successfully used some to fund EDM equipment at various early season meetings around the region to enable new and inexperienced users to get some practice. £1900 from Skills Active funding for officials in the East was used to help pay for the conference 2008.

New officials need to be encouraged; they attend a course and complete a log book but it is taking too long before the outcome is acknowledged by UKA and this needs to be addressed. Even more worrying is that of the many people who attend the courses, only less than 20% are returning their completed log books and don't progress to officiating.

It is acknowledged that there are still issues with the system.

The field leaflets are again on hold, awaiting news of what's happening and out of date leaflets will be removed from the web site.

We are now getting a few contributions for Communiqué from the field, but we need more. A big thank you to Jim Kent for his input and we all look forward to more.

Tony Shaw

Sue Bishop thanked the committee for the work put into conference 2008, saying it was one of the best ever.

The focus on next year's conference is to be less discipline specific and to have more cross discipline workshops. As such attendees will register at the field desk on arrival but will not need to register into individual workshops. There was concern at the split of the workshops, but it was pointed out that there are two different programmes in circulation and hopefully there will be suitable workshops in each session for everyone.

### **Projects for 2009**

- a) We will again aim to have EDM practical training at early season meetings and try and introduce some set up training; this could be held for individuals if they arrive early enough to help set the equipment up. There will be a weekend at Tony Sach's to set up the equipment and to ensure all set up and usage instructions are correct for each machine. Experienced users will be invited to practice setting up the machines.  
John Wright suggested that Bracknell AC clubhouse may be available for set up training FOC, and to contact Malcolm Charlish about using EDM at their pre-season young athletes open meeting.
- b) Field event articles for Communiqué.
- c) The leaflets will be reviewed and either updated or removed from the web site.

### **Any other business**

- a) It was thought that Mike Parmiter has been a field official for 50 years, but our maths was wrong, and it is not until next year! He has however held referee status for 25 years – a remarkable achievement! There are actually two officials who are '49ers', Mike Parmiter and John Lofts – there should be a celebration next year.
- b) Unknown to many officials, there is a UKA appeal procedure for officials, but to invoke an appeal the official is required to pay £100! As employees (admittedly unpaid) of UKA, there should be no fee and this has been taken up by the national association. A general concern was expressed that officials are unaware of this procedure, and that it should be circulated to all officials and be stated in the licence booklet. At national level meetings, officials are assessed and if deemed to be 'not up to the mark', they should be spoken to on the day; this should be followed up in writing and the outcome also communicated.
- c) Of greater concern is that those officials not spoken to have no real idea of how they are doing, and what they can do to improve. It would be helpful to have access to the comments written by the assessor, but at the moment this is not available. In future, it is hoped that access will be available, and that more officials are helped to improve themselves. This should be done at all levels, not just higher level meetings.
- d) Concern was expressed that although Level 2 trainees are completing their log books, returning them to their tutors who assess them and pass them to the regions, the candidates have not heard that they have passed. This seems to be a countrywide problem and needs to be addressed.
- e) Also, there seems to be no follow up of people who attend the course but do not return their log book; this too needs to be addressed.
- f) The levels are changing again! It is possible that level 2 will be split to differentiate between those newly qualified with little experience and those with great experience suitable for officiating at regional meetings and those qualified enough to officiate at national level...

### **Timekeepers**

Dougie Weir resigned from being chairperson as his job has moved to America. To replace Dougie Paul Langston has taken on this role. The committee now consist of Paul Langston, Graham Bentley, Mike Gregory, Chris Lamport & David Lindsey.

There are vacancies for lower grades to join our committee but you are most welcome to attend a sub meeting if you would like to sit in on a meeting. We normally meet in a Harvester. Meetings last 2.5 hours.

We are also looking for somebody to represent us at the Conference sub meetings.

Conference this year 09 is multi discipline.

Timekeepers Starter Pack is in need of updating. We are looking at stopwatches to help new TK's when starting off.

## 'CONFERENCE 09

Have you booked your place yet? Closing Date January 17th so please hurry!

Our guest speaker, by the way, is Danny Crates - Paralympic medallist & World championship runner

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### Officials' Conference on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup>. February '09

at St. Mary's University College, Waldegrave Road,  
Strawberry Hill, Twickenham. TW1 4SX

Dear Official,

This conference is open to all Technical Officials and run by the SEAOA but you do not have to be a member to attend this annual event. Next year all workshops will be multi-discipline so you will have greater choice.

The Association especially welcomes Levels 1 & 2 as it is felt that you will gain much from the day. It is an occasion to meet other officials and exchange ideas. There is also the opportunity to obtain the latest update on any rule changes and become acquainted with some of the latest technical equipment. It is a very sociable day so please do come along.

Morning coffee will be served from 9.15 am. The conference workshops begin at 10.00 am and as usual, lunch and afternoon tea are available. The day ends at approx. 5.00pm.

Appended is the proposed programme for the day. Further information will be posted on our website: [www.seaoa.co.uk](http://www.seaoa.co.uk) when available.

The total cost will be £14.00 per person or £3.50 if lunch is not required. Please enclose your cheque made payable to SEAOA and send it together with the tear off slip to:  
Ros Alterman, 42 Denchworth Road, Wantage, Oxon. OX12 9ES as soon as possible but no later than January 17th. 2009

If you have any queries, telephone 01235 763174 or Email: [rosalterman@seaoa.co.uk](mailto:rosalterman@seaoa.co.uk)

If a map to St. Mary's is required, please enc. an SAE with your return or indicate on the tear-off slip.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

## Ros Alterman

(Chairman, Conference committee)

Proposed agenda & Application form on back page (14)

## REPORT ON PROVINCIAL LEAGUE ATHLETICS MEETINGS IN SOUTH AFRICA

I have read various articles about Technical Officials going to overseas meeting on exchanges, and noticed that these meetings nearly all tended to be at the National competition level. So I thought I would write of my experiences of lower level meetings in South Africa. I am a Field Events UK Level 4 Technical Official and emigrated from Dorset to Kwa- Zulu Natal in South Africa at the end of August 2008. I already knew before I arrived in South Africa that they operated the multi discipline system rather than the UKs' single discipline system. I registered 8 weeks ago and have still not been accredited with a level here; I know that the problem is with KZN who do not know how to deal with a single discipline official; before I left the UK I contacted Eastern Province Athletics and they replied within a couple of days stating that I would be an ASA2 which is the highest domestic level as they then go onto the IAAF levels.

My first meeting was on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2008 in the evening and for someone from Bournemouth was at the appropriately named 'Kings Park Athletics Stadium' in Durban.

The meeting was a Youth, Junior and Senior league, it was a short programme with certain track and jump events but all the throws were included. The first difference I noticed were the age groups, they were based on calendar year of birth and the youth age group was for U18 or athletes born 1991 or later and included 1994 which are under 15, all the throw weights are the UK under 17. Although it says it is league meeting there is almost no league structure in the country as we know it, so it is more a rankings meeting. All athletes are issued their own personal number when they register with the association and wear this to all meetings throughout their career, so there are no numbers and pins handed out. I thought that this was a good idea until I saw what happened at the next meeting.

The Officials briefing was set for 5pm which I thought was too late for a 5.30 start, the briefing started 15 minutes late and the meeting manager asked who wanted to be chief timekeeper, track referee and who wanted to do field events, The problem with the multi discipline system is that officials can choose what they want to do depending on the weather, no wonder everyone wanted to do track or timekeeping, they had heard the weather forecast I had not!. There was a chronic lack of qualified officials so there was only 1 qualified official on each field event, no technical manager, no clerk of the course and no field referee! .For my sins I was allocated the discus and hammer.

I collected the throwing implements from the stores and was surprised to see only one discus of each weight and thought this will be a long evening, then to my horror I saw the layout of the field, the throws cage was by the start of the 100m, with the javelin next to it and the shot at the 200m start, the discus sector cut across the javelin sector and all three events had the same start time, with a pole vault and high jump going on at the other end of the stadium; if that was not bad enough the long jump runway ran parallel to the 100m straight on

the inside of the track !!!, a badly thrown discus or a left hooked hammer could land right in the long jump competition.

I managed to get a parent to help spike and asked the throwing athlete to pull through, Then the heavens opened and decided it was time for a typical African thunder and lightning downpour which lasted for the next 2 hours, The announcer loved the sound of his own voice and chatted incessantly and with the thunder storm I had to shout when I called the athletes names, even then I could not pronounce most of the Afrikaans or Zulu names, at least they all understood me. I had a slight disagreement with the parent helping me about whether a discus that hits the cage and lands in the sector is a valid throw, he said that if it hits the netting and lands in it is a throw, but if it hits the steel frame and lands in it is a no throw, I said I knew the rules and that was rubbish, as this throw had hit the steel frame he had not seen where it had landed. Most of the athletes had a couple of throws and called it a day and when the discus finished I went into the stands soaked to the skin and had to re-write my results card.

Then came the hammer, luckily it had stopped raining but with no Clerk of the course I had to ask where the inserts for the hammer circle were, as no one had put them out, with the help of a chap we carried the inserts to the hammer circle, I managed to move the gate into position. The competition was fine until the last throw when the wire of the 4kg snapped and the poor girl was left holding the handle, she apologised to me and I said 'don't worry this has summed up my evening'. The entire meeting finished 45 minutes late which was not too bad under the circumstances. Quite simply the worst lightning storm I have experienced at an athletics meeting in more than 30 years.

I was given food which I thought was odd for a 2-3 hour evening meeting and my expenses of 30 Rand which is about £1.90. Still it will buy me a couple of pints of lager here.

I was told that the next meeting was at Kings Park on the Sat 15<sup>th</sup> November 2008. The meeting was due to start at 9am with the Officials Briefing at 8am.

It was a hot and sunny day. I duly arrived at 8am only to be told that the meeting start time had been changed to 10am with the officials briefing set for 9-30am, no-one had bothered to contact me, it was an ominous start. Needless to say the officials briefing at 9-30am in the meeting room was a fiasco, first we had to move out of the room as there was a dance class booked for that time, so the meeting was held outside and then it did not start till gone 10am, so again the meeting was 30 mins late starting. As with the previous meeting there were nowhere near enough officials and again no senior management.

I asked for high jump as I knew I could get on with this event and not get held up by other events. The bed was too low, there was only one bar and it had a bend in it and the uprights were rusty and out of calibration, we had to re-measure the bar every time the height went up

I also found out why the Javelin is at the same end as the throws cage, The high jump bed was no more than 5 feet away from the javelin throwing area, and there was a drainage gully about 1 foot deep and 1 foot wide that ran about 5 metres in front of the Javelin throwing line all the way from the 100m finish across to the 1500m start. A javelin thrower who stumbled over the line could trip straight into the gully. The so-called meeting manager came over to me and said we needed 3 officials on the High jump, I said I only needed 2 but he insisted, whilst he went off to find someone else I saw there was no landing validation judge on the javelin and only 3 on the discus with the official on the zero end of the tape throwing the discus back to the throwing area. I also heard an announcement that for 'technical reasons the men's long jump has been moved from pit A to pit B'. I got my hankie out and discovered that the reason was that the earlier women's long jump was held into the wind, had the meeting manager got there earlier he would have noticed that the ground staff had set up the wrong pit. When the competition finished I handed in the card and then decided to watch some more of the meeting from a seat under a tree away from the stand as I had no intention of helping with other events.

I was amazed with what I saw.

1. As there was no Technical Manager or Field Referee there was no weighing of personal throwing implements.
2. The gate for the hammer competition was left open.
3. The rake used on the Long Jump was a normal garden rake.
4. There was no assistant starter or marksmen, just someone telling the athletes which lane they were in. There was a blatant faulty start in the men's 400m, the athlete in lane 8 did not know where to put his hands, in the 'marks' position his hands were ok but in the 'set' position he moved his hands over the start line, the starter could not see that from his position.
5. The only way I knew who the starter was he was the one with the gun, no red top, cap or even armband.
6. In a 400m race an athlete whose blocks slipped whilst practising starts, asked another athlete to use their feet and push against his blocks so they would not slip, that must have impaired the starters view of the athlete and gained an unfair advantage.
7. The times for the sprints were given in hundredths even though they were hand timed, I was not aware that is normal practice.
8. Someone had stolen the photo finish equipment, this is where the issuing of numbers on registration falls down. As these numbers are permanent they are now 5 digits long, it means it is impossible to judge a sprint race and try to note down 8 x 5 digits numbers in a couple of seconds, so the track judges went back the junior school sports day method of each looking for a position and identifying the relevant finisher, then running onto the track and giving the athlete the relevant position card, the chief then walked onto the track and noted down the

numbers of who was holding what card. It all reminded me of my junior school English teacher running over to me and giving me a piece of paper after the 100 yards telling me I was first and to go and collect my certificate.

9. To try to get the timetable back on time the men and women 3000m were run together, I am not sure if it is not against the spirit of the sport to have a senior man in the same event as a 15 year old girl. The same happened with the 1500m and the 5k track walk. Then there was the announcement that all the 1500m runners had to report back to the finish, I guess there were more times than finishers or the other way around.

I left before the final relay events when I would normally help with takeover judging, but I was so disenchanted with the amateurish way the meeting was being conducted that all I wanted to do was go down the pub to watch the Scotland v Springboks at Rugby.

Like all involved in the sport I have competed or judged at some sub standard meetings and venues in the past 30 odd years but the reasons why this meeting stands out above all the rest are:

a) The track is supposed to be one of the top tracks in South Africa, yet there were nowhere near enough throwing implements, all the high jump / pole vault equipment needs replacing and the field layout is dangerous. I was told that last year a long jumper required hospital treatment after being hit on the head by a discus, that was not of much comfort to a former official at Luton Utd AC, where, back in the mid 1980's, a visiting official died after being hit by a discus whilst judging the Pole Vault.

b) This meeting was put on by the provinces association which is responsible for athletics in an area of 8 million people covering 90,000 square km, it was not a school or club promotion.

It is now the summer break and I hope that any meetings that I do in 2009 will be better organised than the first couple of meetings I have officiated at here.

Steve Kelf



**Kings Park, Kwazulu**

## INFIELD SPOTTER

“Mum, I’ve been invited to officiate at the London Grand Prix”,

“That’s nice”

“I’m an infield spotter”

“That’s nice”

“I’m not sure what that means”

“Never mind, it’s still nice”

Of course Mum was, as ever, right and it was very nice to get my first opportunity to officiate at a major meeting. I did actually have a reasonable idea of what the job entailed – keeping the announcers in touch with the progress of the field programme – but little idea how this would work at such a big meeting. Never mind, I would be teaming up with Chris Haxell who had done this role before and I knew he would be a big help.

In view of this the words “Chris is unwell, he isn’t here” were not exactly what I wanted to hear as I reported in. I had already overcome the problem of not being sent my accreditation and car pass and had, for a few moments, started to feel more confident of what lay ahead. Still everyone I talked to was encouraging and assured me it was a good job and I would be fine. Not entirely convinced I set off and obtained my radio and reported to Ian Hodge (UKA’s statistician and link to the stadium announcers), who I would be in contact with throughout the two days. Whilst Ian was slightly alarmed that I would now be the only spotter, and could not therefore hope to keep up with all the field events, we identified where I would be most use and off I set.

Having amused myself with “spotting” several familiar faces in the crowd I pressed on with moving between the Pole Vault, Long Jump & High Jump and sending back snippets of information that the television monitors may not have shown. It seemed only a short time before the evening was over and I was on my way back to the Hotel and its increasingly common car park charge.

Day 2 came and I no longer missed Chris because I had a new “friend” to help me through the afternoon – a small canvass stool. Apparently my squatting or sitting on the ground in an effort to be unobtrusive had produced the opposite effect and it was gently suggested that I would be “more comfortable” using a stool. Alarmed by Eileen and Terry’s advice that there was a stool thief around mine stayed with me at all times – yes even there – and whilst it proved to be rather uncomfortable (seat too small, rear end too big) my initiation as an official was complete. Duties complete and having received a thumbs up from Ian (hope he wasn’t just being nice) I can now relax and reflect on the experience.



What did I learn? That it is great that Hampshire have so many top officials; to be able to approach people I know for help and information helped to settle me down, this became invaluable when I was instructed to find out why the High Jump was taking so long – thank you Chris for your understanding and for not telling me where to place my radio. That even the officials I did not know were unfailingly kind and co-operative. That wearing the official’s polo shirt

Communiqué

means that you attract questions from all and sundry – from trying to help a spectator find the ticket office to fielding Feofanova’s information re her opening height and Chicherova’s request for a toilet visit (name dropper!).

The lighter bits? Sharing a radio band with other areas and overhearing the desperate plea from the call room that there were more athletes reporting than were on the call up screen – the polite reply “try scrolling the page down” brought much amusement. Chasing after a group of male High Jumpers trying to persuade them to go to the mixed area rather than straight to the coach (I failed). Being thankful I had nothing to do with the infamous hurdles race.

“How did it go?”

“I really enjoyed it”

“That’s nice”

**Janet Smith**

## TRACK CHAT

Well, I hope you all had a good Christmas and are fully re-charged for the Indoor season. Thanks to Stan Burton’s hard work it seems as if the problems with the Level 2s are now somehow being resolved although there are still a couple of matters which could be improved but we wait and see. We are now in a position to look at amending the Track booklets to reflect these changes although it will be quite a task.

Conference is the next thing on the Association’s calendar and I hope to see a lot of you at St. Mary’s on 1<sup>st</sup> February. Don’t forget it is being subsidised this time. Ros Alterman puts a lot of work into organising what is a good day and it will be worthwhile coming along so please get in touch with Ros as soon as possible. We have a session on preparing Duty Sheets which will involve practical work and discussion and should be well worth a visit. It will not be a lecture! If you intend coming to this workshop then please try to remember to bring a few highlighters, pencil and rubber with you as these will be useful with the practical work.

Reports are causing a few problems so there will be a multi-discipline session on preparing these although it will be track biased to a certain extent. We have a few ideas which were discussed at the Track AGM in November (see page 4), which will affect all disciplines, and we will welcome your views. Once again if you have any problems then please feel free to get in touch with myself.

Terry Williams (Track sub committee Chairman)

## QUICK TRACK TIPS

Setting up the wind gauge - No spirit level!

Level up the barrel by lining it up with a lane line.



It was thought that Mike Parmiter had been an Official for 50 years but it was subsequently discovered that, in fact, that milestone will be reached in 2009. Congratulations in advance!

## THE OLD 49'ERS by MIKE PARMITER

When John Lofts and I took and passed the AAA Preliminary examination for both track and field on the same evening during the winter of 1959/60 little did we think that 49 years later we would still be involved in athletics. It does seem incredible that in the next twelve months we have been officiating for half a century. Doesn't time fly when you are having fun!

I started at the Aldershot Athletic Club, as it was known in those days. They trained on a variable grass surface in Aldershot Park. A work colleague, Harry Mitchell, has a lot to answer for. His son was a member and I occasionally went down to watch him compete, I should have known better! I soon realised that at this level you can't just go and watch. With many different disciplines taking place, often at the same time, there were never enough officials to cover all the events. It was not long before I was roped in to assist.



Would you believe my very first task was digging over and raking the high jump landing area! Fortunately the athletes tended to jump scissors style or Western Roll (no Fosbury Flops in those days) so it wasn't too dangerous.



I also did my share of chasing, returning and avoiding implements in the field and when necessary did a bit of track judging. It was not long before I was persuaded to take the AAA exam for officials for both track and field.

At that time there was no league structure but during the season the club was involved with a number of trophy meetings, particularly the ladies section which was very strong even then. They competed against top clubs such as London Olympiads, Spartan Ladies, Portsmouth Atalanta and other ladies only teams. When Aldershot hosted their own trophy meeting they held it at the Army Military Stadium on a cinder track with all the trimmings – wow! In those days the Military Stadium was a 440 yards 6 lane track - metric hadn't been invented then! There was grass banking around three sides of the track with an imposing stand all along the finish straight. The 220 yards was very different however. The race started behind the banking at the top bend out of sight of most of the spectators and the starter stood on the top of the banking to start the race. After about 60 yards or so the athletes came into view and merged into the lanes on the track before finishing as normal in the home straight – it looked very weird!

Hampshire County Championships were usually held in Southampton and my first trip there was quite interesting. I was appointed a track judge and I was surprised that there were no long throws on the infield, they were all taking place on the grass plateaus around the main arena. At that time the whole of the stadium was an immaculate grass facility of bowling green standard and the 100 yards, hurdles etc. were held straight down the cent-

re of the arena – the only time I have come across this. The best bit, however, was lunch. At 12.30 all events ceased and the officials went to a large marquee at the side of the track for a waitress served lunch. The athletics restarted at 2.00pm. Where have we gone wrong! \*

Having officiated at both track and field judge in my first few years and upgraded by Hampshire in both, I felt that the variation of events and variety of duties in field events was more interesting and challenging.

In those days measurements were in imperial distances. I seem to remember that horizontal and vertical jumps and shot put were measured to the nearest ½ inch below as were long throws under 100 feet. For throws over 100 feet measurements were taken to the nearest 1 inch below the distance thrown, this was due to the excessive stretching of the woven tape.

At one meeting, as referee, I was asked to go to the shot competition as several competitors had broken the existing record and they were only in the first round. When I got there I discovered that the tape measure they were using had previously been broken and the metal loop had been reattached- unfortunately the first 3-4 feet was missing from the beginning of the tape and no one had noticed!!

At most local meetings Technical Managers/Clerks of Course were often non-existent in those days. Equipment was usually just taken from the store with minimal checking. A spring balance with a cloth bag was all that was used to differentiate between weights of implements and most field officials carried them in their judging bag as many stadiums did not have anything with which to weigh implements.

There has always been a good camaraderie between field judges in particular. I still remember, for example, an incident at Copthall stadium back in the 80's at a Junior International match. Len Smith – who at the time was Secretary of SEAA Officials Committee - was judging validity on men's javelin at a time when they tended to land flat under the old specification. A group of senior field officials, who were watching the event from the stand, found some old cricket scoreboard numbers and each time Len raised a red or white flag a series of 5.6, 5.4, 4.9 etc. were raised just like they did for ice skating!! It took a while for Len to cotton on to what was happening but he found it as amusing as everyone else. It wouldn't happen now..... or would it?

5.6

5.8

4.9

5.4

Who ever said field judging was boring– I have thoroughly enjoyed the last 49 years.

*\* Sadly this no longer happens - even in Hampshire!*

I love High Jump and together with Pole Vault it's one of my favourite events. Taken all together, an athlete's concentration, their timing, rhythm and the apparent effortless glide over the bar, sometimes at awesome heights, is like looking at a piece of Fine Art and no, I don't mean it's like watching paint dry! The High Jump competition combines skill, athletic ability, tactics and sometimes, subtle gamesmanship. Tactical, of course it is; athletes can elect to forgo a trial after failing or even pass on a height completely and remember this event can be won on count-back! Gamesmanship?, well perhaps not but high jumpers are fiercely competitive and will look to achieve any psychological advantage as early as they can (often during warm-up) and, as judges, we need to be conscious of any possibility of that occurring unfairly.

Julia Bennett an experienced former International High Jumper and now Coach together with senior judges Peter Nicholson (himself a former High Jumper of note) and John Gandee are united in one thing; having a view from the athlete's perspective is necessary to being effective in judging this event. The High Jump can be broken down into three phases: Run-up, Take-off and Bar clearance. Julia is clear about the importance of all three of these phases, "they're highly technical and for the athlete getting each of these 'sorted' right at the beginning is crucial" she says.

She goes on, "Run-up includes the **Angle** of the run [too tight an angle means more elevation will be required to clear the bar, too shallow an angle and the athlete may slide along the bar], the **Length** of the run [vital in determining the timing and final two strides] and the **Speed** of the run [vital in achieving explosive vertical lift]. Take-off begins a few steps in front of the bar and is usually indicated by one of the athlete's two check marks. If it's going to go wrong then it'll go wrong at this point, the point of no return! Bar clearance is all about rotation and core body strength and keeping the hips and body under control." With so much going on it becomes clear why preparation is the key.

### ***To Fail to Prepare is to Prepare to Fail!***

I guess the point of all of this, from my perspective is, as a technical official if we don't appreciate the important aspects of any event for an athlete then we may miss the opportunity to contribute to a hugely successful competition. So much of our job happens before the event even starts. For a High Jumper it's mostly about the preparation, once that initial foot has left the ground the outcome of the jump is virtually determined. So little wonder that preparation and testing their setup is the key to getting that right and officials have a conscious or sometime unconscious influence. I suppose it follows for me that supervising warm-up is one of the most

critical technical official roles in High Jump. Talking to Nicholson and Gandee about how they tackle this area a 5 point 'best practice' seems to emerge.

### ***The Warm-up session***

**1. Take charge early, be authoritative (without being officious), announce who you are and what your role is and outline what the warm up regime you're adopting will be. Use time wisely; it can be split down into i) Setting marks; ii) Running through (without the bar); iii) Practice jumps. Clearly most of the available time will be devoted to the practice jumps but so much time can be wasted in the first two stages. Announcing to all athletes you're ready for each of the stages and 'moving them along' helps.**

**2. Suggest warm up is a continuous upward progression ending with some lower (start height) jumps if required. Ensure that everyone understands that your permission is required before a practice jump is taken; a clear instruction from you is required. Liberal use of your arms like directing traffic combined with pointing with your hand to the next athlete to go is one of the clearest methods to adopt.**

**3. Positioning yourself in the centre of the Fan facing the jumpers; this will allow you to alternate between jumpers on both sides of the Fan. Invite the athletes to indicate by raising their hands to get your attention, this gives you an opportunity to acknowledge them and indicate their turn (all other athletes will follow the same routine when they see this is the way to get your attention and thereby their attempt).**

**4. Use the scoreboard to indicate the current height of the practice bar; this avoids any misunderstandings and clearly communicates to coaching observers and athletes alike.**

**5. Ensure the warm-up session is kept moving along briskly; all athletes want to 'get sorted' well in advance of the start so becoming stuck at any one height is frustrating for all. Be ruthless and use a maximum of two attempts at any height (you can always, come back for any last attempts for an athlete still struggling with their setup).**



Once again communication is the key. Explain what you're doing and everyone will understand when they need to get your attention, an orderly and thorough warm-up session will be the result and our stature as the technical officials' team will be enhanced.

### Gotchas!

It seems to me that in High Jump more than other events one has to 'expect the unexpected'. It is the judging team's responsibility to verify the set-up as it avoids embarrassments and this can be quickly done by checking the verticality of the uprights (in both planes); Bar set up and height by measuring from the ground to one support peg and verify the other one is set to the same height; Measure the centre (lowest point) of the bar and verify the vernier reads the same, ensuring the verniers are taped up to avoid any possibility of them moving during the event; Mark ends of bar and stand positions.

The bed does move during the competition and, in extreme cases, can nudge against an upright as an athlete lands leading to the bar falling off. Keep an eye on this and make sure the landing area is central, aligned and that the cover is flat.

We're always torn particularly in junior competitions when athletes compete in more than one event and dash off to run a 100m or whatever. Often they can miss a trial (deemed to have passed) and consequently have to wait for the next height. Nicholson is clear about two things, "we're here for the athletes and we should work with them to minimise any disruption to them and their fellow competitors." Advancing a competitor in the jump order is one way round a potential problem. Missing a trial is however effectively passing that height and the athlete has to wait for the next height. "It's a tough one but the rules don't allow it any other way, full stop!" However, with good communication at the start any potential problems can be minimised.

Younger athletes often dive off the bed in a race to be on terra firma before the bar hits the ground in the mistaken belief that this will validate the jump. I'm not sure where that particular myth came from but it results in some spectacular feats of athleticism against impossible odds! Speaking of impossible odds...what about our very own Martyn Bernard in Beijing back in August? Did you see it? I'm referring of course to the jump he made when he flipped the bar off the pegs and, unbelievably, managed to land it onto the top of the uprights. Okay the bar didn't exactly hit the ground, maybe the official thought it was a showboat trick, so not be outdone, he decided to upstage Martyn and give it a white flag...A WHITE FLAG...I ask you...what's the world coming to! To be fair it's such an unusual occurrence that it would have caught anyone out and nassing it under the World's gaze it's easy to freeze, or

witnessing it under the World's gaze it's easy to freeze, or even to put up the wrong flag! Poor guy!

### Top Tips!

- **Be ready well in advance of the warm-up; know how much time you have and use it wisely. Have a clear and simple warm-up regime and communicate it clearly to the athletes. Be Fair and Consistent throughout warm-up and be mindful of jumpers from left and right sides of the fan.**
- **Check stands before you start, keep an eye on the bed moving, keeping the spike proof cover neat.**
- **Be conscious of verbal and non-verbal communication with athletes. We can put them at ease and set a positive tone for the competition by getting this right.**
- **As Leader, make sure that you have a clear view of each athlete's starting height and it can be useful to mark on your card whether they are coming from the left or right on the Fan if it's a large field. (Saves yelling in the wrong direction!). Communicate with your team if an athlete passes at a height or forgoes a trial.**
- **Ensure the bed is kept aligned properly, it does move and, if too close to the upright, can be the cause of the bar falling and an athlete being incorrectly faulted.**
- **High Jumpers are sensitive to any apparent changes to procedure from one jump to another and more especially between athletes. Ensure the official's team is consistent especially in deciding when to start the Clock if one is being used. Agree this up front either by signal or when the athlete is announced.**
- **As Stand Judge with Flags look for any lateral movement of the bar when it's wobbling before indicating whether the jump is valid, it doesn't take long (3-5 secs) and can prevent an incorrect Flag. (In windy conditions, remember the bar must fall as a result of the athlete's action for it to be a fault)**

**Focus on the plane of the uprights especially on an aborted attempt. Also, will the officials at the uprights be able to easily replace the bar? i.e. bar too high for them...needs thinking about!**



## SEAOA

## CONFERENCE GUEST SPEAKER

**Chairman and Treasurer**  
**Stan Burton**  
stanburton@seaoa.co.uk

**Secretary**  
**Ros Alterman**  
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**Track Sub Committee**  
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**Field Sub Committee**  
**Tony Shaw**  
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**Timekeepers Sub Committee**  
**Paul Langston**  
paullangston@seaoa.co.uk

**Photofinish Sub Committee**  
**Mike Scott**  
Mikescott@seaoa.co.uk

**Starters**  
**Vacant**

### DANNY CRATES

Flag Bearer Beijing 2008 Opening Ceremony  
Paralympic World Cup 2007 800m, Gold  
World Championships 2006 800m, Gold  
Paralympic World Cup 2006 800, Gold  
European Championships 2005 800m Gold  
Paralympic World Cup 2005 800m Silver  
Athens Paralympic Games 2004 800m Gold  
World record Holder 2004 800m  
European Champion 2003 800m Gold  
World Indoor Championships 2003 800m Gold  
European Championships 2001 400m Gold  
Sydney Paralympic Games, 2000 400m Bronze



## CONGRATULATIONS



David Littlewood receives the Lifetime Achievement award from Niels de Vos and Nick Hyde at the UK Athletics Awards Dinner in December.

We would like to congratulate the following who have been successful in achieving new Level 3 status and are therefore now on the National List:

Peter Crawshaw  
Jim Kent  
Tony Shaw  
Kevin Diedrick  
Nicola Evans  
Mark Liversidge  
John Muir  
Paul Avery

Julie Roe  
Chris Haxell

I would like to thank all those who have contributed articles for this edition of the Newsletter. Please keep sending your contributions whether they be articles or quick tips, amusing anecdotes, general interest stories or informative technical articles. I would particularly welcome contributions from Conference presenters so that we can share the information with those unable to attend.

Editor

**PROPOSED CONTENT FOR WORKSHOPS AT CONFERENCE '09**

**1000 – 1120 Session 1**

- W1 Mentoring
- W2 Using photo finish - From the B of the bang to marking the torso
- W3 Call room duties – Find them, check them, move them out
- W4 Clerk of Course / Technical Manager - How to do the jobs
- W5 Keeping a Level 3 logbook – What is the purpose of doing so
- W6 Decisions, decisions. Throws – What decision do I make?
- W7 Preparing duty sheets – how to scatter your judges

**1130 – 1245 Session 2**

- W1 Mentoring
- W2 Using photo finish – From the B of the bang to marking the torso
- W3 Call room duties – Find them, check them, move them out
- W4 Keeping a Level 3 logbook – What is the purpose of doing so
- W5 Writing and receiving L3 reports – Is it a yes, or is it a no?
- W6 Photo finish, using Timetronics – How's your Flemish
- W7 Decisions, decisions. Jumps – What decision do I make?

**1500 – 1615 Session 3**

- W1 Call room duties – Find them, check them, move them out
- W2 Clerk of Course / Technical Manager - How to do the jobs
- W3 Umpiring – What am I doing out here?
- W4 Photo finish databases – The names behind the numbers
- W5 Meeting Manager – I'm in charge!
- W6 1AAF v UKA rules – What a difference a rule makes!

**AGENDA**

- 0915 Registration and coffee
- 0955 Chairman's welcome followed by dispersement to workshops
- 1000 - 1120 Workshop session 1
- 1130 - 1245 Workshop session 2
- 1245 - 1400 LUNCH
- 1405 - 1450 Guest speaker – Danny Crates
- 1500 – 1615 Workshop session 3
- 1615 Tea & Raffle

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**SEAOA Officials Conference... 1st February '09**

Please reserve.....place(s). Cheque enclosed for £..... payable to SEAOA

<b>FIRST NAME</b>	<b>SURNAME</b>	<b>TEL NO</b>	<b>DISCIPLINE</b>	<b>LEVEL</b>	<b>COUNTY</b>
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**LUNCH YES / NO**

**E-mail address if map required**