



SEAOA Structured Chat on the New Shoe Rules - 21st March 2021

Pam introduced herself and Steve Marshall, explaining that they had decided that, after much thought, the subject matter and conversations during the session ought to be:

- what Rule 5 (the “Shoe Rule”) has been updated to;
- its implication on Call Room (CR) practice;
- and how one actually measured shoes in order to prove that they were compliant with Rule 5.

She then explained that despite all the reading on the matter that she had done, both UKA advice and WA advice, as well as people that she had consulted the main ‘issue’ is at present ‘And?’.

There is no quibble about the rule and what Call Room officials have to do if presented with a pair of shoes that appear to be non-compliant, the issue is what do we do next?

It was that question that she left the attendees with, not wanting to get into huge amounts of discussion early on in the session. She said that she had some ideas, plus others that had been suggested, and she wanted at the end of the session to possibly have in place some agreement of best practice that we in the South could adopt in our Call Rooms.

She then handed over to Steve Marshall, who had prepared a very comprehensive Power Point on the subject. This covered:

- the wording of Rule 5;
- that it is only an update of the previous Rule 5, of which we all should have been aware;
- how recent results at meetings have shown that experimental shoes are being worn in competition, and how WA, and consequently UKA, have needed to bring the issue to CR officials for checking;
- from the advice document, where in the shoe the measurements should be taken;
- The list of Shoes Approved by World Athletics as of 26th February 2021.

Steve, being an experienced Field Official, and TM, had put together a pro-forma for recording taken of any suspect shoes, which could be kept for future reference.

He listed some websites where callipers could be purchased.

The last part of his presentation was to show us all how and at which positions in the shoes, measurements have to be taken. This is a long job, and there were many comments in the Chat Box about how long it would take, how many officials it would need and what about the other jobs needed to be done in a CR.

Shoe inserts

He finished up, like some super magician with a ‘gizmo’ which might help, a fantastically simple, but initially time-consuming to make piece of equipment:

- Inserts bought to eliminate odours in shoes, cut to fit all sizes, with the calculations already made and marked (the 12% and 75% mark in the shoe at the mid-line).
- These could be held against the sole of the shoe and the marked spot used to place the callipers.
- As the inserts can be turned over, one insert should suit a pair of shoes.

Steve had roughly calculated that a set of these, for each size potentially needed at a competition, might cost as much as £30, but if the matter of shoe measuring was going to be an ongoing task in the CR, invaluable.

Steve’s Power Point can be accessed by visiting his website: www.tinycc/AthleticTM. Its title is SEAOA SUNDAY CHAT #2

Questions and Answers

Various points were raised during the presentation, and we tried to answer them at the end:

Q 1. What about athletes' shoes that have been modified?

Ans: The suggestion was to go through the same routine as if the shoe was non-compliant. Results to show TR5.513 by the athlete's name.

Q 2. What about shoe inserts? For instance, heel guards in HJ shoes?

Ans: The advice was the same as above.

Q 3. Should both shoes be measured?

Ans: Yes.

Q 4. How are the callipers to be calibrated?

Ans: No rules currently apply.

Q 5. If an athlete is both a Triple Jumper (for instance) and a sprinter, should they have two sets of shoes?

Ans: Looking at the list in Steve's PP, the answer is Yes, but if the shoe presented complies with the maximum thickness of 20mm, then the shoes can be used in both events.

Q 6. Are other countries doing what we are discussing?

Ans: Currently only the USA have stated that they are checking shoes more vigorously in their Championships.

Q 7. Are we applying the Rule more aggressively?

Ans: No, we are acknowledging that we need to apply Rule 5 and in doing so are only being as efficient as we always have been.

Q 8. There was a question about 'flats' worn on the track for 3K, 5K and 10K races, and Race Walking shoes. Could road running shoes be used?

Ans: Currently there seems to be a lack of advice on 'flats'

Summing Up

So, to sum up, there was much interest, some useful questions and much to consider in Steve's presentation.

- There seems to be agreement that the letter sent to athletes for an event needs to include a statement concerning Rule 5, wording as yet undecided.
- Notices reminding athletes at the venue that Rule 5 will be implemented and that shoes should be ready for possible measurement if deemed to be non-compliant by CR officials.
- The CR box (at Regional and National level) needs to have a suitable set of callipers for use.
- A copy of the current list of acceptable shoes needs to be available, either in paper form or on-line, for officials to refer to.
- Reference to the Meeting Manager if non-compliant shoes are found, with a view to them making a decision as to whether an athlete may wear them.
- Use of Steve's sheet for recording measurements of shoes.



The main topic of conversation between attendees, some of whom were experienced CR officials was the length of time all of this would take in a CR set up with only 10 minutes to run all other checks. It almost infers that there needs to be a 'shoe' specialist, whose sole role is to measure potential non-compliant shoes and fill in the paperwork.

Not all shoes would fall into the category of needing to be measured. Advice was to carry out a visual check on the exterior of the shoe first, and if it was felt that the shoe was possibly non-compliant, then to measure.

Of course, gloves might need to be provided for this check!

Infographic Challenge

At the end of the session, Steve challenged all attendees to come up with some notices that could possibly be adopted for use at Regional meetings, to include suitable wording alerting athletes that implementation of Rule 5 would take place.

I personally am going to buy a set of suitable callipers to use, for my own CR box, and may spend some time practising checks on athlete's shoes so that I feel confident if I am presented with a possible non-compliant pair 'in real life'!

Many thanks to all concerned for your interest and input, and especially to Steve for his superb efforts. I feel that Odour Eaters will soon have a run on stock!

Pam Rogers