



Timekeepers' Code of Practice

1. Unless otherwise stated in the 'Letter to Officials', for County, Area and National Championships, timekeepers should report to the Meeting Manager and the Chief Timekeeper at least an hour before the first track event. As per World Athletics Competition Rule CR15 the Meeting Manager will check that all officials have reported for duty. The Chief Timekeeper will inform the timekeepers of the time and place of the timekeepers' briefing and hand out their individual duty sheet.
2. Individual timekeepers should not be required to take more than one time in sprint races. Good practice requires that timekeepers should not take times other than those requested by the Chief Timekeeper.
3. Normally for races run wholly in lanes (400m or less) each timekeeper will be given a position to take, either on their own, or with another timekeeper. For races above 400m it is normal that each timekeeper is given two (or maybe more) times to take.
4. In distance races on the track with large fields, timekeepers may be given a multi-time duty to ensure that all runners are timed to 1/10th of a second. A Lap Chart is advisable if lapping takes place. An official Lap Chart duty may be given to two timekeepers in the team so they can advise on when athletes are finishing. With a large field of varying ability with lots of lapping possible, a 'Tick and Cross' system can be employed as a fail-safe way of ensuring that all finishers are timed to 1/10th of a second.
5. For deciding fastest losers, hand times to 1/100th sec must not be used.



6. Calling of intermediate times. Provided that there are sufficient timekeepers available, intermediate times in races of 800m or more should be called at the Start line and at the Bell to all the athletes in the race. In the case of the Steeplechase, because of the varying distance of the lap on different tracks, calling should take place at the Finish line. Variations may be made at the Chief Timekeeper's discretion, but normally calling will not take place at intervals of less than one lap except for the bell time. Typically, this means that in a 1500m race, calling will take place for 400m and 800m plus the Bell. In mile races, intermediate times should be called at the 1/4 miles.
7. On an indoor track of 200m, times should be called every 400m, plus the bell time, unless otherwise required. (Note Below. lap times should be recorded every 200m in accordance with World Athletics and UKA Technical Rule 19.3).
8. Timekeepers going out on duty should be aware of safety and courtesy to athletes, officials and spectators.
9. To enable timekeepers to comply with World Athletics and UKA Technical Rule 19.3, a clearly visible marker should be placed on or near the inner edge of the track to indicate the distances of 1K, and 2K, in the 3000m Steeplechase. Similar marks should be placed at any other distances e.g. 1500m in Mile, 3K in 2 Miles etc.
10. To comply with WA and UKA Technical Rules 19.3 and 19.6 the Chief Timekeeper will ask timekeepers to do a duty of recording lap times and the leader's number in races of 800m and over. A lap may be defined as the distance between a point on the track and a complete rotation of the track back to that point. So, when doing the duty of recording in a 1500m race, the times at 400m and 800m and the bell time will be recorded in case a record is broken. In a 3000m or 5000m the times to be recorded will be at 400m, 800m, etc.

However, at the Chief Timekeeper's discretion and for ease of doing the duty, times at more convenient points such as 300m and 700m in a 1500m can be recorded instead, and at 200m, 600m etc. in a 3000m and 5000m race.



To comply with World Athletics and UKA Technical Rule 19.3 intermediate times at every 1000m in races of 3000m and over shall be recorded. In order to do this, it is necessary to have clearly visible markers placed on or near the inner edge of the track to indicate the distances, for example at 1K and 2K in the 3000m Steeplechase and at the start of the 3000m and 5000m to indicate the 2K (and 4K) mark. Similar marks should be placed at other distances e.g. 1500m in the mile, 3K in a 2-mile race etc.

11. The Chief Timekeeper is responsible for any intermediate times given over a Public Address System by an announcer. Usually for races 800m and over, a timekeeper will be given a duty to provide times to the announcer (or act as back-up to such times taken from the track-side clock by the announcer). It is common for the announcer to specify which intermediate times he or she requires.
12. Relays. Split times for relay events should not be taken if the individual legs are less than one complete lap. The split times shall be taken as the baton crosses the centre of the takeover box. In the case of the 4 x 400m, competitors may be required to run in lanes for three bends; the first take-over is therefore staggered and in each lane the centre of the take-over box should be marked on the track by a white line with a green mark super-imposed. Timekeepers recording times for teams in lanes two to eight therefore should take up positions on the outside of the track opposite these marks for the first takeover. For lane one and for all subsequent takeovers, the centre of the take-over box is the finish line, and times should be taken from the stand.

At the discretion of the Chief Timekeeper, timekeepers may be asked to stay with their teams through to the finish (thus making it easier to calculate the final split) or revert to their normal finishing position at the finish). In the latter case, the final split will be an arithmetical calculation based on the final times indicated by the Chief Timekeeper (possibly taken from the final electronic times).

13. Where Photofinish is in operation, the Chief Timekeeper should ensure that the hand times are communicated to the chief of Photofinish as soon as possible after the completion of a race.



14. In cross-country and / or road races with large numbers of competitors, there may come a time when the competitors are too closely packed for times to be given for every position. When this situation arises, timekeepers should thereafter identify a runner's number and record this with a time as frequently as possible. In practice, this can be done every five seconds or less; these times and numbers can then be matched with the judges' positions, and every runner can be accredited with a time within the above limits.
15. Starting protocol. When the starter is ready and all the athletes are assembled in their respective positions, he/she will normally whistle to the Chief Timekeeper to indicate a readiness to proceed. The Chief Timekeeper should first check whether the Track Judges are ready to proceed with the next race and then, by the waving of a flag or clipboard, indicate to the Starter that he / she can proceed with the race.
16. Once the race has been completed, the Chief Timekeeper, in reading the race, should mark down on his/her board any close finishes in the race (for example between 4th and 5th positions). In championship meetings the Chief Timekeeper should only take first position, and this will allow him / her to 'read' the race. He / she will proceed down the timekeepers to collect the times from each team leader (or timekeeper). Decisions may have to be made to keep the time order correct. Having written the times for each athlete down on the board, it should be passed to the timekeepers' steward for the results to be written on the Track Judge's slip containing the finishing positions and then passed to photo-finish as soon as possible. If no Timekeepers' Steward is appointed, then this task must be done by the Chief Timekeeper.
17. It is important that a Timekeeper should report to the Chief Timekeeper as soon as possible if he / she feels that they are unsure if they started their watch correctly at the beginning of the race. This is so that the Chief Timekeeper can, if necessary, make arrangements for their time to be taken by someone else.



18. Three official timekeepers (one of whom should be the Chief Timekeeper) and one or two additional Timekeepers shall time the winner of every event and any performances for record purposes. The times recorded by the additional Timekeepers' watches shall not be considered unless one or more of the official Timekeepers' watches fail to record the time correctly, in which case the additional Timekeepers shall be called upon, in such order as has been decided previously, so that in all the races, three watches should have recorded the official winning time.
19. In Race Walking events, at the discretion of the Chief Race-Walking Judge, a number of Timekeepers may be asked to assist with the timing of athletes whilst they are in the penalty zone.
20. When timekeeping for any frame running or wheelchair racing events, it is important to remember the time for each athlete is determined when the centre axle of the leading wheel crosses the finishing line (as opposed to the torso as is the case for all other events). See World Para Rules (WPA) Section 20, Page 122