



OFFICIALS COORDINATOR

by
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**Monograph Series on Track and Field Officiating Technique
from the
Training Subcommittee (George Kleeman, Chair)
USATF National Track and Field Officials Committee**

This document is a summary of an officials training clinic presented by Eric D. Zemper, Ph.D., on December 5 at the 2003 USATF Annual Meeting in Greensboro, NC. It draws on experience as an Officials Coordinator for eight major national or international meets in the last eleven years. Unlike other formal monographs that are a part of the series from the Training Subcommittee of the USATF National Officials Committee, this is just an outline. It notes the primary tasks and miscellaneous hints that an Officials Coordinator should pay attention to while preparing for a competition, during the competition, and following the competition. These notes are in reference to a major competition, such as a national championship meet, although an Officials Coordinator for a smaller competition could derive some benefit from this material.

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Officials Coordinator: Duties and Responsibilities

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Some things to keep in mind if you're an Officials Coordinator for a major meet:

9-10 months before the meet:

1. Put together your officials application forms
 - Make sure it contains all the information an applicant will need (e.g., what expenses are covered, uniforms, what's expected of them)
 - Make sure you ask for all the info about the applicant that you will need
 - Give the applicant deadlines for application, notification, confirmation, etc.
2. Distribution of applications
 - At the USATF convention
 - Mail (get mailing labels from national certification chair)
 - NOC website and newsletter

5-6 months before the meet:

3. Selection of officials
 - Know how many you'll need (for a USATF national meet ~ 125; it has been possible to get away with as few as ~80 for a national championship meet, but >100 is better); depends on level of competition, venue, length of meet
 - Look at competition schedule as soon as possible: look for problems (particularly from a safety perspective), how many events going simultaneously and how many you will need at each venue
 - Locals vs non-locals (locals are less expensive, BUT they tend to 'disappear' unexpectedly for business, family matters, etc.; non-locals cost more in housing and food, but they are a 'captive' group, and they usually are there to work)
 - Select non-locals who are versatile and can be assigned anywhere during the meet, when necessary (this includes the Starters and the Race Walk Judges)
 - Keep in mind that up to 20-25% of those selected may not be able to make to the meet; keep a reserve list
 - Don't let Meet Management trim the numbers of officials too much; demand what you need; remind them that if there are not enough to do a good job, the reputation of all will suffer
 - Confirm housing, meals, parking, amenities for the number you will need
4. Stay in touch
 - Between the time you make your final selections and the week before the meet, maintain reasonably regular communication (mailings, e-mail)

3-5 months before the meet:

5. Put together the assignment schedule
 - Overall schedule; individual schedules
 - Make sure you schedule people to be in a Reserve Pool (but the Asst. Coordinator can use them as Marshals, etc., until they are needed, so they are not just sitting)
 - Build a notebook containing all info, overall daily schedules, copies of each individual's schedule, daily lists of crews
 - If you haven't already done so, select an Assistant Coordinator (someone you can work easily with, who is a good trouble-shooter and who handles people well, not shy/reticent/quiet)
 - Make a second notebook for your Assistant Coordinator
6. Get with Meet Management to finalize the Operating Procedures for the officials
 - Should contain things like parking procedures, check-in procedures, where and when equipment is checked in/out, movement on and off the field, uniforms, meals - where and when, paperwork flow during the competition, general and specific reminders of what's expected of them
 - Another item to include in the Operating Procedures is the requirement that there will be no cameras, cell phones or pagers allowed on the field; note this in your pre-meet communications to the officials, and give them an on-site phone number where they can be contacted for emergency messages
 - Keep copies of the Operating Procedures in your notebooks
 - Check with Meet Management on the scheduling of meals at the track and in the dorms (if officials are being housed in nearby dorms); make sure dorm meal facilities will be open before the officials have to leave for the track, and will be open after each day's competition is completed; plan to have relief officials from the Reserve Pool give officials from crews working during the meal hours a chance to eat
 - If you have officials with disabilities, arrange to have parking close by for them

2 weeks to 3 months before the meet:

7. Keep in communication with your officials; revise schedules/procedures as necessary

1-2 weeks before meet:

8. Put together the officials packets, containing items such as:
 - Meet schedule
 - Venue map
 - Operating Procedures
 - Individual schedules
 - For crew chiefs - lists of crew members, evaluation sheets
 - Info re social functions
 - Credentials
 - Meal tickets
 - If shirts/hats being distributed, where/how to get them
 - List of referees, other important individuals
 - Anything else Meet Management wants in there

The day before the meet:

9. Required officials meeting
 - Hand out officials packets, credentials, shirts, hats, meal tickets, etc. (it will save a lot of time during the meeting if things like the shirts and hats are distributed at the housing site; but do hand out the officials packets and credentials at the meeting to ensure everyone attends)
 - Introduce Meet Management, Referees, etc.
 - Go over Operating Procedures, venues, answer questions
 - Try to keep the meeting to less than half an hour, but make it informative
 - Afterward, break out to crew meetings with crew chiefs

During the meet:

10. Daily activities
 - Assistant Coordinator oversees officials check-in
 - Coordinator makes rounds of venues, make sure all is OK
 - Radio communication with Assistant Coordinator in Pool
 - Plug holes when necessary; try to anticipate problems
 - Evaluation of crew chiefs (if requested to do so)

After the meet:

11. Communication

- Thank you letter, maybe a certificate to all officials
- Remind crew chiefs to send in evaluations
- You send in your evaluations
- Note any problems to Meet Management and recommend fixes