

National Officials Committee Spring Meeting Winnipeg April 16-18, 2010

Notes from John Cull, BC Branch Chair

The NOC meets twice a year. Branch Chairs are invited to sit in as non-voting participants at the Spring session. It is a good opportunity for Branch Chairs to check up on trends in the other Provinces, and discuss national issues.

Eight Provincial Branches were represented this year. Among the missing were:

- PEI, which has a Branch Chair, but no members (yet!)
- NL (Newfoundland/Labrador), which has a Branch Chair, for the first time in 5 years. Unfortunately, Heather O'Brien was not available to attend her first meeting.

News from the Branches

All Branches emphasize the same themes in their reports; an uphill struggle to recruit new member officials, and development of programs that will recognize the services of senior officials, and retain their affiliation. Typical recruitment programs emphasize work with new parents in Clubs, and to some extent recruitment from athletes (mostly former competitors). Saskatchewan has had huge success with recruitment through a City Track League in Saskatoon. (Hub City Track Council). All of the member Clubs are required to produce a given number of volunteer officials for the League's series of meets. Senior Officials provide training sessions at all meets. This has some similarities with the Vancouver Island Athletic Association training program. There may be something here that our Lower Mainland Clubs could emulate. Most Branches have recognition (incentive) programs which reward service with apparel, sport bags, or other items. Some specific ideas for recruitment and retention:

- The Quebec committee places paid ads in Community newspapers (weeklies). The response has been good, especially from immigrant communities.
- Saskatchewan awards a special commemorative gift to officials after 40 years of continuous service

All Branches report that lack of opportunities for Level 3 officials to participate in National level meets are a barrier to development, Good officials are lost through frustration with slow progress. Access to top-level competitions and inter-Provincial travel is clearly a factor in retaining senior Level 5 officials as well. Four Provinces provide officials with free memberships (Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Alberta). Membership fees in the other 4 Provinces range from \$5 (NB) to \$15.75 (BC).

All Branches compensate officials for their travel, mostly in the form of mileage payments (\$.30-.40 per kilometer).

Several Branches supplement their committees' budgets by charging fees to non-Championship meets. For example, Manitoba charges a flat fee of \$150 for

supplying officials to a 6 hour meet....up to \$750 for a meet that lasts for 30 hours. Quebec charges \$5 per official per day.

BC now has one of the largest officials' groups. Here is a table of reported Provincial memberships, plus the number of events serviced in 2009:

	Membership	Events
BC	204	70
Ontario	190	120
Saskatchewan	188	17
Alberta	144	32
Quebec	86	43
Manitoba	41	37
New Brunswick		
Nova Scotia	46	22

Upcoming National Level Meets

Major officials have been selected and invited to **the IAAF World Junior Track and Field Championships**; Moncton July 19-25, 2010. Selected Referees will also participate in the **Canadian Junior Track and Field Championships**, Moncton July 2-4, 2010. The World Juniors will run under the new IAAF Infield management guidelines. The guidelines strictly limit the number of personnel on the infield, in order to improve the presentation. For instance, no more than 10 umpires may be inside the competition area at a time. Four judges plus a referee, will manage each field event, with no technical aides. All field events will use Electronic Distance Measuring, with the exception of horizontal jumps, where Video Distance Measuring is used (with a remote.....very remote....camera and console).

Your Committee has nominated BC candidate officials (Level 3 and Level 5) for participation in **National Track and Field Championships**; Toronto, July 29-August 1, 2010. We have now been informed about another opportunity for them to participate in a National Level meet; The **Ontario Championships/Canadian Junior Combined Championships**, Toronto, June 19-20 2010 may accept some outside officials. We will hear about these opportunities in the next month.

NOC Reports and Initiatives

The NOC Vice-Chair for Education will contact the Level 5 officials who received the "**refresher quiz**". He will provide them with their results, plus an explanation of the intentions of this educational initiative. NOC does not at this time intend to pursue a "recertification" program, or use the quiz results to make decisions on status. All Officials who wrote the quiz passed with more than 80%. Others are encouraged to complete this voluntary open book test to improve their understanding of the recent rule changes.

National Mentors and Clinicians in all disciplines will be receiving some re-training courses in the next year. There have been some inconsistencies in the way mentors have been completing forms, and applying the mentoring

guidelines. Clinicians are invited to send any corrections or improvements to the National workshops to Serge Thibaudeau. (sthibaudeau@athletisme.qc.ca)

Some long serving BC officials were recognized at the meeting, and awarded commemorative pins. Congratulations to:

Shirley Young	25 years
Murray Hainer	30 years
David Weicker	30 years
Shirley Byington	35 years
Louise Meville	35 years
Rafe Melendez-Duke	40 years
Kanwal Neel	40 years
Keith Newell	40 years
Jack Rowe	40 years
Ken Porter	45 years
Anne Lansdell	60 years

New Level 3 officials were also awarded Athletics Canada lapel pins.

Congratulations and thanks to:

Wayne Elke, Sandra Dever, Helen Jaques, Evelyn Parent and Dave Short.

Congratulations are also due to BC officials recognized by the NOC for outstanding service:

Carol Cull selected for the **Athletics Canada Wall of Honour**

John Cull selected as **NOC Official of the Year**.

Three BC officials were upgraded to National levels at this meeting. We are very pleased to let you know about their new status:

David Weicker	Walks Judge 5
Laurel Wichmann	Vertical Jumps Judge 4
Lin Hopkins	Photo Finish Chief Judge 4

Provincial Branch Chairs are now responsible for reinstatement of officials to active status, using their own criteria for the decision. The NOC Vice Chair (Directory) keeps some historical records to help with this process. The proposal from this Branch to create a national List position for **Start Referee**, which recognized the eligibility of Level 5 Starters, was not strongly supported at the meeting. The Upgrading Criteria will be amended to allow Starters to be appointed as Start Referees for individual meets as required.

Branch Chairs asked the NOC to take steps to improve communication with the officials across the country. The Committee agreed with some of the recommendations:

- Publish an issue of NOC/NOC after each committee meeting including a summary of important items
- NOC members to attend Branch meetings to meet the membership
- NOC members to organize “forums” at NC meets

Paralympic News. The officials who participated in IPC Athletics training at the Boiling Point Meet in 2009 will be responsible for on-going training in their home

Branches. David Weicker and Alice Kubek will be an important resource for us here to help with integration of the Paralympic events into Track and Field meets. There is a strong indication that Special Olympics Canada will be making increasing use of AC official at the Championship level. Special O Nationals will be coming up in BC in a few years.

Technical Notes

Most Provinces are applying the “new” IAAF **False Start** Rule to age groups from Midgets (14/15) to Senior. The exceptions are:

- Manitoba (applying the rule to all age groups)
- Quebec (applying it only to Junior and Senior, and NOT to Youth or Midgets)

Rules on the use of starting blocks are inconsistently applied to age groups across the country. The NOC (with support from Branch Chairs) will recommend to AC that all age groups eligible for National Championships (Midgets through Seniors) should be governed by IAAF Rules regarding starting blocks and False Starts. Masters would continue to be the exception.

Some other notes regarding the start:

- Warnings and disqualifications at the Start for delay or other improper conduct should be given by the Start Referee. The Starter should only disqualify for a False Start.
- False start control apparatus will still be used on a limited basis in Canada. It has been used for International events such as the “Bolt” meet in Toronto, but is not required for a Canadian record.

John Cull
BC Branch Chair