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**ON TRACK 4.1:  
NATIONAL OFFICIALS' COMMITTEE  
THE NEWSLETTER FOR OFFICIALS, ATHLETES, COACHES  
AND ADMINISTRATORS**

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## MESSAGES FROM NOC

As Chair of the National Officials Committee I am looking forward to the New Year with great anticipation. It will be a big year in Canadian Athletics. Not only do we have the Olympic Trials and National Championships in June as well as the Olympics and Para-Olympics on the world stage but the World Masters will be held in Toronto in late July which for sheer numbers is one of the largest Athletics events in the world.

Looking back on 2019 the NOC has streamlined and standardized the training for Levels 1 and 2 across the country by providing an on-line training package for those levels which supports the Branches. We are working

on Level 3 materials for release in 2020.

In addition, the Master Trainer event in May was very successful and almost all Provinces now have a fully trained Master Trainer in place. This will be critical when it comes to Mentor and Evaluator training in our continuing effort to upgrade the competence of our officials across the country.

We have also revived the national officials publication (which you are now reading) called On Track and have started to recognize all officials across the country who have contributed to our sport for 50 years or more.

We continue to encourage the Branches to keep us current with any officials who have achieved the 50 year level of service as well as to advise who their provincial Officials of the Year are. We also encourage submissions from the Branches for National Official of the year and our Wall of Honor which rewards service. Criteria and forms can be found in the NOC Handbook which is on line.

We continue to maintain the National Officials Directory and to process and make decisions on Upgrading applications twice a year.

It looks like an exciting year in Athletics in 2020. We owe it to our athletes to put a competent and proficient group of officials on the field of play at all competitions across the country no matter what the level.

Many thanks to the National Officials Committee for the hard work they have contributed to our sport. David Weicker, Lloyd Howey, Jane Edstrom, Helen Vasilić, Gilles Rochette and Colin Inglis have spent many hours on their NOC duties over the last year. Serge Thibaudeau has moved the ball towards the goal for us on the training upgrade and Angela Whyte and Jenn Brown have contributed on behalf of the athletes. Thank-you all and we look forward to a successful 2020.

Andy Walker, Chair, NOC

# WORLD ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019, DOHA, QATAR

## BY JANE EDSTROM



The 2019 World Athletics Championships were held in Doha, Qatar during late September and early October. These dates were later than usual, but the athletes came through with many outstanding performances in spite of it. The stage was the Khalifa Stadium which was outdoors but

outfitted with three tiers of air conditioning – one at field level and two in the stands. During competition, the field tier units were turned off to prevent draughts on the athletes or events like javelin. The temperatures on the warm up facility adjacent to the stadium ranged from 40-46C even at night. The stadium at field level was kept at approximately 25C. To assist the athletes in acclimatizing to a 20-degree differential in temperature between the warm up track and stadium, the differential was graduated through the corridor between first check in and the final call room.

All sessions started in the early evening due to the extreme weather conditions. The walks and marathons were hosted on a downtown boardwalk adjacent to the waterfront with start times at midnight. There were large floodlights installed along the course to assist walks judges with appropriate vision. The spectator count was not large until the evenings when men's high jump qualifying and finals were held. The stadium was overflowing on those nights in support of Qatar's own Mutaz Barshim competition. He thrilled the crowds by winning the gold medal.

Event presentation has become increasingly important during athletics events especially at the world level. The introductions of the final events of the evening became quite the productions and a highlight for the spectators. Athletes entered to fireworks at ground level, then stadium lights were dimmed and the straight/oval became a projection screen to introduce the athletes.

I was fortunate to receive an appointment as an ITO to Doha. My role was to serve as secretary to the Jury. This entails close communication with the technical information center (TIC) as to the status of appeals (verbal) and to whether they will escalate to a protest to the Jury. During an appeal, the appropriate referees are consulted including the video referee for the possibility of video evidence and meetings are set up with the coach/manager or appealing personnel. The goal is to be transparent, firm and fair. If the appeal progresses to a protest, the secretary is responsible to oversee the completion of the proper paperwork. The secretary then gathers all the paperwork, results, start lists; alerts the appropriate referees for possible consult; and requests technicians to tab the video evidence. Once all the information is gathered, the chair of the Jury is consulted as to the timing of the deliberation (usually at the end of the session if it does not involve a same session event). During the deliberation, the secretary ensures the appropriate paperwork is completed. Once a decision is made, appropriate copies are made and the secretary locates the delegation for the chair to meet with. The decision is communicated to the delegation by the chair and the secretary distributes paperwork to the delegation, TIC, photo finish, referee, video referee, results, technical delegates, press delegate and retains a copy. In previous championships, the secretary was in charge of collecting the protest fee as well. In Doha, a new protocol was initiated, with World Athletics invoicing appropriate federations at the end of the championships rather than having cash change hands at the event – transparency as well, proper currency was always a problem.

The secretary maintains a log of protests with all the appropriate details for the championships.

This was a particularly busy event for the Jury with 24 protests considered: 8 of which were accepted and 16 were ruled against – numbers were up from London 2017.

The influence of technology and video is a huge factor at the world level.

It was a great experience to be at the world championships and witness the event in person.

# INTERVIEW WITH DANIEL MICHAUD AT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Video

# WPA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS BY LOUISE BUSKAS

What a year! And what an honor to represent Canada in the International Officiating scene. And only slightly intimidating... especially when I think about whose footsteps I am following in.

I was assigned World Para Athletics (WPA) World Juniors in Nottwil Switzerland and World Championships in Dubai, UAE.

At the Junior Championships, thanks to fellow Albertan – Elizabeth Duff (F40/41 Shot put) I had the absolute thrill of experiencing the playing of our National anthem, as she received her gold medal.

Being an ITO isn't always the thrill you think it should be. Airports, hotels, and Athletics facilities are very similar no matter where you are in the world, and the issues you encounter are similar everywhere. But we are part of a great team of dedicated officials, and it is rewarding to assist with some spectacular events. It is always a pleasure to reconnect with fellow officials.

At Every International meet I have attended, my take away is - how fortunate we are to have the training / mentoring program we do in Canada. Our National Officials truly rate amongst the best in the world. While in Canada we can't really relate to why at an International competition on our soil that the ITOs act as referees. In some countries, you understand why the rule was introduced.

The recent Championships in Dubai presented itself with some interesting challenges. And probably number one would be communication, as it is with most events no matter where they are, or how well organized they are. When English is not the first language and with the innate desire to please, the continued response 'Yes, Yes, no problem' comes with varying amounts of doubt.

The call room was exactly what you would expect. Patterned carpeting throughout, flowing material on ceiling and walls, and opulent looking chairs. Then out on field of play the distance markers are overturned white garbage cans with the distances spray painted on. The number of new implements was staggering, some never even made it out of the boxes. Then there was the very thin cat (stray? Unofficial mascot?) wandering behind the scenes. Truly a country of inconsistencies.

One of the hardest events I had to oversee was the Women's F38 Discus. I was pleased to see that the South African gold medalist from World Juniors was also competing at the World Championships. But then I noticed the Canadian coaches in the viewing area – and realized there was TWO CANADIANS in the event. That puts your impartiality to the test! I was thrilled to witness Renee Foessel and Jennifer Brown both get PBs and Renee winning Bronze. And that was followed immediately by Brent Lakotas getting silver on the track. What a day!

We are definitely now a sport focused on the show. 'Your event was delayed in starting – please move it along' 'Broadcasting is requesting you slow down your event' 'Broadcasting is requesting you slow down your event a little more'

**"World Championships in Dubai"** – dedicated / intense officials, amazing (in quantity and devotion) volunteers, impressive facility, many new world records, and great competition.

# QUEBEC OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR



Even though very young, she has already been officiating for 18 years.

She was brought to track and field by the track and field club when she was in high school and never quit. Never has she quit working as an official even when she went in the north of Quebec a few years to teach to children of First Nations, during summertime, we could always rely on her. She made her way through becoming qualified as a level 4 in Vertical Jumps. Athletes and colleagues always smiling and very professional appreciate Karine. We are always happy to have her on the team and wish she will remain for many many years.

# ONTARIO OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR



Congratulations to the Athletics Ontario Official of the Year for 2019, Gumar Balasubramaniam. Gumar has been a very active official over the past year, officiating many meets, being coordination of officials for the Legion Championships, and also hosting the Officials AGM. He is an excellent official, a team player and well liked by his peers. A kind, generous gentleman.

# SK 2019 OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR



Darwin remembers starting officiating with Saskatchewan Athletics in 1999. It was around that time his daughter was competing in the Triathlon with the Wheat City Track and Field Club in Regina. Like most officials, he started out as a “parent volunteer” and for some unknown reason to him gravitated towards the long jump pit. Since 2011, Darwin has been a level 3 Horizontal Jumps official. An officiating highlight for Darwin was working at the Long Jump for the 2005 Canada Summer Games in Regina. Darwin says officiating has been a great experience. Thanks to his many mentors Darwin has learned a lot over the years.

## BC OFFICIALS 50<sup>TH</sup> YEAR OF SERVICE

Keith Newell and Iain Fisher—in June, 2019 at the BC High School T&F Championships.



1. All recipients except Keith—on Dec 3, 2019. Photo contains:
  - a. Ken Porter—celebrating his 98 birthday on Saturday!!!
  - b. Iain Fisher—received his clock in June (other photo)
  - c. Anne Lansdell—received her clock 20 years ago. Anne is at 70 years of service in officiating!!!
  - d. Alice Kubek
  - e. Rafael (Rafe) Melendez-Duke



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