

NJSIAA Winter Track Committee Meeting

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Site: Robbinsville, NJ
Date: February 28, 2012
Time: 9:30 am

Members Present: Paul Spaventa, Executive Committee Representative; Lou Fraulo, Assistant Tournament Director; Carl Rickershauser; State Rules Interpreter; John Pontes, Coach from Clifton High School; Elizabeth Morris, Coach from Bridgewater-Raritan; Paul Buccino, Coach from Morristown. Don Danser, NJSIAA staff.
Absent: Gerald Richardson, Coach from Lenape.

Guests in attendance:

Robert Brynes – Head Clerk for Indoor Tournament
Brian Wilkinson – Manager of the Bennett Center
Pat Montferrat – NJRunners.com (MileSplit)
Len Pietrewicz - Coach from Randolph HS
Michael Walker – Coach from Robbinsville HS

The following topics were discussed, most of which were based on e-mails or other correspondence.

1. Problems/incidents during the meets

There were three cases where runners were present but did not get to run.

- A. Three sprinters because coach had entry cards in his pocket
- B. 400 runner who was a female athlete, but whose entry card was filled out on a boy's white card, which resulted in the entry card being placed in the boys 400. Not discovered until after the girls race was finished
- C. 1600 meter runner – coach claimed card was turned in but no one could find the card, during or after the meet.

After discussion on ways to improve the system, the conclusion was we should stress that coaches, not athletes, should be responsible for turning in the cards. Considering we clerked into races over 7,900 athletes (nearly 6,000 in the 8 sectional meets, 1,500 in the group meets and 444 in the Meet of Champions) missing 5 athletes means the system worked 99.9367% of the time. However, to the individual student/athlete, missing his/her event is much more significant. We will continue to do all we can to prevent future occurrences, but as always, it takes everyone involved, the coaches, officials and athletes, doing their part to prevent these incidents from taking place.

- D. One 400 runner was seeded incorrectly. Plain and simple clerking error that was not handled as professionally as it could have been when discovered. Again, a rather rare problem that we continue to work on to prevent a repeat.

2. Dates and starting times:

A. Relays

We have a major problem with the large number of athletes participating in the Group 4 meet. The number has gotten too large for the facility. **Pending the approval** of the NJSIAA Financial Committee, The NJSIAA Program Review Committee and the NJSIAA Executive Committee, the NJSIAA Winter Track Committee is proposing the following tentative schedule for the Relays:

Thursday, January 10, 2013	4:00 pm – Group IV Girls
Friday, January 11, 2013	4:00 pm – Group IV Boys
Saturday, January 12, 2013	9:00 am – Non Public Boys and Girls
	4:00 pm – Groups III Boys and Girls
Sunday, January 13, 2013	9:00 am – Groups I Boys and Girls
	4:00 pm – Groups II Boys and Girls

Based on the participation levels of Non-Public B in the Individual State Group Meets, the Committee tentatively approved dividing the Non-Public into A and B for the Relay Championships as well, with the understanding that this is a two-year pilot program that would revert back to one Non-Public Relay title if Non-Public B participation is not sufficient. This also will need the approval of NJSIAA Financial Committee, the NJSIAA Program Review Committee and the NJSIAA Executive Committee.

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The entries for the relays will close on Thursday January 3. If the pilot program is approved, that means the A and B non-public classification will have to be done shortly after, so both meets for Non-Public will have to close on the same date.

Because of the size of these meets, all races 4x400 meters or longer, will be run in alleys. Only the shuttle hurdles and the 4x200 meters will be run in lanes.

B. Sectionals

Monday, February 4, 2013	3:45 pm	North 2, Groups I & 2, Boys and Girls
Tuesday, February 5, 2013	3:45 pm	North 1, Groups 1 & 2, Boys and Girls
Wednesday, February 6, 2013	3:45 pm	Central, Groups 1 & 2, Boys and Girls
Thursday, February 7, 2013	3:45 pm	South, Groups I & 2, Boys and Girls
Friday, February 8, 2013	3:45 pm	North 2, Groups 3 & 4, Boys and Girls
Saturday, February 9, 2013	9:00 am	North 1, Groups 3 & 4, Boys and Girls
Saturday, February 9, 2012	3:30 pm	Central, Groups 3 & 4 Boys and Girls
Sunday, February 10, 2012	9:00 am	South, Groups 3 & 4, Boys and Girls

C. State Group Meets

Friday, February 15, 2013	4:00 pm	Non-Public A & B, Boys and Girls
Saturday, February 16, 2013	9:00 am	Groups 1 & 4, Boys and Girls
Saturday, February 16, 2013	3:00 pm	Groups 2 & 3 Boys and Girls

D. State Championships (a.k.a. Meet of Champions)

Saturday, February 23, 2013	10:00 am	Boys – all events
	11:00 am	Girls Pole Vault (Boys PV will start at 10:00 am)
	1:00 pm	Girls Running, HJ and Shot put

This time schedule was decided on after hearing from a boy's coach this year who had a boy's pole vaulter and a 4x400 relay team which meant his boys had to be there for the first event at 9:00 and the last event of the day which took place around 2:30pm. Also, since this is a statewide meet, many coaches asked for a later start for more travel time. Both the boys and girls pole vault each took four hours to run. The boys and girls running events each took a little over two hours to run. This is the reason for starting the Girls Pole Vault 2 hours earlier than the Girls running events and high jump and shot, so that all events finish at the same time.

3. Seeding

Relays and Sectional seeding worked better than ever, but still left a lot to be desired, especially when it came to the 400 meter dash in the sectionals. Milesplit lists will still be used but using the following criteria:

1. All seeds must be done at the correct distance on 200 meter tracks in meets involving five or more teams of the same gender. The **only** exception would be meets with less than 5 teams that use fully automatic timing.
2. Fully automatic times are preferred, but converted hand-times will be accepted. Converted hand times will not be accepted from meets involving fewer than five teams of the same gender.
3. Only the Top-Six listed on MileSplit will be "protected" seeds (i.e. no one can be seeded above these top six performers).

The Committee felt that this should cover those who can't afford to go to F.A.T. meets. Many directors of meets that have not run the same events as the state meet said they would run the 400m and 800m in some meets to help the athletes in their areas get seed times in these events. Again, converted distance times are not acceptable (i.e. converting a 300 meter time to a 400 meter time, etc).

This will be the same procedure used for the sectionals outdoors, except that the track needs to be 400 meters and the protected seeds will be eight instead of 6.

4. Grouping

An e-mail from an athletic director asked the Committee to do away with sports-specific classification because it appears not to be working. When listed by school, South Group I had 20 schools in it while South Group II had 14. This apparent disparity is the result of the nature of the sport. Track consists of both team and individual. Of the 20 South Group I Schools, eight had 10 or fewer entries. Many schools do not have teams, but sponsor individuals. South Group I had 267 competitors from 20 schools while South Group II had 291 competitors from 14 schools, only 1 of which had 10 or fewer entries. North I Group I showed similar numbers: 262 competitors from 23 schools, with 11 schools having 10 or fewer entries, while North I Group II had 325 competitors from 16 schools with 2 schools having 10 or fewer entries. So in actual practice the number of competitors under the present system is balanced. The Committee agreed that the system is working as planned.

5. Changing the Pole Vault Relay rules.

We had a couple of requests to consider changing the pole vault relay rule to allow a jumper to continue if his or her partner fails to clear the opening height. The feeling of the Committee was that it is a relay. It would be like letting the same runner run the first and anchor leg of the 4x200 because the school does not have 4 good sprinters.

6. Dropping the pole vault

In the Sectionals and Non-Public Groups there were 315 pole vault entries. It was true that some groups did not have enough entries, particularly Group I and Non-Public B schools. The Committee decided that it is a viable event and with two venues presents no administrative problems while allowing a significant number of athletes an opportunity to perform.

7. Adding the 200 meter dash.

This proposal came in two forms: a. just adding the event to the present program, and b. substituting the 200 meters for the 4x400 meters. After considerable discussion of the pros and cons of both proposals, the decision was to adopt neither.

8. Adding the long jump and triple jump.

Again, after a little discussion, it was decided that the Bennett Center is just not suitable for either or both of these events because you cannot use the track and the jumping pit at the same time.

9. Qualifying for the Meet of Champions

An e-mail was received asking us to consider using one of the following four possible ways to qualify for the Meet of Champions:

1. Only the top 3 in each event automatically qualify, with the next 24 being wildcards.
2. No one gets an automatic qualification. Strictly the top 42 in each event would move on from the Group Meet to the Meet of Champions
3. The top 42 athletes qualify for the MOC strictly based on performances produced from January 1st on.
4. Set a performance standard at the start of the season. All athletes meeting that standard before the announced closing date would go to the MOC.

Proposals three and four were rejected out-of-hand because there would be no purpose for running the first two rounds. The first two proposals go against the philosophy behind the Meet of Champions. No MOC or TOC run by the NJSIAA is designed to get only the best individuals or teams into the MOC or TOC. That is only possible if there were no Group Titles. The MOC is designed to give the Group State Champions an opportunity to see what they can do against each other in the final event of that season for that sport. The Committee expressed no desire to pursue any of these proposals further.

As Tournament Director, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone, starting with the athletes up to and including the administrators of the schools involved for an excellent indoor season. It was not perfect, but it surely can be called excellent. Almost everyone, the athletes, the coaches, the officials, the buildings and ground crew at the Bennett Center, the Toms River School District administration, the meet crew of the Bennett Center, and the athletic directors of each school sending athletes to these meets had important roles that made the season the success that it was. The NJSIAA is keenly aware of this and greatly appreciates the support each of you has given the program this season. We look for an even better season next year.

Don Danser
Assistant Director
Indoor Track Tournament Director