

Meeting took place at Robbinsville office at 9:30 am.

Members Present: Carl Rickershauser (State Rules Interpreter), Ed Colona (South Section Director), Steve Shaklee (Coach-Cherokee), John Martin (Coach-Westfield), Lou Fraulo (North I Sectional Director), Robert Byrnes (North II Director), Len Pietrewicz (Coach –guest), Don Danser (NJSIAA staff).

Absent: Jim Casey (Central Sectional Director), Tim Grant (Coach-Pringry), Grant Shrivvers (Athletic Director-Woodbury), Jeanette Bruno (Executive Committee member-athletic director-Colts Neck)

First order of business was a congratulations to all involved: Coaches, athletes, officials, administrators, venues, and the weatherman – for a nearly perfect series of meets.

Secondly, NJSIAA publicly thanks Robert Byrnes for substituting for long-time North II director Wayne Letwink who has been fighting a serious illness all fall. At this writing, Wayne has been showing improvement and may be returning home soon. Our prayers and thoughts are with Wayne and his family as we wish him a speedy recovery.

Correspondence-

1. Coach from Millburn – requesting more help with ropes/flags on certain areas of both Warinanco and Holmdel, where the spectators are becoming a problem by narrowing pathways for the runners. He also mentions the probability that Warinanco may not be available next year due to reconstruction of the track and immediate surrounding area. He suggests if that's the case, we should use Greystone Park where Sandy forced the meet to be last year. "I know it is a bit farther north for North 2 schools, but I know that runners, coaches, and spectators loved the course."

He also had a suggestion to save money on the chips. "I still think we need to declare 12 with our entry, and could possibly cut that down between meets.

The directors involved will look into the course problems and we will make a decision about Warinanco when the park itself is more sure of its time table. The chip suggestion would be logistically difficult, unless rosters started at 10 from sectionals forward, but all coaches on the committee were not in favor of cutting back on the official roster. Charging one dollar for the shuttle bus service saved enough money to make the cost of the chips more manageable. Retrieving the chips would mean we would have to use the same numbers again, which also would be logistics issue.

2. Coach from Madison noted that Group I, both boys and girls had only 8 or 9 teams in most sections, which the other groups had 15+. He suggested not classifying the schools until after entries were received to have the same number of team in each group. We already do it for the non-publics.

There are fewer than 50 non-public schools, while there are more than 300 public schools with cross-country. Entry collection would have to be sooner and not by mail, because of the different speeds mail comes in from different parts of the state. Entries can be received more than 7 days after they are postmarked, especially if mailed in large envelopes. The other issue is one of fair play. NJSIAA philosophy uses enrollments for classification. In essence saying that size of student body is the most important criterion on which classification is based. Sports specific classifications warps this concept a lot as it is. The gap between the smallest school and the largest school can be almost two hundred more in Group 1 than it is in Groups 2 and 3 in any given sport and section. (Because of schools like Clifton and Elizabeth Group 4's size difference is always 3 or 4 times of the other groups). Doing what the coach suggests would almost guarantee that a current group 1 school would never win a sectional or group title again. If you look at the ShopRite Cup, you can see this by the fewer number of points a Group I school has compared to two and three's because most of the Group II schools win their point in sports where they are competing in Group I.

3. Coach from Summit has a boy who is legally blind and has no depth perception. Holmdel had been giving him many problems because of this. Prior to the MOC's he emailed the NJSIAA office and asked about the possibility of having roots and rocks painted to aid his runner. We contacted Mark Borchert, the head Ranger at Holmdel and asked what could be done. He contacted the Summit coach on Friday, telling how the rangers painted all the roots and rocks in the woods and asked if there was anything else. The coach asked if they could mark the boundaries of the course in the woods before the exit. Ranger Borchert got back to him, quickly telling him how they put pink reflective tape on the final

150m prior to exiting the woods. The runner ran a PR and broke 17:00 for the first time. He, his parents, and the coach were extremely appreciative of the park's efforts to help one runner succeed.

We are very happy that this happened and also ad our thanks and appreciation to the Park for their efforts on behalf of this runner.

4. Coach from West Morris Central whose main concern was that the wild card teams can only come from 4th and 5th place. His team placed 6th by one point in Group 3, but had the 2nd best total time in the Group 3 race.

Choosing wildcards based on only time flies in the face of the scoring rules of cross-country. You should note that in the rules for cross-country, there is not a single mention of time. Scoring is based on placement in the races. The first year wildcards were used, it happened where a 6th place team did indeed qualify over a team that beat them in the group meet. That is why the rule now reads as it does. No one should qualify for MOC who lost to a team in the Group meet that did not qualify, because scoring is based on place.

5. Coach from Westfield expressed similar concerns that were expressed by Millburn about spectators on the courses, both at Warinanco and Holmdel. His other concern dealt with the use of the chips: "What advantage is there to chip timing? There is added expense but id didn't seem to add anything to the meet." He also went on to express ways to perhaps use less chips.

Last year was the first time the meet of champions was 100% guaranteed to be accurate. For the first time, the final order of the runners were absolutely correct. They may have been in the past, but not very likely because of pile-ups in the chute, passing in the chute, athletes leaving the chute before their tags were collected, and many other ways that changed the finish. We wanted that same guarantee for the Group Meet races, and we got it. We needed about 7 less officials in the chute + the shuttle bus charge, helped to mitigate the extra expense. We are also more confident when there is a problem because we have more and better electronic and digital backups in case there is a problem with the chips. And as the technology improves, so will the benefits to the athletes and coaches.

6. Coach from Haddonfield expressed a desire to have the awards ceremony moved to the finish line area during the Group Meets because it would make it easier for schools with both boys and girls team participating that day to cheer each other on both during their races and getting the awards.

This correspondence was received after the meeting, but has merit and will be explored. Getting a power source may be the biggest problem.

Other issues

Len Pietrewicz discussed Garret Mountain and the need for some improvements to the course. Lou Fraulo, the meet director of North I, will contact the Park administration to talk about Len's concerns.

The only other major issue seems to be an increase in students doing distracting and dangerous things like Frisbee throwing, football throwing, and kicking of soccer balls in all areas of the racing. A woman was knocked over during the Group Meet and required medical attention as a result of some Frisbee throwers, while the timing company was having cardiac arrest as soccer balls were being kicked around and among the cameras at the finish line.

The "culprits" were the students and runners themselves after their races, or students coming with the team for support. The regulations will require coaches to make sure such activity ceases. The Frisbees, footballs, and soccer balls should not be allowed on the bus, let alone let loose in the park.

Tournament Regulations

The following statement will be added to the regulations as per the above issue:

Coaches will be held responsible for students and student-athletes who engage in but not limited to such activities as Frisbee throwing, football throwing, kicking soccer balls, etc in or around any cross-country competition at any level of the state tournament (i.e. sectionals, group meets, and Meet of Champions.)

Dates: Start of Official Practice: **August 11, 2014**

Start of Regular Season: **September 5, 2014**

Transfers on or after half of the season: [if start is on 9/5/14=October 11, if start is 9/6/14=October 12; if start is 9/11/14= October 17],

Entries Close: **October 22, 2014 (Public)**

October 29, 2014 (Non-Public)

Sectionals: **November 8, 2014**

Group Meets: **November 15, 2014**

Meet of Champions: **November 22, 2014**

Order of Races

1. Sectionals:

10:00	Group IV Boys	11:40	Group III Boys
10:25	Group I Boys	12:05	Group II Boys
10:50	Group IV Girls	12:30	Group III Girls
11:15	Group I Girls	12:55	Group II Girls

2. Group Meets

10:00	Non-Public A Boys	12:00	Group IV Boys	2:00	Group III Boys
10:30	Non-Public B Boys	12:30	Group I Boys	2:30	Group II Boys
11:00	Non-Public A Girls	1:00	Group IV Girls	3:00	Group III Girls
11:30	Non-Public B Girls	1:30	Group I Girls	3:30	Group II Girls

3. Meet of Champions

11:00	Boys
11:45	Girls