

DATE: July 1, 2025

TO: All Track & Field / Cross Country Officials

FROM: BJ Duckworth | Sport Administrator & Director of Officiating Development

RE: July Officials' Memo



### State Rules Meeting for Cross Country

The mandatory state rules meeting will go live in DragonFly on July 17. **This meeting is mandatory to renew your license, to officiate Cross Country during the regular season, and to officiate the postseason.**

Meeting Begins	Late Fee (\$50) Begins	Meeting Closes
July 17, 2025	August 19, 2025	September 10, 2025

*If you are a coach AND an official, you must complete both State Rules Meetings. While the content in both is similar, each is customized to its specific audience.*

### Tournament Questionnaire

The Tournament Questionnaire is no longer in MyOHSAA; it is sent to all eligible officials via email and is done through a Google Form. The questionnaire should be out today and will run through July 19. If you feel you are eligible and have not received the email by the end of this week, first check your spam folder and if the email is not there, please reach out to Keaton Jones ([kjones@ohsaa.org](mailto:kjones@ohsaa.org)). You **MUST** complete the questionnaire to be eligible to officiate Cross Country Tournaments.

### Heat Illness

It has been incredibly hot the past few weeks and this is a great time to remind everyone of the importance of taking care of yourself. Heat Illness is serious, and officials must take the steps needed to keep themselves safe and healthy. Just last week, the officiating community in South Carolina lost one of their own to Heat Illness, specifically Heat Stroke; learn more about what happened by clicking [HERE](#).

When preparing to work a meet in hot weather, make sure to follow the below steps:

- Hydrate before you go
- Bring...
  - Water
  - Hydration beverages (Gatorade/Powerade)
  - Head covering
  - Cooling towel
- Know your limits
- If you need help or a break, ask for it!

For more information on heat illness prevention & treatment, click [HERE](#)

HEAT EXHAUSTION	OR	HEAT STROKE
Faint or dizzy		Throbbing headache
Excessive sweating		No sweating
Cool, pale, clammy skin		Body temperature above 103° Red, hot, dry skin
Nausea or vomiting		Nausea or vomiting
Rapid, weak pulse		Rapid, strong pulse
Muscle cramps		May lose consciousness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Get to a cooler, air conditioned place</li><li>• Drink water if fully conscious</li><li>• Take a cool shower or use cold compresses</li></ul>		<b>CALL 9-1-1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take immediate action to cool the person until help arrives</li></ul>

Weather.gov/socialmedia  
Weather.gov/heat

@SacramentoOES  
SacramentoReady.org

### Permit Renewal

As a reminder, if you plan to officiate cross country, your officiating permit must be renewed for 2025/26 prior to the start of the season. If you are not officiating cross country, you have until December 31 to renew your permit for track.

### 2025 Cross Country State Meet Officials Clinic

As of this morning, eight spots remain for the clinic. For more information on this clinic, please see the email sent on the topic or click [HERE](#).

### 2025 Cross Country Tournament Regulations

The 2025 Cross Country Tournament Regulations can be viewed by clicking [HERE](#). In addition, a brief video outlining the changes this year can be found [HERE](#). Notable changes are outlined below.

- Changes to the number of individual qualifiers that advance.
- Changes to the number of medals provided at each regional site.
- Coaches will be required to provide their pupil active permit number to receive course access.
- Individual qualifiers are not eligible for team scores.
- Individual qualifiers will be placed in groups of seven for box assignments, with priority within each box to the athletes with the better finish position at the previous level.
- Starting boxes must be exactly five feet.
- Team tunnels are allowed at the district and regional level (meet management decision) however, they are **not allowed** at the state meet.
- Air horns and mega phones may not be used by spectators.

Please review the full regulations at the link above.

### Virtual Local Meeting

The OHSAA will produce one virtual local meeting for Cross Country. The date and topic are TBD and will be shared with you when available.

### OHSAA Officials Hall of Fame

Congratulations to **Jim Fox & Glen Smith** on their much deserved induction into the OHSAA Officials Hall of Fame. Induction into the hall, is the top honor bestowed by the OHSAA for our contest officials.

### NFHS Officials of the Year

Congratulations to the NFHS Officials of The Year, who received their award at the OHSAA Celebration of Officiating Banquet in June. These officials were nominated by their local association and selected based on their career achievements, specifically their work recruiting and mentoring new officials and their commitment to preventative officiating.

**Boys Track and Field:** Mike Nissenbaum

**Boys Cross Country:** Kristopher Marshall

**Girls Track and Field:** Dave Milkovich

**Girls Cross Country:** Dr. Allison Jones

### 50 Year Officials Awards

Congratulations to the below officials who received half century awards at the OHSAA Celebration of Officiating Banquet in June.

**50 year Officials:** Donald Hange, Dave Hershey, Phil Horvath, Dave Madaras, Donald Marsh, Jim McPike, Bob (Paul) Meuleman, R. Thomas Neighbarger, William Scott, James, Thielen, Rodney Thomas, Michael Uszak, Ken, Vogt & Michael Whitley

## Ohio Track & Field and Cross Country Officials Association Award Nominations

It is time to nominate the best officials and outstanding track & field and cross country supporters in your area for the Ohio Track & Field and Cross Country Officials Association Awards!

**Frederick E Cope Award**- The highest award given by the OTFCCOA, the Cope Award is presented to a Track & Field/Cross Country Official who is a respected and enthusiastic promoter of the sports of Track & Field/Cross Country.

**Contributor Awards**- Contributor Awards are presented to persons who have made a positive contribution to the sport of track and field and/or cross-country. Any track and field official, athletic administrator, physician, trainer, sports writer, tournament manager, and others are eligible. Each nominee must exemplify the highest standards of moral character, ethical conduct, and sportsmanship.

The applications for each award can be found by clicking [HERE](#) and then clicking on the photo next to the relevant award. **All nominations are due by August 1st!**

*Note: These awards are given by the OTFCCOA, and the OHSAA is not involved in the selection.*

## Save The Date – 2026 Ohio Track & Field and Cross Country Officials Association Clinic and Awards.

The 41<sup>st</sup> edition of the OTFCCOA Clinic will be held on **January 23-24, 2026** at Nationwide Hotel & Conference Center in Lewis Center. Registrants will receive one local meeting credit for each day they attend and will be able to participate in and receive credit for the only in person state rules meeting that will be offered.

For more information, contact Dennis Sabo, [densabo@gmail.com](mailto:densabo@gmail.com).

## Situations

Below are four situations reviewed in the first Virtual Local Track & Field Meeting from the spring.

**Situation 1:** In the 800 meter run, with 2 runners assigned in lanes 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 and 3 runners in lanes 3, 7, and 8 one of the runners who started behind the 2 other runners in lane 3 falls approximately 30 meters from the start line. The race is not recalled by the assistant starter. After the race, the coach for the runner that fell files a written protest saying that the race should have been recalled as his runner fell within the first 50 meters. No actions of either of the other two runners in that lane causing the runner to fall is reported to you as the Referee. Assume the coach correctly filed the appeal. What is the correct ruling?

**Ruling 1:** Deny the appeal as no action by another runner causing the fall was reported to you as the Referee.

**Notes 1:** In order for an assistant starter to recall a race, it must be determined that the fall was due to contact with another runner. Rule 5.7.6. "A race shall be recalled in the first 50 meters when a competitor falls due to contact with another competitor". If the contact is determined to be inadvertent, then no disqualification needs to be made, and all runners restart. If the contact was deemed intentional or reckless, such as cutting off the runner who fell, then a DQ would be appropriate. See the Casebook under 5.7.6 for additional situations. The Referee cannot change the decision of the starter; however, if they feel interference took place, based on what was reported to them by the starters and umpires, they may issue a disqualification and order a rerun, if deemed appropriate. Only affected athletes would participate in said rerun.

**Situation 2:** Nine competitors remain at the start of a height in the verticals. Competitors A & B fail their attempts and Competitor C clears the height. The official should?

**Ruling 2:** Change rotation methods only at the start of a height.

**Notes 2:** Changes in rotation procedures should be changed ONLY when the height changes.

**Situation 3:** In the finals of the 400 Meter Dash at a regional meet, (using a 3 member start crew) the starter (who is watching the middle lanes) fires the gun. This is followed almost immediately by a recall shot fired by the “drag” starter. A split second later, the “point” starter fires. The “drag” starter reports a false start in lane 2, but the “point” starter states that the runner in lane 7 committed a false start. After some discussion, both runners are disqualified. The coach of the runner in lane 7 protests that his athlete was drawn off his mark by the false start in lane 2. The Referee should?

**Ruling 3:** Deny the protest since only the start team can make decisions regarding false starts.

**Notes 3:** Although it might be argued that the runner in lane 2 was drawn by the motion of the runner in lane 7, it is very unlikely that the reverse would be true due to the large stagger between the 2 lanes. In any case, this is a consideration for the start team – not the referee. Judgement calls are not subject to appeal, as all false starts are judgement calls that cannot be appealed.

**Situation 4:** During the 1600 Meter Run, an umpire sees an act of interference by A1. However, the official was unable to get the number of A1. The Referee should?

**Ruling 4:** Not disqualify A1 unless his/her identity can be absolutely by another method (such as “the only blue uniform in the race”).

**Notes 4:** A disqualification should never occur unless there is absolutely no doubt as to the identity of the offender.

## **BJ Duckworth**

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