

DATE: April 3, 2023

TO: All Track & Field / Cross Country Officials

FROM: BJ (William) Duckworth
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Track & Field and Cross Country



RE: April Update & In Season Bulletin #1

Video Note

Please click [HERE](#) to view a brief pre-season video update.

NFHS Pre-Meet notes

Please click [HERE](#) to view the 2023 NFHS Pre-Meet Notes. This document is prepared by the NFHS in conjunction with the USATF and is a great educational tool.

Manufacturer Logos in Relays

I wanted to clarify the manufacturer logo rules in regard to matching on a relay or cross-country team. NFHS Rule 4-3-2 discusses the rules for relay and cross country uniforms, including that school logos must match; this rule makes **NO** mention of manufacturer logos matching. Therefore, as long as the manufacturer logos meet the size and quantity restrictions listed in NFHS Rule 4-3-1b5 they do **NOT** need to match. A relay team could have any combination of different manufacturer logos on the tops or bottoms.

Weigh Ins at the Pole Vault

In the 2023 NFHS Pre-Meet Notes, the weighing in of vaulters is discussed as a risk mitigation and safety process; Ohio currently has not adopted weighing in of vaulters. Per the Pre-Meet Notes and NFHS Rule 6-8-15 note 2, state associations are exclusively given the ability to adopt a process for verification of weight. NFHS and OHSAA rules on games committees **DO NOT** give games committees the authority to modify the verification process and weigh in vaulters. Additionally, no conference, league, school, official, or DAB has the authority to change or modify this rule. The process of utilization of a certification form or card is the only process that should be used in Ohio. A sample certification card can be found in the official's manual.

"Fly By" Exchange

There is a new method of relay exchange that has made its way to high school track in Ohio; it is known as the "Fly By" Exchange. A Twitter video of the exchange can be found [HERE](#). This method is legal, pending that no rules are broken. If the team is able to accomplish this style of handoff, not interfere with another team, not cross the inside line for three consecutive steps, or break any other rule; it is legal.

Sitting While Officiating

One very common complaint that comes in is, "the official was sitting down; how did they even see what they called." Now I'm not saying an official should never be sitting while you officiate; however, as officials, we must be mindful of our purpose in our assigned officiating position.

Umpiring: While it is absolutely acceptable to sit between races, it is never acceptable to be umpiring a race while sitting. Officials need to be standing, engaged in the race, and move as needed to observe violations. Umpires should also be actively signaling with their flags as runners pass.

Field Events: When working a field event alone, it is impossible to see what you need to do and communicate with the athletes and coaches from a seated position. You need to be able to move from the front to the back of the circle, see clearly into the vault box, etc., and when working events alone, that cannot be done while sitting. When working a field event with a partner or crew, there is more flexibility for those serving in some roles to be sitting, for example, those announcing the board or calling fouls in the long jump. However, even with a crew, those calling makes and misses in the pole vault or calling fouls in the throwing ring cannot do that position properly while seated.

Please take breaks as necessary to take care of yourself, but also be conscious of your responsibility to our sport.

Electronic Verification Forms

While paper verification forms have been a mainstay for many years, that does not mean that is the only method of collecting the verifications. The use of an electronic method such as a Google Form is an acceptable way to gather the forms for individual meets as long as it is, per the NFHS rules, done before each contest.

10-Minute Rule

The “10-Minute Rule” is something that a lot of officials reference; however, **it is not actually a rule**. There is nothing in the NFHS Rules or OHSAA Officials Manual related to the “10 Minute Rule”. The decision on how to handle athletes that check-in and out of field events is not something an event official can decide on their own. Per NFHS Rules 3-2-3o and 6-2-3a, this is something the games committee must do. Officials should ask their meet referee and/or meet manager what the games committee has decided related to this.

Tournament Regulations Changes

Please see below for a list of changes to the Tournament Regulations effective this season and some clarifying notes on each. These are included in the 2023 Tournament Regulations and Meet Managers Manual and are in effect for both District and Regional Tournaments.

- “Shirts need only be tucked in when they obscure the reading of a hip number.”
- “All Regional Meets will allow for ninety (90) minutes between the start of field & the start of the running events.” *NOTE: This is mandatory for regionals and recommended for districts.*
- “All field events will utilize finals (when applicable). Consecutive attempts WILL NOT be permitted (as in throwing two at a time). All throwing attempts should use the “1-1-1 model” in both prelims and finals. This format allows for appropriate coaching opportunities between throws. NOTE: Meet officials in collaboration with the coach, **can allow** athletes to throw consecutively when needed to leave for another event.
- “Heat sheets with relay lane assignments MUST be provided to officials working running events, specifically umpires, to aid in the placement of athletes. PA announcements MUST be made prior to the start of all relays announcing lane assignments and ensuring umpires at each zone are ready.” *NOTE: This is a preventative officiating policy.*
- “The paper results used by field event officials are to be considered the “Official Results.” Any form of electronic results system that is used for ANY field event is NOT official and is used only for the purposes of live/unofficial results.”
- Field Events will be seeded from worst to best.

- High Jump & Pole Vault – Seeding in the vertical jumps should be lowest to highest.
- Long Jump, Shot Put, and Discus – Competitors should be divided into flights. Seeding in these horizontal events should be shortest to farthest, with the first flight being the shorter qualifying performance and the final flight being the longer entry performance.

NOTE: This will allow for an additional layer of safety for officials and help expedite the event by allowing for more effective measuring and shortening warm-up time before the finals.

- “To ensure ongoing safety & fairness, the use of infield areas for warmups, coaching or congregating is strictly prohibited. Sites must provide coaching boxes for coaches at any field events located in the infield area.”

NOTE: This is a **SAFETY** policy and should be strictly enforced by meet management and officials. Having athletes and coaches in the infield increases the risk of interference and injury to runners, puts meet management equipment such as wind gauges and cameras at risk, and hinders the ability of umpires to do their job correctly. Violations of this rule would fall under NFHS Rule 4-6-5e for coaches and NFHS Rule 4-6-2 for athletes. While this is a tournament regulation, it is recommended that meets also follow this policy during the regular season.

Other Tournament Information

- With the change to NFHS Rules related to the number of athletes allowed on a relay card, the cards used this year have been redesigned. To view a sample of the new card, click [HERE](#).
- The violation cards used had not been updated in some time, and some rules on the old cards were no longer in effect. New cards have been created, and a sample can be found [HERE](#).
- The appeal form used for tournaments has been updated to be more detailed both in the information provided by coaches and officials. A sample of the form can be found [HERE](#).
- The form used for evaluation of officials will be updated for this season and will include the new rules related to starters’ timing. That form is not yet available but will be posted on the officiating forms page soon.

Note on Assignments

All assignments for the HS State Meet, MS State Meet and OHSAA positions for Regional Tournaments have been made. They will be announced via email, Facebook and Twitter in May.

Other Reminders

Virtual Local Meeting Provided by the OHSAA

The first of two local virtual meetings has been posted by the OHSAA; all officials have been sent an email notifying them of the process to view and receive credit. The second virtual meeting will be made available later this month.

State Rules Meeting

The OHSAA has extended the period to complete the state rules meeting without a late fee; you now have until Thursday, April 6. Anyone completing it April 7 - 24 will be subject to a late fee of \$50. If you attended the in-person rules meeting at the officials’ clinic, you **do not** need to view the online meeting. If you are a coach and an official, you **MUST** complete **BOTH** the coach’s rules meeting and the officials’ rules meeting.

Officials vs Cancer

The National Federation of State High School Associations calls on all sports officials to join us in our partnership with the American Cancer Society in the vision of ending cancer as we know it, for everyone. Through the Officials vs Cancer program, sports officials can participate in the Whistle Campaign. Getting involved is simple. Make a \$25 donation (or more) and receive a Fox 40 whistle to use while you are officiating.

1. Visit <https://officials.cancer.org>
2. Choose your favorite Fox 40 whistle color:
 - Go Blue in March to show your support for colorectal cancer!
 - Go Purple in April to show your support for testicular cancer!
 - Go Pink in May to honor all the moms battling breast cancer!
 - Go Gold in September to show your support for childhood cancer!
3. Select the sport that you officiate.
4. Add an additional donation to the American Cancer Society if you'd like.
5. Provide contact and payment information.

You will receive your whistle in the mail two to three weeks after purchase. If you have any additional questions, please email officialsvscancer@cancer.org

2023 OHSAA Documents & Websites

Click the item below to be taken to the page/document

- [2023 Track & Field Page](#)
- [2023 Track & Field Officials Manual](#)
- [2023 Track & Field Coaches Manual](#)
- [2023 Track & Field Mixed Gender Relay Waiver](#)

Completed by meet management for all meets that will include mixed-gender relays.

- [2023 Seated Athlete Competition Guide](#)
- [2023 HS Seated Athlete Qualification Form](#)

Completed by meet management for all meets hosting seated athletes that want those performances to count for the HS State Meet.

- [2023 Middle School State Meet Page & Qualification Instructions](#)
- [2023 Middle School Meet Qualification Form](#)

Completed by meet management for all meets wishing to count as a qualifier for the MS State Meet.

- [2023 Tournament Regulations](#)
- [2023 Regional Tournament Sites & Meet Manager Information](#)
- [2023 Tournament Meet Managers Manual](#)

Sincerely,

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