

DATE: February 10, 2026

TO: All Track & Field and Cross Country Officials

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

RE: February Officials' Memo



### State Rules Meeting for Track & Field

The mandatory state rules meeting is live in DragonFly per the chart below. **This meeting is mandatory to renew your license and to officiate Track & Field.**

Meeting Begins	Late Fee (\$50) Begins	Meeting Closes
January 28, 2026	March 25, 2026	April 15, 2026

*If you are a coach AND an official, you must complete both State Rules Meetings.*

### 2026 OHSAA Manuals

As previously shared, the OHSAA Track & Field and Cross Country Officials Manual has been expanded to include a comprehensive Mechanics Guide for officials. This guide is designed to bring much-needed consistency to officiating across the state and to enhance the training and mentoring of new officials. The Mechanics Guide outlines mandatory mechanics and positioning for all field events, as well as for Umpires, Starters, Clerks, Head Field Judges, and Referees in both sports. The mechanics and procedures outlined in this manual are required and must be followed. **Thank you** in advance for embracing this important update, which will help us better serve Ohio's student-athletes.

In addition to the Officials Manual referenced above, the 2026 Coaches, Electronic Starting Device, & Seated Event Manuals are also now available online.

[Officials Manual](#) | [Coaches Manual](#) | [Electronic Starting Device Manual](#) | [Seated Event Manual](#)

### 2026 Track & Field State Championship Clinic

The expanded OHSAA Jesse Owens Track & Field State Championships will serve as the backdrop for this opportunity, where veteran mentors instruct clinic participants on rules, mechanics, and best practices as they happen in real-time. **The clinic is open to ALL officials who have not officiated the Track State Championships**, regardless of years of service. Participants and their mentors will follow a set schedule that covers every field event and officiating position. Participants will experience everything from the press box to the referee, and there will be set times to ask questions and hear from the Meet Manager, Sport Administrator, and Tournament Assignor. There will also be time built in to enjoy the meet with your all-access pass. **It's an educational experience like no other.**

**When:** June 5 & 6, 2026

**Where:** The Ohio State University, Jesse Owens Memorial Stadium

**Cost:** \$25 non-refundable deposit.

**What You Receive:**

- Lunch both days
- Parking
- All Access Credential & lanyard
- Officiating Guide & Souvenir Program
- Discount rates at the officials' hotel (limited rooms available)
- Two local meeting credits for the 2027 track season (one for each day). You **MUST** stay with your mentor and group to receive credit.

**Registration:** Due to venue space limitations, registration is limited to the first 30 people to pay the non-refundable deposit. Please do not register if you are not 100% committed to attending; the deposit is not refundable. **Registration will open on February 25 at 10am, click [HERE](#) to register at that time.**

**Waiting List:** Once registration is full, we will keep a waiting list of interested officials.

**Hotel:** Participants are responsible for their own housing. Information will be sent out to those registered related to a limited number of discounted rooms at the officials' hotel.

*\*If you sign up for the clinic and are then assigned to officiate the meet, your deposit will be refunded and we will use the waiting list to fill your spot.*

### Virtual Local Rules Meetings

The OHSAA will again provide two virtual local meeting opportunities for officials, each will be posted for a 7-10 day period. Email communication will be sent to all officials when each meeting is open for viewing.

Meeting topics are:

1. Field Event Set Up & Mechanics Guide Introduction
2. Tournament Regulations & Umpiring Mechanics

### Turbo Javelin

OHSAA Sport Regulations prohibit Javelin from being competed by OHSAA member schools. This prohibition applies to all Javelin variants, including Turbo Javelin.

### 2026 Tournament Expansion Related Officiating Changes

Please click [HERE](#) to view a video outlining the officiating changes occurring as part of the expansion of the Track & Field tournament to five divisions. These are the same changes reviewed at the OTFCCOA clinic in January.

### 2026 OTFCCOA & OATCCC Award Winners

Congratulations to those honored at the 2026 OTFCCOA Clinic & Awards Dinner.

**Cope Award:** Penny Zuber

**Joe Lenge Service Award:** Bob Meuleman

**Contributor Awards:** Jamie Bialecki, Liz Davis, David Downs, Dublin Coffman, Jim Fedor, Gilbert Hartley, Emily Hickerson, PJ Hollern, Amy Kramer, Dr. James Lehner, Dave Pavlansky

**Contributions To The Officiating Community:** Terri Tutt

Congratulations to those honored at the 2026 OATCCC Hall of Fame Dinner

**Ed Barker Award:** Dave Pavlansky

**OATCCC Hall of Fame:** Mackenzie Jo Willis, Emily Pendleton, Jim Jurcevich, Donica Merriman, Rebekka Simko Morgan, Brittany Atkinson, Adriane Blewitt Wilson, Denny Hammond

**OHSAA Sportsmanship, Ethics, & Integrity Awards:** Corey Culbertson, Chris Ickes, Chelsey Copley, John DePietro

**Fred Dafler Coach Of The Year:** Mark Stiver, Louis Domitrovich, Chip Dobson, Doug Mason

**Dale Gabor Service Awards:** Bridgette Longino-Thomas, Bob Mandi, The Lee & Joyce Pipher Family, Mike Dunlap, Jeff Henderson, Bob Bergstrom, Steve Nester, Bill Schaller

### Situations

**Situation #1:** At a weekday dual meet where the only licensed official is the starter/referee, an athlete checks in for the 400 meter dash with the clerk who is a parent volunteering for the role. As the athlete is walking towards the starting line, after having checked in, you notice they have an illegal uniform. As starter/referee you must?

**Answer #1:** Issue a warning, ask for the head coach to notify them of the warning, and not allow the athlete to compete until they make the uniform legal.

**Note #1:** Per Rule 4-3, an illegal uniform must be made legal BEFORE being allowed to compete. The fact that they were checked in by the clerk or that the meet is only a small weekday meet are both irrelevant factors related to the enforcement of the rules. Choosing not to enforce rules is not a decision a contest official has the authority to make. Officials are required to enforce rules consistently and uniformly throughout the season regardless of the size of meet or our personal feeling on said rules.

While many think "letting things slide" is benefiting the athletes, it is actually hurting them by increasing the likelihood of violations in future meets. It also puts your fellow officials at a disadvantage when they correctly enforce the rules.

**Situation #2:** Upon the conclusion of the boys 1600 meter run a coach from Team B states that the athlete who won the 1600 meter run from Team A does not go to school at School A and therefore should be disqualified from the event. As referee you check the roster provided by Team A for the meet and find the athlete is listed on the boys roster for Team A and take no action. The coach from Team B appeals your decision stating he has proof the athlete does not go to School A. As referee you must?

**Answer #2:** Deny the appeal.

**Note #2:** As a contest official, you shall not be involved in eligibility issues in any way. As the athlete from Team A is on Team A's roster, they are allowed to compete at that meet. If they were not on the roster, they would not be allowed to compete and would be disqualified from any event participated in.

Anytime a coach has a concern related to eligibility, such as a name on a roster that does not belong, they should direct that concern to the OHSAA office for investigation following the conclusion of the meet.

**Situation #3:** Running down the backstretch on the second lap of the 1600 m run, a runner stumbles and takes several steps inside the curb line on the track, without passing any other runners. He returns to the track after two or three steps, while still on the straightaway.

**Answer #3:** No disqualification since no advantage was gained in distance or position.

**Note #3:** Per NFHS Rule 5-13-1 as the stumbling and steps inside the curb line were not deliberate and no meaningful advantage was gained, no action is warranted. If this were on a curve, and three consecutive steps were taken inside the line, a disqualification would be warranted.

**Situation #4:** Running down the home stretch of the 3200 m run, athlete A is boxed in and, in an attempt to overtake athlete B, takes three steps inside the curb line of the track, returning to the track before the finish line.

**Answer #4:** Disqualified since an advantage was gained in position.

**Note #4:** Per NFHS Rule 5-13-1 as the action was deliberate and a meaningful advantage was gained (passing competitors), a disqualification is needed.

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