

DATE: March 4, 2025

TO: All Track & Field / Cross Country Officials

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

RE: March Officials Memo



### State Rules Meeting for Track & Field

The mandatory state rules meeting is now live online via DragonFly. **This meeting is mandatory to renew your license, and to officiate Track & Field.**

Meeting Begins	Late Fee (\$50) Begins	Meeting Closes
January 29, 2025	March 26, 2025	April 15, 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.*

**For full instructions, please refer to the email you received from Keaton Jones via DragonFly on January 29, 2025.**

### OTFCCOA Name Badge Orders – FINAL CALL

**A Note from Dennis Sabo, OTFCCOA Secretary:** The Ohio Track & Field and Cross Country Officials Association is again selling name badges for officials. These badges are compliant with the OHSAA Track & Field Officials Uniform Regulations and are an optional part of the uniform. All proceeds from the sale of these name badges will go towards the Fred Dafler & Rick Haddix Scholarship Fund, which provides scholarships to family members of OTFCCOA member officials.

Name badges will be two-sided and include your name, permit number, photo, local association name, and the OTFCCOA Logo; a sample of this year's design can be found on the order form linked below.

**The badges will be \$16 and can be ordered by clicking [HERE](#) by March 8, 2025;** they will be mailed to your home in late March. Officials will need to upload a passport-style photo when they place their order.

Anyone with questions should contact Dennis Sabo, [densabo@gmail.com](mailto:densabo@gmail.com).

### Virtual Local Meetings

The OHSAA will produce two statewide virtual local rules meetings again this season that will be available to all officials for approximately 9 days once posted.

- The first of these local meetings, which will be sent to officials next week, will include the viewing of the NFHSLearn.com Sportsmanship Course as well as the completion of a quiz. If you have never viewed the Sportsmanship Course in NFHSLearn.com and want to get a jump start, please feel free. Full information and directions will be sent out early next week.
- The second virtual local rules meeting will be sent to officials in early April and will be a traditional video meeting that will review safety among other topics.

### Game Reports

As mentioned during the state rules meeting and a memo last fall, Game Reports are now completed in DragonFly and are filed by accessing your meet assignment. To help officials better understand where to find and file Game Reports in DragonFly, please click [HERE](#) to view a brief video put together by Assistant State Rules Interpreter and Greater Youngstown Track Officials Association Local Interpreter, John Daubenspeck. I thank John for taking the time to put this together.

### Exhibition or Non-Scored Competition

**Conducting non-scored events during OHSAA meets is NOT permitted, all events must be scored and all participants must have the ability to score.** This prohibition does not prevent meets from holding events like the “Thrower Relays” (when throwers run the 4x100); however, when they are competed they **MUST** be scored.

Additionally, there is no distinction between Freshman, JV, and Varsity competition per OHSAA Track Regulation 1.5a, meaning that even if you declare a section or heat of an event as a “JV section/heat” those participating in that section/heat must be given the same opportunity to score as those in the other sections/heats. **It is also important to mention that OHSAA contest officials are prohibited from officiating exhibition events.** Teams who host or participate in exhibition competitions are subject to fines and other penalties.

The only exception to the mandate on scoring is seated events, or other events that have received a waiver from the OHSAA office.

### Hair Touching Scenarios – Starting, Long Jump, Throwing Events

**Situation #1:** As the starter issues the “set” command in the girls 100M dash, the runner in lane four moves quickly and without delay to her set position. In doing so, her ponytail falls forward and is touching the track surface beyond the starting line.

**Note #1:** The touching of the athlete's ponytail provides no advantage to the athlete. In contrast, it actually could be a disadvantage to the athlete as she accelerates. A starter shall not penalize the athlete with a false start. If, in the opinion of the starter, the hair touching could cause an unfair start for any of the athletes, including the runner in lane four, they shall call the runners up and restart the starting sequence with no false start issued.

**Situation #2:** In the girls shot put, after the third thrower starts her attempt, her hair brushes the ground outside the circle.

**Note #2:** The athlete's hair brushing the ground provides no advantage to the athlete and shall not be a violation.

**Situation #3:** As a female athlete lands on the long jump pit after a successful trial she leans back slightly and her branded hair makes a small indentation in the sand 18 inches behind the mark made by her body.

**Note #3:** The NFHS has been very clear that marks made by the body, hair, or items attached to the body (clothing) would be the mark used for measurement if they are the mark nearest to the foul line. Marks made by items such as a hat or sunglasses falling off, shall be ignored.

### Officiating Survey – 2026 Tournament Expansion

To better understand the availability of officials in relation to an expanded Track & Field State Championship in 2026, we are conducting a short survey. Please take 2-3 minutes to complete this survey, your feedback will be extremely helpful in putting together a plan. The survey will be open until June 7, 2025.

Click [HERE](#) to complete the availability survey.

### **FAT Contractor List**

A list of FAT contractors in Ohio can be found by clicking [HERE](#). If your meet is in need of a FAT contractor, this list will help you find a timer in your area that may be available for your meet.

This list was compiled through a survey that was sent out to the track community. If there is a contractor missing, please have them contact me so we can get their information added to the list.

### **Seated Event Meet List**

The OHSAA is looking to help our seated student athletes find more opportunities to compete head-to-head against other seated student athletes during the regular season. To do this, we are conducting a survey of meets that will be held during the 2025 season. The results of the survey will automatically populate to a meet list that is posted on the [OHSAA Track & Field page](#) as well as the [OHSAA Seated Division page](#). The list will be "live" meaning it will automatically update as meets are added.

If you are hosting a meet that will include seated events, please click [HERE](#) to complete the survey.

### **NFHSLearn.com**

The NFHS provides dozens of free or low cost training courses for coaches, officials, administrators, and parents. Courses include sportsmanship, coaching/officiating track and field, implicit bias, student mental health, middle school coaching, protecting students from abuse, and more. They also offer three levels of coaching certificates. Learn more about the coaching certificates and classes available by clicking [HERE](#).

### **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).

### **7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Track State Championship & Qualifying Meet Information**

In August 2024, we announced several changes related to qualifying meets for the 2025 season; those changes are a direct reflection of feedback from coaches, administrators, and officials. The modifications made for 2025 will provide more opportunities for student-athletes to qualify for the championship while also helping maintain a higher level of consistency, fairness, and safety. Information on the 2025 championship, a list of approved qualifier meets (updated regularly with new approvals), an outline of qualifier requirements and updates for 2025, and the application to become a qualifier can be found by clicking [HERE](#).

**The deadline to submit a meet as a qualifier is March 28, 2025; any applications after that date will require a late fee be paid.**

## 2025 Track & Field State Championship Clinic – REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

After a year off due to the move of the state meet to Dayton's Welcome Stadium in 2024, the Track & Field State Meet Clinic is **BACK!** Mick Harris will serve as the day of coordinator, and we have five all-star veteran officials lined up to serve as mentors.

The 2025 OHSAA Track & Field State Meet 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 Championship, regardless of years of service. Participants and their mentors will follow a preset schedule that will take them to every field event and every officiating position. Participants will get to experience everything from the press box to the referee; there will also 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 state meet with your all-access pass.

**It's an educational experience like no other.**

**When:** June 6 & 7, 2025

**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 2026 track season (one for each day)

**Registration:** [CLICK HERE](#) 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 close on April 19, 2025, or when full. Last year, registration was full on the first day!

**Waiting List:** Once registration is full, we will keep a waiting list of interested officials. The waiting list can be accessed through the registration link above.

**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.*

## BJ Duckworth

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<b>Important Dates</b>		
	<b>2025 Cross Country</b>	<b>2025 Track</b>
	<small>All 2025 dates are subject to change</small>	
OTF&CCOA Officials Clinic	January 23-24, 2026	
OATCCC Coaches Clinic	January 29-31, 2026	
First Day of State Meeting <u>for Officials</u>	TBD	February 4, 2025
First Day of State Meeting <u>for Coaches</u>	TBD	February 10, 2025
First Day of Coaching	August 1, 2025	February 24, 2025
Early Season Invitational	August 16, 2025	
Season Begins	August 18, 2025	March 29, 2025
State Meeting Late Fee Begins <u>for Officials</u>	TBD	March 26, 2025
State Meeting Late Fee Begins <u>for Coaches</u>	TBD	March 30, 2025
Deadline To Declare for Tournament	TBD	April 21, 2025
State Meeting Ends <u>for Officials</u>	TBD	April 15, 2025
State Meeting Ends <u>for Coaches</u>	TBD	April 21, 2025
Non-Interscholastic Date	September 29, 2025	May 5, 2025
7th & 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade State Championship		May 17, 2025
District Tournaments	October 18, 2025	May 19-24, 2025
7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Post-Season Invitational	October 19, 2025	
Regional Tournaments	October 25, 2025	May 28-31, 2025
State Championships	November 1, 2025 <small>@ Fortress Obetz</small>	June 6-7, 2025 <small>@ Ohio State</small>
OHSAA State Championship Officials Clinic	November 1, 2025	June 6-7, 2025
Season Ends	November 1, 2025	June 7, 2025
OATCCC Cross Country Clinic	November 14, 2025	

<b>Important Documents/Resources</b>		
	<b>2025 Cross Country</b>	<b>2025 Track</b>
OHSAA Sport Webpage	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>
Sport Regulations	TBD	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>
Tournament Regulations	TBD	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>
Uniform Guidance Video	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>	
Coaches Manual	TBD	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>
Officials Manual	TBD	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>
Seated Athlete Manual		<a href="#">Click HERE</a>
Electronic Starting Guide		<a href="#">Click HERE</a>
Verification Form	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>	
Mixed Gender Relay Waiver		<a href="#">Click HERE</a>
Medical Waiver	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>	
Non-Bordering State Waiver	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>	
OHSAA Officials Handbook	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>	
OHSAA School Handbook (Constitution, Bylaws, GSR)	<a href="#">Click Here</a>	
NFHSLearn.com   Fundamentals of Coaching	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>	
NFHSLearn.com   Sport-Specific Coaching	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>
NFHSLearn.com   Sportsmanship Course	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>	
NFHSLearn.com   Track & Field Officiating	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>	
NFHSLearn.com   Interscholastic Officiating	<a href="#">Click HERE</a>	

Tournament information can be found by clicking the appropriate links on the sport-specific OHSAA Sport Webpage.