

DATE: May 12, 2023

TO: All Track & Field / Cross Country Officials

FROM: BJ Duckworth
Director of Officiating Development & State Rules Interpreter
Track & Field and Cross Country



RE: Tournament Officials Last Minute Updates

Officials Uniform Policy

Please see the officials' uniform policy that is located [HERE](#).

- In addition to the policy, I ask that all shirts be tucked in for the tournaments unless it is a women's cut shirt designed to not be tucked in. It is important we all look professional when officiating, especially during the tournaments.
- As previously communicated, officials may NOT wear anything (hats, name badges, etc.) featuring the "new" OHSAA logo while officiating, all officials attire must have the "old" logo with the torch on it. There is currently only one company licensed to make items with the new logo and they are not producing items for officials, therefore, anything worn with the new logo has not been provided from an approved vendor per the policy linked above.

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. This DOES NOT prohibit meets from using the infield for awards or in the absence of another appropriate area, using a roped off section as an athlete reporting area.

Violations & Enforcement of this rule are as follows:

- **Coaches with an athlete in a race or field event that is going on** would fall under NFHS Rule 4-6-5e for coaches as they would be coaching in a restricted area. The penalty is a disqualification for their competitor.
- **Athletes who have checked into a race or field event** are considered competitors and fall under NFHS Rule 4-6-2 for failure to follow the direction of a meet official.
- **Coaches without an athlete in a race or field event that is going on**, in this situation the coach does not have a competitor at this time, they would not be coaching from a restricted area, however, they would be a spectator at that point. In this instance the coach can be treated the same way meet management would handle a parent or other spectator in a restricted area. In extreme situations, a coach can be penalized under NFHS Rule 4-6-1, however, their actions MUST meet specifications of the rule. Keep in mind that enforcing 4-6-1 at the tournament level will end the season for that coach.
- **Athletes who have not checked into an event** are considered contestants and are not subject to disqualification under 4-6-2. As with the coaches above, these contestants can be considered spectators, especially if they are a teammate not entered in the meet, and handled the same way meet management would handle a parent or other spectator in a restricted area. In extreme situations, they can be penalized under 4-6-1, however, this MUST ONLY be used when their actions meet specifications of the rule.

Everyone needs to do everything they can to prevent the use of infields as much as possible to prevent disqualifications. It should be discussed in the coaches meeting and stressed that it is a safety rule, PA announcements should be made, Meet Managers should have notified coaches in the pre-meet communications, and all officials (including meet management staff) at the meet need to work together to politely ask people to leave the infield when they are there inappropriately before we turn to punishment. Coaches have already been notified of this via their state rules meeting, updates from the OHSAA Office and an email sent by the coaches association. **Additionally, if you have tried everything in your toolbox to keep the area clear and safe; suspending the meet until the area is cleared is an option as well.**

Other Tournament Information

- With the change to NFHS Rules related to the number of athletes allowed on a relay card, the cards in use 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.

Clarification on Crocs

- Several people have reached out asking if Crocs are legal footwear. In general, **most** of these styles of "shoes" cannot be securely attached to the foot and therefore are not legal. However, it does not mean that they don't make a style that would be legal or that there is another similar brand that can be securely attached. There is no universal one size fits all answer, each official must make a judgement call based on what is worn at that particular meet.

Sincerely,

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