

**TRACK AND FIELD**  
Coaches Advisory Committee Meeting  
September 14, 2009

**MINUTES**

This summary represents the recommendations of this Committee and is not to be construed as a change of existing rules or regulations. Final action on all items will be taken by the Board of Control at their October meeting.

Committee Members: Chris Herriot (Arrowhead), Vince Lease (Fennimore), Carla Elliott (Marathon), Vince Komar (Mukwonago), Mike Chapes (Oregon), and Brad Meixner (Portage). Todd Hartwig (Pius XI) was not in attendance. Marcy Thurwachter attended the meeting representing the WIAA. The meeting was chaired by Mike Chapes and the minutes were recorded by Marcy Thurwachter.

I. SEASON REGULATIONS

A. Minutes

Last year's minutes and action taken by the Board of Control were reviewed. Vince Lease commented that the change in warm-up procedures for field events at State were an improvement. The committee agreed.

It was recommended to accept the minutes. Passed unanimously.

B. Season Regulations

The 2009 WIAA Spring Edition of Season Regulations, pages 47-51 were reviewed.

1. Starting Procedures

Marcy explained that the current WIAA language opens the possibility of an athlete "playing games" with the starting procedures. The NFHS rules are much cleaner and straightforward. It was recommended that the current language be deleted and that Wisconsin follow Rules 5-7-2 & 3. Passed unanimously.

Current language: "The appropriate starting command(s) should be selected not by the length of the race, but by the starting positions of the involved runners (block or standing)."

NFHS Rule 5-7-2 & 3: "The starting commands for races or opening legs of less than 800 meters outdoors and 600 meters indoors shall be: On your marks. The starting command for individual races, or opening relay legs of 800 meters or more outdoors and 600 meters or more indoors shall be to ask all competitors to take position at least one step behind. . ."

2. Pole Vault Helmets

Marcy reviewed the status of the new ASTM certified pole vault helmets. Vince Komar reminded the committee that the helmet is intended to offer protection from a fall off of the pit, not from higher heights. There are currently two ASTM helmets on the market; Pro-Tech (Gill) and the KD Pro (Simpson). It was recommended that all pole vault helmets be ASTM certified by 2014. Passed unanimously.

Marcy explained that she had asked to have the topic of pole vault helmets added to the Sports Medicine Committee agenda in light of materials provided to the NFHS advising caution in requiring helmets. Vince Komar was familiar with this report, which indicates a potential risk to athletes with hyperflexion of the neck when the athlete lands in the pit. The issue is whether to risk head trauma or possible neck hyperflexion.

3. Starting Guns

Dave Anderson, WIAA Executive Director, made an appearance to address the committee regarding a study the WIAA will undertake this spring. Dave explained the WIAA received a request from a WIAA track & field official to ban all gun starting devices due to a belief that the

starting pistol report is causing harm to athlete's hearing. Dave requested that committee members participate in the spring study. Vince Lease felt that .32 should not be used and that perhaps an adjustment in the gunpowder in the .22 could be adjusted. Dave described the study as it is proposed at this time; using a decibel meter, record the decibels near the ear of the athlete in lane 1. Wind and weather conditions would need to be taken into account. Also experiment with the location and mechanics of the starter. Marcy added that the close proximity of the recall starter would make a test of Lane 8 also necessary. A report sheet will be developed by Marcy. Dave thanked the committee for their cooperation.

4. Jewelry Review

Marcy informed the committee that reports of athletes wearing jewelry last season had increased. Mike suggested this be a point of emphasis at the WISTCA caucuses. Also needs to be included in next year's rule presentation. Marcy shared a report of an athlete at the Boscobel Sectional who was warned to remove her jewelry, went to another event and was disqualified for her second offense. The girls' coach appealed to the games committee, which reversed the meet referee's decision. The committee agreed that this was in violation of NFHS rules and WIAA protocol.

C. Wheelchair Athletes

The committee reviewed the current guidelines for wheelchair athletes and data that had been collected from last season. Brad Meixner relayed to the committee that his athlete had a wonderful experience and found tremendous support from other schools. It was recommended that the current guidelines remain the same. Passed unanimously.

A review of the summer discussion relating to the inclusion of wheelchair athletes in the State Track & Field tournament series was undertaken. The summer committee had recommended the following:

1. Separate competition by gender.
2. One division for all competitors.
3. Competition in the 100, 400, 800, 1600 meter track events and the shot put.
4. Optional participation at regionals.
5. Required participation at sectionals with a legitimate mark recorded.
6. All athletes recording a legitimate sectional mark will advance to State in their respective event(s).
7. Awards to be determined by WIAA staff.

It was recommended to adopt the wheelchair athlete criteria listed above for the 2010 track season and beyond. Passed unanimously.

D. Pole Vault – Experimental Rule

Marcy reviewed the current pole vault experiment and shared with the committee the request from the NFHS to provide more objective data regarding the results of the experiment. NFHS also requested that Wisconsin experiment with the new NCAA rule, which would allow a two minute warm-up after an athlete had sat for one hour. Vince Komar expressed his belief that the current experimental rule is working well and that the NCAA rule would only confuse coaches and officials. The committee concurred and directed Marcy to notify the NFHS that Wisconsin would renew its current experiment, but decline the NCAA experimental rule.

E. Pole Vault Landing System

Marcy reported on an ongoing issue involving the requirement of additional padding surrounding the pole vault and high jump landing systems. With the increased minimum size of the pole vault pad, schools who have chosen to purchase a larger (collegiate) size pit have found it very difficult and sometimes impossible to fit the additional padding around the pit. Vince Komar reminded the committee how expensive it is to purchase the pads. Both Brad Meixner and Vince Lease remarked that they have seen many athletes, coaches, and officials trip and fall on the additional padding. The proposed rule change would read: "Additional padding is not required if the landing system is 21' 8" x 22' 2" or larger." The

exception would be any obstacles that might be encountered when exiting the pit; slotted drains, electrical boxes, sprinkler heads, and similar obstructions. The committee endorsed this proposal.

## II. TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES

### A. Tournament Regulations

The 2009 WIAA Spring Edition of Season Regulations, pages 52-63 were reviewed. Mike Chapes shared his thoughts regarding a newspaper article appearing in a Mequon newspaper highly critical of the State Meet schedule, primarily Saturday's schedule and that some teams arrived home late. Marcy agreed that she was surprised by the article and also the number of individuals who expressed a concern over the Saturday meet schedule. Vince Komar felt that there are meets throughout the season that result in teams getting home late. Chris Herriot's team ate a quick dinner on their way out of town and were home by midnight. Mike Chapes reminded the committee that a later starting time on Saturday was originally proposed to address the late ending time on Friday night.

### B. State Meet Series

1. It was recommended to allow the use of coed open pit at regional meet facilities having only one runway. Passed unanimously.
2. Reaffirmed the current split from the 800 m and 3200 relay in regionals and sectionals. Passed unanimously.
3. It was recommended that actual regional and sectional performances along with first place finishes be used when seeding field events. Running events are seeded only by actual performances. Passed unanimously.
4. It was recommended that the WIAA post all regional heat sheets on the WIAA website by 10 a.m. Saturday prior to the regional meet. Passed unanimously.
5. Chris Herriot presented a request to adjust the regional and sectional groupings in the Milwaukee area as the strength of the sprints in this area are so strong good athletes and relays are not even being entered because the competition is so strong. Marcy explained that the WIAA does not arrange tournament groups due to strength of the teams. An option that was discussed and supported at the WISTCA Summer Meeting was explained by Mike Chapes. It was recommended to advance from regionals to sectionals any athletes meeting the predetermined standard for their respective division. The standards are the three year average of the 8<sup>th</sup> place finish at the State Meet. Passed 5-0, 1 abstention.
6. It was recommended to advance 10 to the finals in the running and field events at the State Meet. Passed unanimously.
7. It was recommended to adopt NFHS rules 7-4-11 and 7-5-18 at the State Meet. Passed unanimously.

New language: Note: When only one competitor remains in the competition, the competitor may determine successive heights of the crossbar.

Current language: "When only one competitor is left, that individual may choose his/her own increment provided it is a full inch (three inches in pole vault)."

8. The committee discussed a proposal from Curt Gruenewald, Beaver Dam, recommending that at regionals and sectionals the flights for the throwing events be arranged so that boys and girls are in opposite flights to facilitate coaching. Mike Chapes felt that the proposal would be difficult to

administer. The proposal also recommended a staggered starting time for shot and discus at regionals and sectionals. Carla Elliott thought this would have the potential to impact the running events in Division 3. The committee took no action on this proposal.

9. Vince Lease asked that the WIAA consider allowing athletes to warm-up in Mitchell Hall. Marcy felt this was possible provided adequate supervision could be arranged.
10. Mike Chapes asked for a report on the status of the UW-La Crosse scoreboard. Marcy shared with the committee that a new scoreboard was a priority of UW-La Crosse. Vince Lease recommended that if a new scoreboard is not in place for the State Meet, a running clock on the old scoreboard should be used. Marcy agreed that this would occur.

C. State Meet Time Schedule

The committee reviewed the 2010 State Meet schedule provided. The 2010 schedule reverts back to the 10:30 a.m. start time on Saturday. It was recommended to approve the 2010 State Meet schedule. Passed unanimously.

D. UW-La Crosse Updates

Marcy updated the committee on some of the cosmetic finishes on the stadium. She and Larry Terry will be working towards solutions regarding seating issues on the backstretch, congestion in the jumps area, high jump seating, and the status of the hammer/discus cage. Marcy also reiterated that only the pole vault coaches would have seating in the infield, other field event coaches would be seated outside of the track.

III. TRACK & FIELD RULES

A. National Federation Major Rules Revisions

The National Federation Track and Field/Cross Country Major Rules Revisions for the 2010 season were reviewed. Vince Komar commented on the rule change allowing a “manufactured pole vault bungee cord.” How would this be enforced?

IV. MISCELLANEOUS

A. State Track & Field Ticket Price

Marcy shared the WIAA's loss in track was substantial. She anticipates an increase in the cost of the State Track & Field tickets.

B. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2 p.m.