

Head Finish Judge

A. Begin-of-meet Preparation:

1. Procure needed supplies from Meet Director.
 - a. Official Events Calling Order.
 - b. Lane Assignments.
 - c. Finish Recording Forms (slips or cards).
 - d. Finish Line String/Pens & Pencils/Clipboards.
 - e. Stopwatch Timer/Whistle or Signal-Flag.
 - f. Award Ribbons (IF distributed at Finish Line).
 - g. Meet-Worker School-Assignments (Finish Judges and Timers).

B. Assign and Instruct the other Finish Judges.

1. Head Judge needs to assign judges to each "finish place" that will be scored, PLUS the next finish- place (in case a higher place is disqualified) Assign a first and send place timer.
 - The extra finish judge can operate backup Stopwatch Timer (in case 1st Place TIMER misses the time).NOTE: AT SPL LEAGUE FINALS MEET, ASSIGN A BACKUP CLOCK FOR THE FIRST PLACE FINISHER IN ALL RACES.
2. When sufficient volunteers (and work-space) are available, assign 2 judges for each finish place; one would stay at finish line and second would go onto the track to identify runner judged by both as earning their specific "finish place".
3. Appoint most-experienced judges to 3rd, 4th, 5th places, as these places are more difficult to judge.
4. Appoint TIMER for 1st and 2nd place; validate person's experience and capability. "Timing" is done for FIRST place always; and, for subsequent places in some multiple-heats events, where best-times are used to determine qualifiers or finish places.
 - Each Finish Judge should have a Stopwatch Timer, for their use, when instructed by Head Judge.
5. NOTE: AT SPL DIVISIONAL FINALS AND LEAGUE FINALS, RECORD First and Second place times for final races.
6. Place judges at finish line in a way to gain an unobstructed view of finishing runners (may be placed on either side of the track). Use a finish line stand if available.
7. The Head Judge should instruct the volunteers at the scoring table that they are not to consider the times reported by the Finish Line Judge as a reason to alter the order in which the runners were escorted to the table. The finishing order of the runners was determined by visual observation at the line by the finish line judges, and the times reported by the judges are not reliable enough evidence to overturn the placement as determined at the finish line.
8. Meet management and the Head Finish Line Judge should physically create, on both sides of the finish line, an area that is segregated from athletes, coaches and parents that is solely for the Head Finish Line Judge, Finish Line Judges, and Timers.
9. Keep the start/finish line clear of athletes, coaches, & spectators. Keep the area quiet for starts.
10. Use red and white flags to indicate to Head Starter if race is ready to be started.
11. Indicate or signal the laps to go for races 800m & above.

C. Correct operation of Stopwatch Timer:

1. Use index finger (NOT thumb) to engage timer button.
2. BEFORE each race, check watch to ensure it is ready.
3. Start watch UPON SIGHTING FLASH (or SMOKE) of the GUN; sound of the gun will come slightly later.
4. After false-starts, be sure to reset stopwatch timing device to zero.

D. Procedure and Rules:

1. Before each race, announce to the judges...
 - a. Identify WHICH running event is ready to begin.
 - b. Announce whether event is a "prelim" or a "final".
 - c. Announce HOW MANY finishers will be judged.
2. Signal the Starter when head field judge, finish judges, and timers are ready.
3. Announce to judges when Starter ready ("gun is up"...)
4. As end of race approaches, loudly remind coaches and fans near the finish line to "STAY AWAY FROM FINISH LINE and OFF THE TRACK".
5. As race ends, loudly remind finishing runners to "STAY IN YOUR LANE", so judges can correctly identify finish places.
6. A runner reaches finish line ONLY WHEN any part of the body torso reaches the finish line.
- Head, hands, or feet alone do not qualify as a finish.
7. Judges go onto track after each race to identify the runners judged by them, as earning specific "places".

E. Responsibilities of HEAD JUDGE at Finish Line.

1. Head Judge shall view the finish "as a whole". When place-winner is overlooked by all judges, and they are unable to determine total order of finish, Head Judge should judge a contestant in position that he/she observed.
 - a. Head Judge should make finish-decision, **only** when the event cannot be determined by other judges.
 - b. Assist in judging "very close" finishing places; be in-position to offer consultation to other judges.
2. With emerging use of voice-recorders by Head Judge, to record his/her impression of finishers (ie., "red, blue, white, red, white", etc),...Head Judge should speak quietly into recorder. Recorded information is used when there are disputes or missed calls.
3. Head Judge at should be well-experienced in "Finish Line" judging. Knowledge of "Starter" and "Assistant Starter" duties and procedures is also necessary, since effective communications between the "starting" and "finish line" officials will achieve efficient track meets. Head Judge must be thoroughly familiar with "Official Events Calling Order" procedures.

Revision History

| Date | Change |
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| 2015-04-14 | Added B.8 to segregate Finish line area for judges. Also B.9 – B.11 Modified B.1 and B.4 for 2 nd timer. |