

March 18, 2011

Dear Track and Field Coaches and Officials,

With the weather we have had the last couple of days we should have been outside having meets, not inside. We can only hope that the weather will hold and we will have a good spring as competition moves outside the last week of March.

As far as track and field rules are concerned, there are very few changes for this spring.

One of the most significant changes is to Rule 4-3-3 - **Jewelry shall not be worn by competitors.** There are two changes to the rule. A new item d. has been added. "Unadorned devices, such as bobby pins, barretts and hair clips, no longer than 2 inches, may be worn to control a competitors hair." This change does not allow for beads to be worn in the hair but does include the most common and practical hair control devices. The second change deals with medical alert bracelets. If the bracelet is made of a pliable material, the bracelet does not need to be taped to the body. The **major** change to Rule 4-3-3 involves the change to the **PENALTY**. For the first violation of the jewelry rule, the competitor shall be required to remove the jewelry before further competition, the team shall receive a warning and a subsequent violation by any team member shall result in disqualification from the event. The referee shall be notified of the violation by the observing meet official and he/she shall then notify the head coach of the offending school of the violation and the team warning. **NOTE: The ultimate responsibility to have each competitor compliant with uniform and jewelry rules is with the coach.** The rule has not changed, only the consequence. This is not complicated and will not be as difficult to administer as some want to make it. Very simple, each team gets one jewelry warning and then we are back to the old penalty. **Remember, the warning is only for jewelry, not for an illegal uniform.**

There are a couple of other minor rule changes that did nothing more than to bring common sense into the rules. One we will mention is 7-2-12, dealing with the high jump. "If improperly fastened supports slid downward when a jumper hits the crossbar, the head judge of the event shall rule no jump, and allow the jumper another trial." Previously this was ruled as a failed attempt, which really made no sense at all. The practical application of this rule and all of our rules should be that no student-athlete should be penalized for the failure of meet equipment.

We do want to mention something to our starters. Other levels of track and field have a card procedure that is used by starters regarding false starts and warnings to starters. There is no provision for the use of cards in the National Federation Track and Field and Cross Country Rules Book. Accordingly, you should not be using cards in a high school event.

Information for Coaches - Two rule books were mailed to your school in January. If you have not seen those books, you need to check with your athletic administrator. We have had several inquiries about rule books and want you to know they have been sent to member schools.

We now have a new vendor for Iowa QuikStats. The new vendor is ASPI Solutions, in Ames. Many of you are familiar with Tom and Rob Lynch because of their involvement with online entries for our district/regional meets. The system will be better and easier. As was developed by ASPI last year, performances from many meets will be posted automatically. We believe the system will be available by the middle of next week. You will use the same QuikStats password as you have in the past. We will send an email to your athletic administrator and directly to the track and field coach (boys and girls) if we have those emails in our database. We have asked your athletic administrators to update the coaches' emails.

A list of the district/regional sites is on our websites. We will make the district/regional assignments and post

those sometime the first full week of April.

The big change for this spring is the state meet qualifying for both boys and girls. Here is how it will work. We will create a preliminary qualifying list using the top 4 place winners in Class 4A, the top 3 place winners in Class 3A and 2A and the top 2 place winners in Class 1A. We will then look at that list and the 12th place performance will become the standard for other qualifiers. Any district/regional place winner whose performance is better than or equal to the 12th place performance on the preliminary list will come onto the list and others will be eliminated. District/regional champions are automatic qualifiers and will not be removed from the list, regardless of performance. Ties will be broken using the place of the tied competitors. Tied place winners will be considered to have the place at which the tie occurred. (For example, John and David tied for 4th and 5th place. We are both considered 4th place finishers.) If the tie still remains, the school name, as printed in the IHSAA Directory, will be used as the tie breaker. The first school name alphabetically will be the qualifiers. There will be no more than 24 qualifiers in any event. We are certainly open to your questions and concerns as we get closer to district/regional time.

Information for Officials - We will be sending information out the first full week of April for availability to work at the state track and field meet. This is not just for referee, starter or clerk positions. This is for officials for all events at the state meet. If you have not been on our worker list in the past, but are interested in working at the state meet, please send an email with your complete mailing address to David Anderson (danderson@iahsaa.org). We will add you to our state meet worker list. Also, if you know of anyone else interested in working the state meet who has not worked for us before, please have them contact us as well.

The National Federation has formed a partnership with Arbiter Sports and created a Central Hub for officials in all sports. You can access the central hub at the following website:

<http://nfhs.arbitersports.com/front/105401/Site>

Once you are in the site, click on the Track and Field icon and you can access information about interpretations, rule changes, etc. You can also access an electronic copy of the Rules Book, Case Book and Officials' Manual. You will need an Arbiter username and password after you click on the Publications tab to access the different books.

We will be providing additional information as we move into the outdoor season and we start to get questions sent to our offices. We welcome any questions or concerns you may have. We hope your season goes well.

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