

Alan Bell

IAAF International Starters' Panel

The Development of Starter Competencies



The Agenda

- **Lessons from Berlin**
- **Technical rule application**
- **Developing good practice for starters**
- **The start referee**
- **The start co-ordinator**
- **Considering a model for Italy**



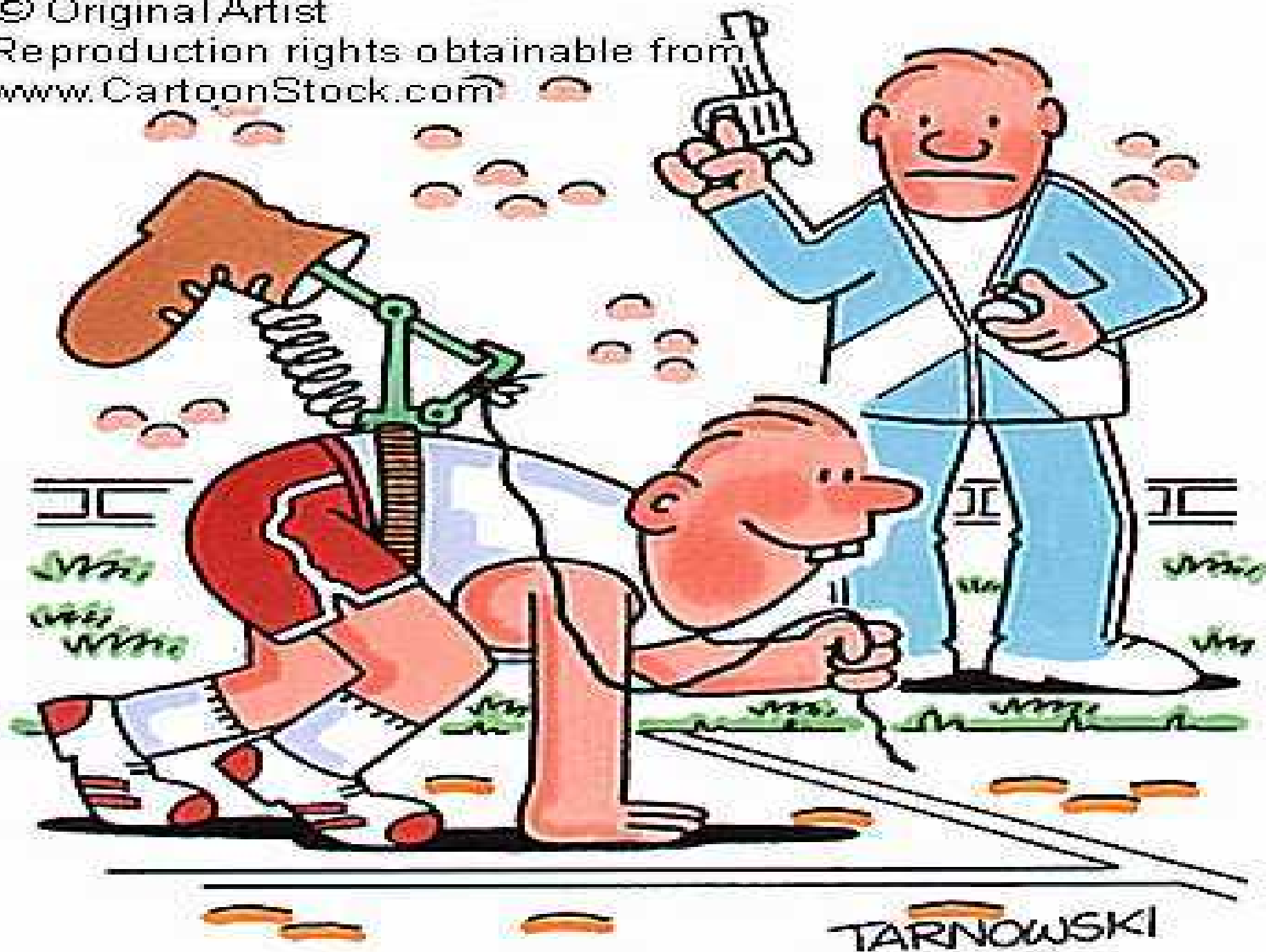
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The Development of Starter Competencies



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The Berlin Experience

Technical Organisation and Delivery



Start with the obvious

- **No two nations have the same procedures or protocols for managing the starts**
- **European nations are generally more consistent in how they operate**
- **At world championship events the athletes are often bemused and surprised by a 'new culture' of working'**

- **Some athletes (and some officials) are not comfortable or experienced with technology**
- **The significant collaboration with television does require compromise and adjustment**
- **Multi lingual fields create additional problems**
- **Have home based officials the experience and credentials to operate at this level?**

... from Amsterdam in 1928 ...




What was good about Berlin?

- **Very good team of German officials**
- **Excellent facilities**
- **Superb technology back up from Seiko**
- **Significant time for planning and team development before the first day**
- **A good test event**
- **No 'in team' language problems**



How did the team operate?


- **Duty rota drawn up and agreed with IAAF Technical Delegate one month before competition.**
 - **German rota of one team for ‘male events’ one for ‘female’**
 - **Some starters only start races of 400m and above**
 - **Strategy to include a young (29 years) starter.**
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- A decorative graphic at the bottom of the slide consists of a large red rectangle on the left and a series of overlapping blue and red triangles on the right, creating a dynamic, abstract design.

- starters rotate from being recallers to assistants
- starter's assistant check numbers, lane positions, fingers and feet
- signal systems vary so much across the world (why signal if all is well?)
- start co-ordinator manages whole process – never starts a race but always acts as an extra recaller (is this a 'waste of expertise?')
- he uses a whistle as the control tool
- a dedicated start referee was ALWAYS at the start.

What did we learn?

- **Athletes are more disciplined than in past years – number of false starts has reduced**
- **Over reliance on the technology is an easy habit to adopt**
- **The starter must always maintain personal control of the race and the decision making process**
- **Starter adaptability is crucial – apply common sense**
- **Assistant role in checking feet is crucial**
- **Warning cards must be shown consistently**

What of the future?-The rule change

- **Starters must maintain integrity**
 - **Starters must not rely on the technology but use it to
confirm decisions**
 - **Starter's assistants must be consistent and rigorous in
checking foot contacts in blocks**
 - **Start teams must apply common sense to start situations**
- 
- A decorative graphic at the bottom of the slide consisting of overlapping red and blue triangles and a white triangle, creating a dynamic, abstract shape.

Integrity and Consistency

- Starter's decision will still rely on visual judgements
- At all major events FSE will be in place
- Starters must see the result of the FSE judgement
- Use the technology as support information



- **The Position of the FSE control is important**
- **Key decisions must be made by the starter**
- **Technician only provide the information**
- **The information must be close at hand**
- **Technical Directors need to know the needs of the start team**
- **Time between referral and decision is crucial for everyone**



Integrity and Consistency

- **Positioning of recaller must give comprehensive coverage**
- **Recallers 'stop' a race but do not make the decision – that is left to the starter, after consultation**



Examples from Berlin

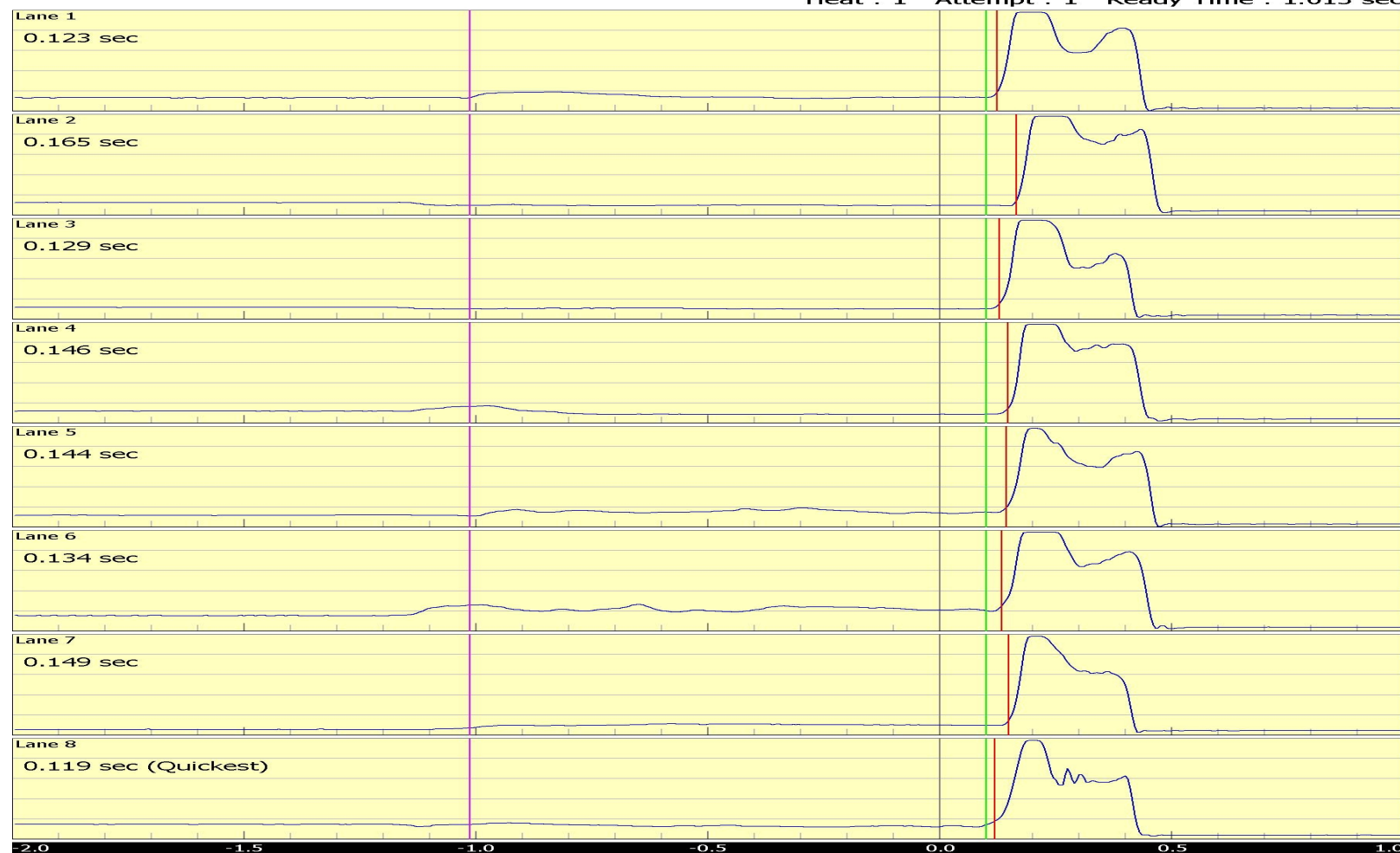
What happened?



World Champs Berlin 2009
Race : 100m men final

16 Aug 21:45

Heat : 1 Attempt : 1 Ready Time : 1.013 sec



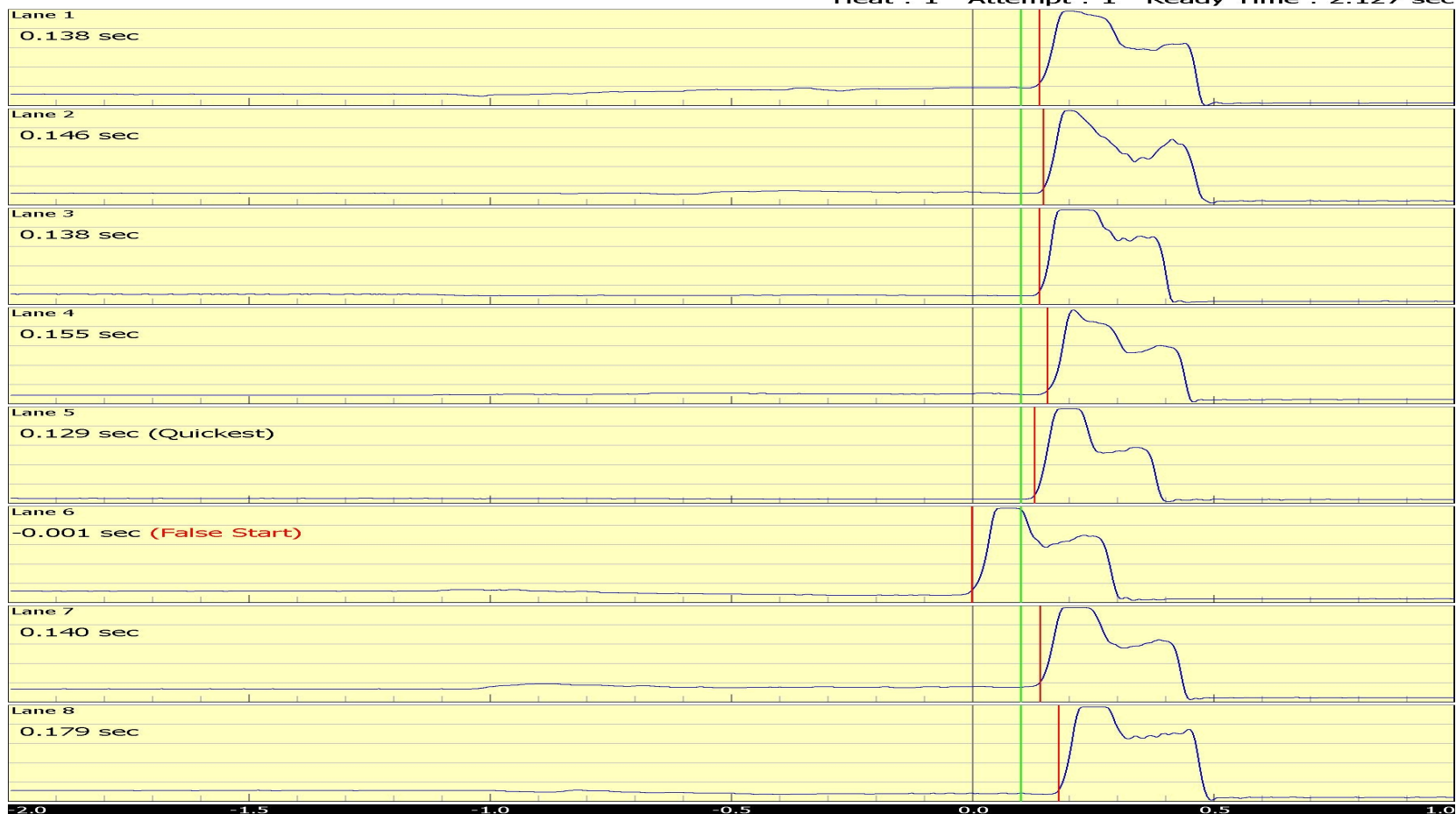
SEIKO



World Champs Berlin 2009
Race : 100m Men Semi Final

16 Aug 19:11

Heat : 1 Attempt : 1 Ready Time : 2.127 sec



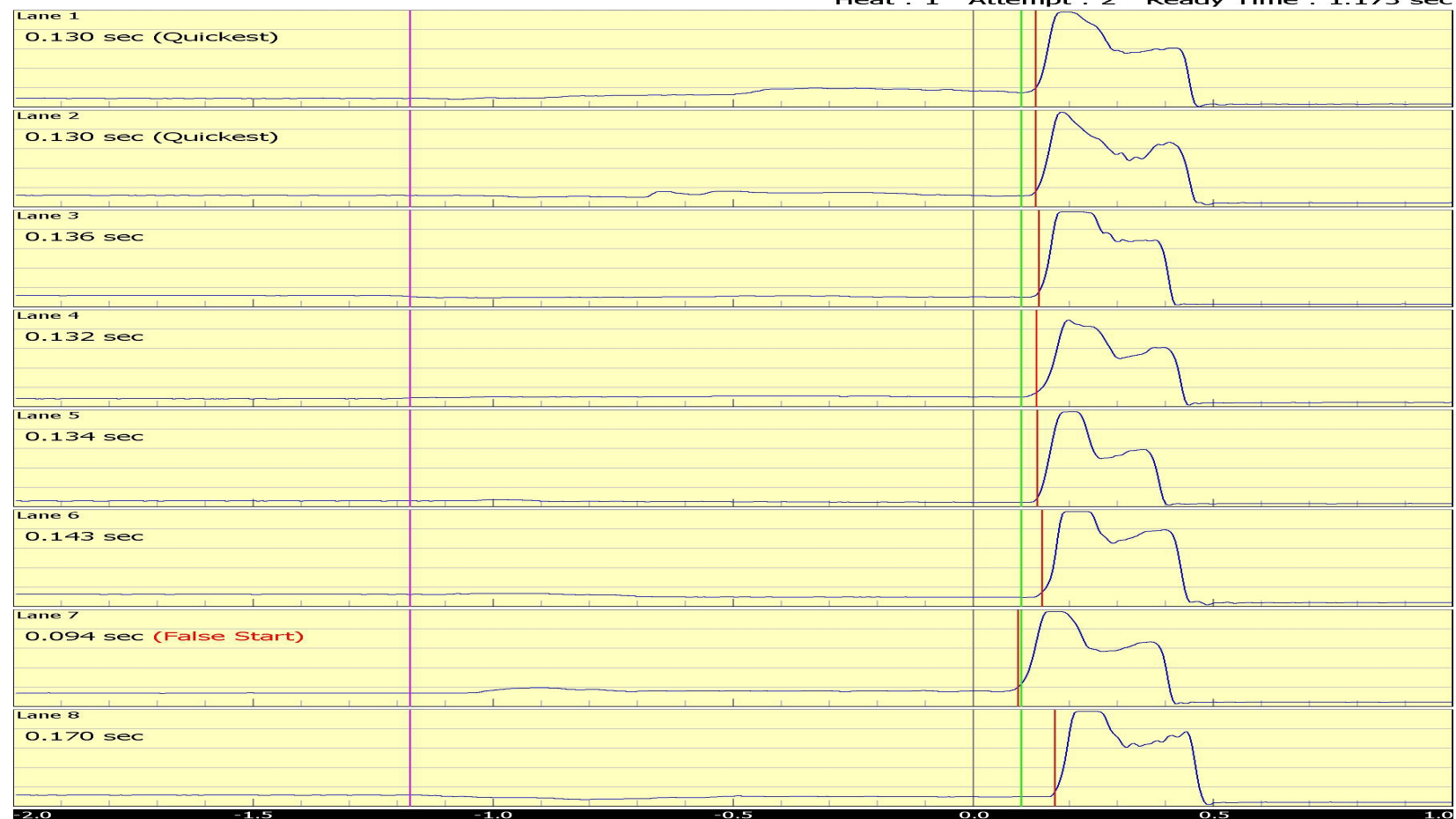
SEIKO



World Champs Berlin 2009
Race : 100m Men Semi Final

16 Aug 19:13

Heat : 1 Attempt : 2 Ready Time : 1.173 sec



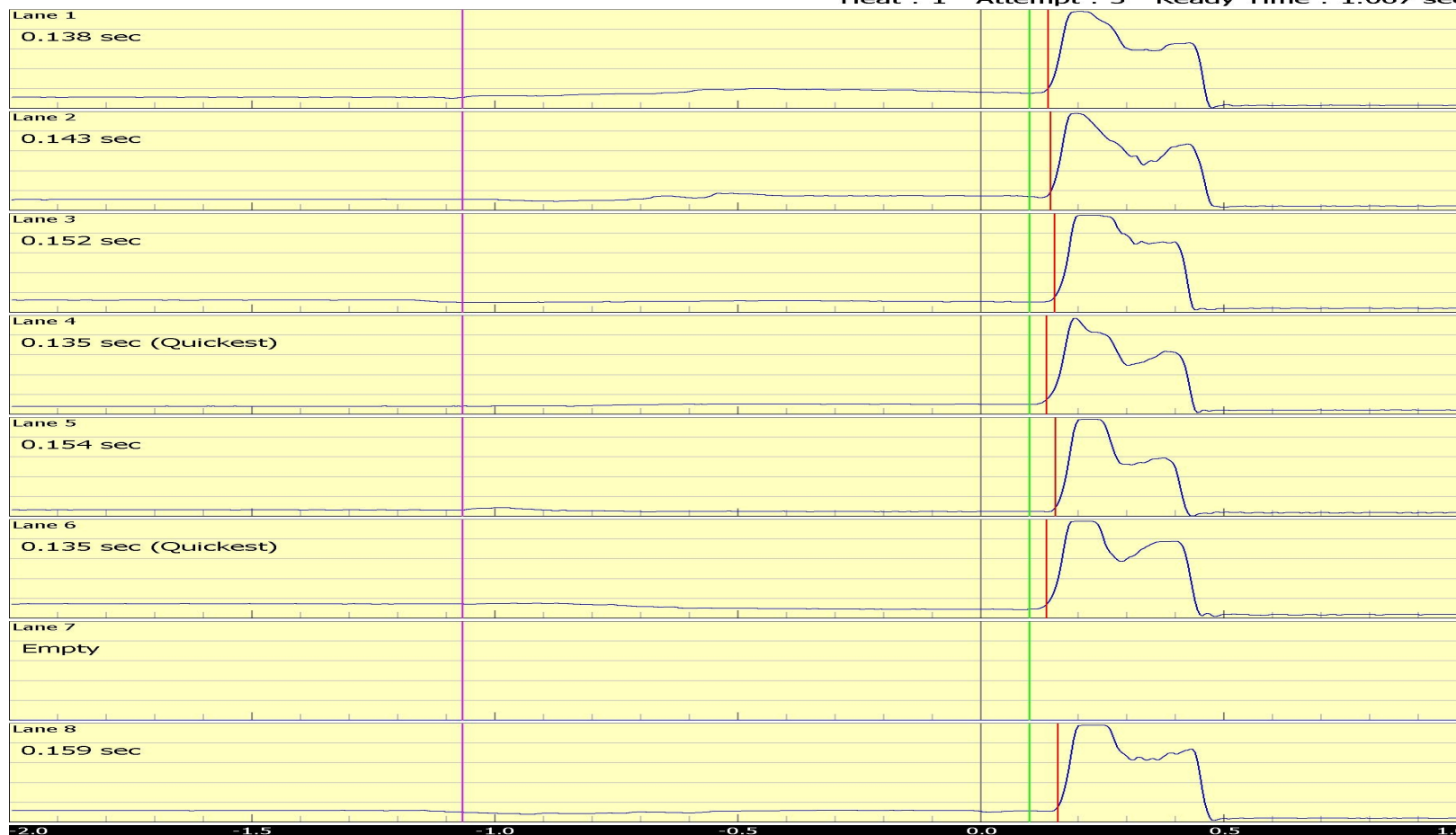
SEIKO



World Champs Berlin 2009
Race : 100m Men Semi Final

16 Aug 19:15

Heat : 1 Attempt : 3 Ready Time : 1.067 sec



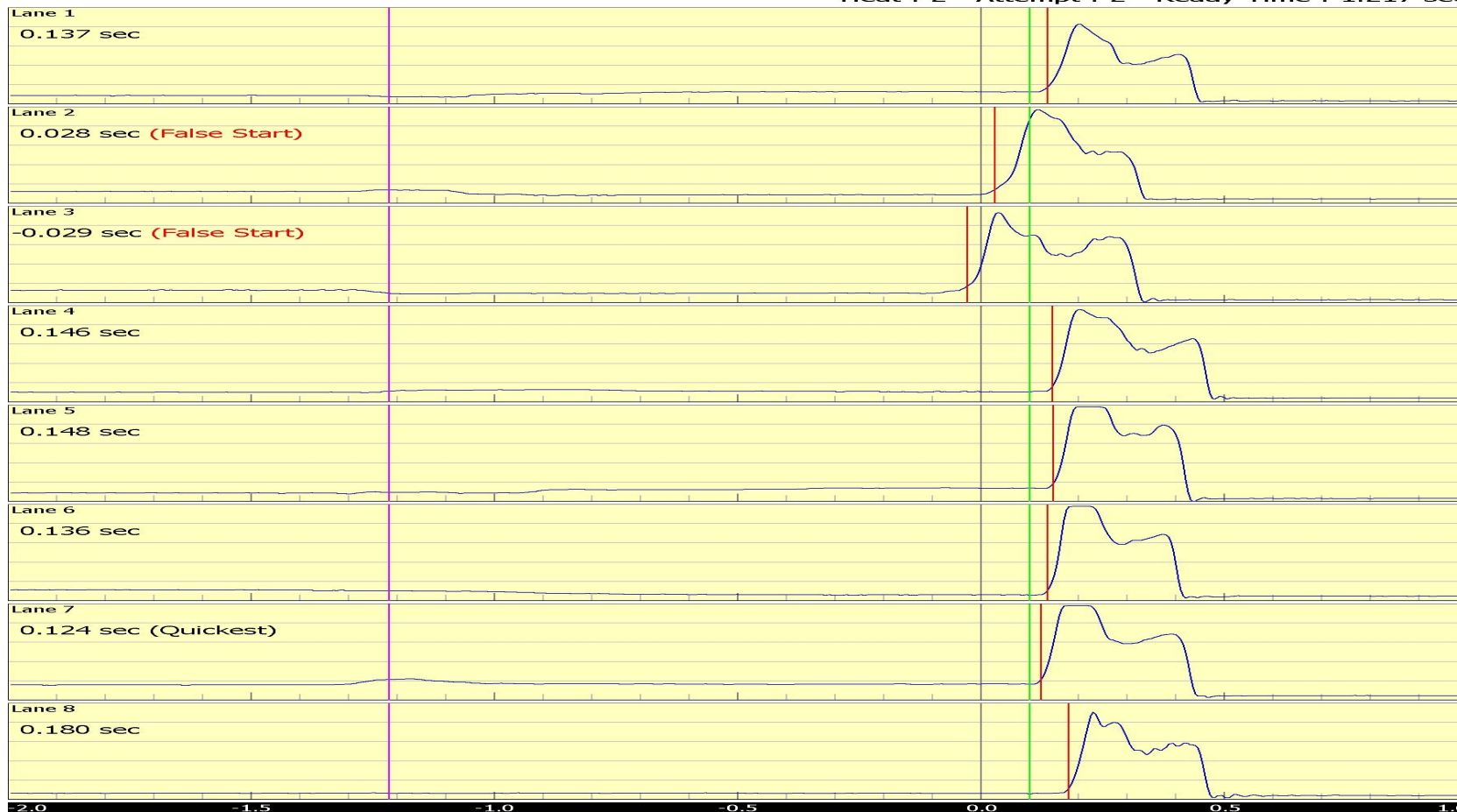
SEIKO



World Champs Berlin 2009
Race : 100m Men Rd 2

15 Aug 18:59

Heat : 2 Attempt : 2 Ready Time : 1.217 sec



SEIKO



The Start Co-ordinator

How should he/she work?



The role

- **Manages all aspects of the start process**
- **Controls all aspects of the start process**
- **Draws up the duty lists**
- **Links all aspects of the start process**
- **Works with all connecting parties (photo finish, TV)**
- **Keeps the meeting to time**



Two ways of operating

- **Manages the start operation for a supervisory role. Makes no technical input or decisions**
- **Is the lead starter. Works as a member of the team fulfilling all the roles required. Delegates duties at certain times**

Discuss the merits



The Start Referee

**An increasingly important role
Why?**



- **The potential for more protests at starts**
- **The authority to intervene if decisions are not correct**
- **Must be able to ‘understand the use and operation of technology**
- **Needs to know what is a ‘good start’**
- **Must be at the start**
- **Needs technical and practical knowledge when FSE is not in use**



Three ways of operating

- 1. Start referee is one of the duties allocated to the track team of referees/umpires. They rotate between starts and do not relate to start team during meeting**
- 2. Start referee is a track official allocated to that duty throughout the meeting. They remain with the start team throughout**
- 3. The start referee is an experienced starter. They are part of the start team throughout**

Discuss the merits?



- **Ensure fairness**
- **Evaluate protests**
- **Issue conduct warnings (with the starter's collaboration?)**
- **Concentrate and record all events**
- **Remain Anonymous**



Seiko False Start Detector

Meeting Title
Event and round
Attempt no.

XX=false start
by lane 2

Lane order	Lane no.	Sec
1	XX2	0.064
2	4	0.112
3	5	0.131
4	6	0.136
5	7	0.142
6	3	0.145
7	8	0.162
8	1	0.176

Omega Start Control

Date
 Time
 Event
 Round
 Race no.
 (in the meeting)

Lane	1	0.175
Lane	2	0.149
Lane	3	0.145
Lane	4	0.112
Lane	5	0.115
Lane	6	0.151
Lane	7	0.178
Lane	XX8	0.012

XX False start by 8