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RULE OF THE MONTH

Elbows, Shoves and Spikes

There are races in the Athletics program which are traditionally told in the sporting epic as "battles"; challenges that involve "physical contact" between competitors, which is normally outside the Rules and Regulations of athletics.

The 800m, the 1500m, the Mile are events in which physical contact, spike jabs, slight pushes to find space or avoid a fall are part of the game at all levels including international and, often, much more in indoor events. And there are athletes who manage to exalt themselves and make the competitive charge deriving from these situations one of their strengths, especially in tactical or not particularly fast races.

Jostling or obstruction can be unintentional, due to loss of balance or touches received or simply because the damaged athlete is behind the person causing the incident and he is not in the visual arc. But it can also happen that there is a will to obstruct or to prevent overtaking or to gain a position.

The TR17 foresees different consequences based on the intention of the involved athlete. If the jostling or obstruction is considered unintentional or is caused otherwise than by an athlete, the Referee may, if they are of the opinion that an athlete (or their team) was seriously affected, order that the race (for one, some or all of the athletes) be re-held or allow the affected athlete (or team)

In the Rules we use the word "**Jostling**".



Photo: Getty Images

What is meant by jostling? How to behave in the evaluation of these incidents? When to consider these events worthy of sanction and when to accept that they are part of the game? And who is responsible for the evaluation?

Let's start with the first and last of these questions. The interpretation that we find in green at Technical Rule (TR) 17 tells us that: *Jostling should be understood as physical contact on one or more occasions with another athlete or athletes that results in an **unfair advantage** or causes injury or harm to them or, consequently, to another athlete or athletes.*

to compete in a subsequent round of the event.

In case an athlete is found by the Referee to be responsible for the jostling or obstruction, such athlete (or their team) shall be liable to disqualification from that event. Also in this case, the Referee may, if they are of the opinion that an athlete (or their team) was seriously affected, order that the race (for one, some or all of the athletes) be re-held excluding any disqualified athlete (or team) or allow any affected athlete (or team) to compete in a subsequent round of the event.

As you can see, whether an incident is intentional or not affects the appearance or otherwise of the athlete causing the jostling in the final ranking, with all the resulting consequences. The (purely) theoretical possibility that the referee orders the event to be **re-held** finds little support, considering that it affects the acquired rights of all other participants and using it to please one athlete leaves all the others dissatisfied. It remains a valid option if the majority of athletes are involved. Instead, it often happens that the Track or the Video Referee (when not the Jury of Appeal) **reintegrates** an athlete allowing him to participate in the next round of the event when the Referee believes that, without the damage, the athlete would have had (at least theoretically) a chance to qualify.



In both cases TR 17.2.1 and 17.2.2, such athlete (or team) should normally have completed the event with **bona fide effort**. The jostling/obstructing must be considered serious in order not to allow the injured athlete to continue their race to the end.

We can say that this is one of the most popular requests among Team Leaders when they show up in the video room to view a video.

Video does it better

Let's move on to the last question to state that, where present, the **Video Referee (VR)** is now the only person capable of evaluating these behaviours effectively. The Rules say that *"The Video Referee will generally be able to act proactively in respect of the Running or Race-Walking Events (e.g. the start, running inside the lane line around the curve, jostling and obstruction, breaking from lanes too early, relay changeovers)"*.

It is, therefore, for the VR to proactively evaluate situations and make decisions. It remains obvious that, in the absence of a video recording system, the judgment remains anchored to what was seen by the umpires or Track Referee at ground level.

And now the key question: how to evaluate a possible jostling situation and the decisions to be taken?

The video referee must work with extreme care in these cases, to understand the real dynamics of an incident, causes and possible responsibilities with an enormous dose of common sense. Contacts are part of the game in such events and almost all of them, however big they may seem in slow-motion, are absolutely irrelevant to the competition and the conduct of the athletes. And even when incidents result in falls or interruptions of the race by one or more athletes, it is not certain that there are situations that lead the referee to make decisions. Some examples could be mutual pushes or consequences of involuntary behaviour, such as hitting an opponent's shoe or leg or an obstacle in steeplechases or a group fall due to the extreme density of athletes in a few metres.

These and other unintentional situations can also lead to an athlete being pushed or forced by another person or object to step or run outside their lane or on or inside the kerb or line marking the applicable border (without gaining material advantage) without this leading to consequences or disqualification.

How can we therefore understand what are the **conducts** to be sanctioned? The reconstruction of events is crucial in these situations and video recording provides

many more elements than simple visual observation. It is necessary to understand why the action starts and who starts it, if it's a need to gain a position, or an attempt to pass in an opening where it is clear there is no space, or an exit from a boxed position, or prevent an athlete from overtaking.



Photo: Getty Images

There are no precise rules to rely on, but it can be useful to read the running trajectory of an athlete (in the case of sudden changes), the posture of his body (spreading the arms without other motivation, sudden and unjustified slowdowns), reading any glances or head movements to understand subsequent intentions. These are tools that can help in reading and evaluating a behaviour, but every piece of evidence could be helpful. Obviously, the reactions of the other competitors must also be evaluated, which at times can be excessive or blatant, aimed more at highlighting than revealing an actual damage (remember that the damage must be effective and prevent an athlete from continuing or affecting their final position).

It is not an easy task. The best rule in evaluating these situations is **common sense**, as well as a certain detachment from the competition itself. The approach must be that of those who do not seek to find a culprit or necessarily seek a will to harm. The good referee affects the event as little as possible and takes decisions only on absolute evidence and without fear of denial, trying to safeguard the fairness of the competition, the rights of (all) athletes, avoiding creating an unnecessary dispute in the Jury of Appeal, with possible controversial aftermath that do not help the understanding of our sport.

By Luca Verrascina

Sponsors support “Your Sport For Life”!

Athletics events are not possible without sponsors. Sponsor- and partnership generate the needed funding to organise events, to facilitate athletes and coaches to train and compete, and to support World Athletics, European Athletics and the Member Federations. Our events are a very good opportunity for (potential) sponsors and partners to showcase their products and services.

Marketing and advertising displays of a promotional nature is permitted in all international competitions provided such advertising and displays comply with specific rules and regulations. In this short article we try to make an overview of what is or what is not allowed.

The main general rules and regulations can be summarized as follows:

- ◆ Marketing and advertising displays should never be tasteless, distracting, offensives, disreputable, defamatory or unsuitable.
- ◆ Marketing of alcohol products should comply with all applicable laws and is permitted if the alcohol content is less than 20%.
- ◆ Any advertisement with respect to tobacco or related products, like e-cigarettes is prohibited.
- ◆ Both political and religious marketing are prohibited.
- ◆ Marketing of arms and weapons is prohibited.
- ◆ Marketing of food/nutritional supplements, energy drinks, pharmaceutical companies and/or products and betting/gambling are prohibited unless specifically approved via the governing body.
- ◆ Sports drinks/hydration tablets are permitted if approved prior the event via the governing body.
- ◆ In general, all displays should comply with applicable laws and safety regulations.

It is important to consider safety with the advertisement boards around the track, infield and around a road race course. An attempt should be made to keep the distance to the track (see Table 1). For road races the type of barriers (the “foot” of the barrier) can be of importance.

	Outdoor	Indoor	Non-Stadium
Perimeter Board			
Height	Around 1.2m 100m: 2.5m (elevated 0.5m)	Around 1m “crash pad”: 1.5m	1.2m
Distance to Track	0.3m	0.3m	
In-field board			
Height	0.5m (elevated 0.1m)	0.4m (elevated 0.1m)	
Distance to track	0.5m	0.5m	
Lenght	120m / 3m	30m / 3m	

Table 1: Overview dimensions advertisements boards

Of course, there are also specific regulations with respect to the awards podium, awards, backdrops for the mixed zone, scoreboards, giant screens, finish line tape, space blankets given to athletes, gantries, cam carpets for television, any vehicle used, electronic equipment and specific product placements.



Photo: Handy Heading - Berlin 2018 European Athletics Championships

Photo: Handy Heading - Berlin 2018 European Athletics Championships



Advertisement is allowed on all infield equipment and implements but certain rules apply with respect to maximum height and number and type of displays allowed (see Table 2).

Table 2: Overview of displays allowed on infield equipment and implements.

	Maximum height	# of displays provider or manufacturer	In addition
General	A maximum of two "World Athletics Certified Product" Logos may be displayed on Competition equipment, throwing implements (i.e. shots, discus, javelins and hammers) and relay batons		
Shots, Discus, Javelins, Vaulting Poles, Hammers, Crossbars, Uprights, Lap Bells, Starting Blocks and Lane Boxes	4 cm	Twice	Logo of one Event Sponsor and the Event Logo may be displayed on crossbars, uprights, lap bells and starting blocks (maximum height 4cm)
Relay batons	4 cm	Twice	Event Logo may be displayed
Landing beds	30 cm	Four (only on the sides)	Additional one Event Sponsor may be displayed on the sites. The Event Logo may be displayed on the top of the landing beds and on each side of the landing beds. (any size)
Take-off boards		Adjacent to the board Event sponsor or provider or manufacturer	
Hurdles and Steeplechase Barriers	5 cm (hurdles) 10 cm (steeple)	Three of the following may be displayed across the length on both sides of the hurdles and barriers: 1. Logo of the Provider or manufacturer 2. Logo of an Event Sponsor 3. Name of the host city 4. Name of the stadium 5. Event Logo	
Umbrellas/Protective Canopies	Umbrellas/protective canopies on the Field of Play may display the Event Logo and: - for stadium Events: the Logo of one Commercial Affiliate; - for non-stadium Events: the Logo of one or more Event Sponsor. The maximum size of each such display shall be 40cm ² . The protective canopies of the timing/measurement equipment on the Field of Play shall have a maximum height of 1.7m and a maximum diameter of 1.2m or for rectangular canopies each side of a maximum width of 1m and may only be used during the Competition if necessary. The Logo of one Event Sponsor that produces, services or sells such timing/measurement equipment may be displayed on the protective canopy. The maximum height of such display shall be 40cm.		
Refreshment, Drink and/or Sponging Stations	At Stadium Events: The maximum height of a drink station shall be 1.4m and the maximum diameter shall be 1m or, for rectangular drink stations, each side shall have a maximum width of 1m. The form or shape of the drink station may incorporate the design of the packaging of the drinks supplied by the Event Sponsor of the drinks (e.g. a bottle or can). The Logo of an Event Sponsor may be displayed around the edge of the stations or, for rectangular stations, on each side. The maximum height of each such display shall be 40cm. At Non-stadium Events The Logo of an Event Sponsor may be displayed on a skirting around the tables and on a canopy over the tables used for the stations. The maximum height of such display shall be 20cm and the total length shall be 10m.		



Photo: Handy Heading - Silesia 2019 European Athletics Team Championships Super League

Last but not least, we need to look at the regulations with respect to the athletes clothing and apparel.

Table 3 gives an overview of the athlete clothing and other apparel for international competitions. The WA regulations for clothing are slightly different for major World Athletics Series (WAS) events, than for international competitions. Recently World Athletics introduced a new opportunity to allow additional advertising on national kits to give the Member Federations additional income opportunities, i.e. to allow an additional sponsor to clothing manufacturer on the team kit. Member Federations need to upload their national kits on the World Athletics and/or European Athletics platform for approval.

COMPETITION KIT	
UPPER BODY - T-Shirt / Singlet / Vests / Tops	
1x Manufacturer Name/Logo	> 40cm ² , max height 5cm
2x Athlete Sponsor Name/Logo (front or back)	> 40cm ² , max height 5cm
LOWER BODY - Shorts / Tights / Leggings	
1x Manufacturer Name/Logo	> 40cm ² , max height 5cm
2x Athlete Sponsor Name/Logo (front or back)	> 40cm ² , max height 5cm
LEOTARD (one piece body suit)	
1x Manufacturer Name/Logo	> 40cm ² , max height 5cm
2x Athlete Sponsor Name/Logo (front or back)	> 40cm ² , max height 5cm
OTHER ATHLETE TEAM KIT	
UPPER BODY - Ceremony, track suits, sweatshirts & rain jackets	
1x Manufacturer Logo	> 40cm ² , max height 5cm
2x Athlete Sponsor Name/Logo	> 40cm ² , max height 5cm
LOWER BODY - Ceremony, track suits, sweatshirts & rain jackets	
1x Manufacturer Name/Logo	> 40cm ² , max height 5cm
2x Athlete Sponsor	> 40cm ² , max height 5cm
OTHER APPAREL	
SUCH AS SOCKS, HEADGEAR, HATS, HEADBANDS, EYEWEAR, GLOVES, SUNGLASSES, WRISTBANDS AND LONG FOREARM BANDS	
1x Manufacturer Name/Logo	> 6cm ² , max height 3cm

Table 3: Summary of athlete clothing and other apparel for international competitions (source: World Athletics) ➔



We all have an obligation to review and adhere to these specific advertisement rules and regulations. This starts with the organizing committee but also the Technical Delegate(s), Competition Director, Call Room Referee and Event Referees play an important role to check specific items. And of course, athletes and teams. At certain international events an advertising commissioner can be appointed. She or he will supervise and apply the current Marketing & Advertising Rules and Regulations and shall determine any unresolved advertising issues or matters arising in the Call Room in conjunction with the Call Room Referee.

Reference:

- ◆ Commercial team at World Athletics and European Athletics
- ◆ Competition Rules and the Marketing and Advertisement regulations at <https://www.worldathletics.org/about-iaaf/documents/book-of-rules>

By Niels van der Aar

Some questions to Cinzia Hardy-Molinari from the Commercial Team of World Athletics



How are the specific dimensions defined? e.g. the 40 cm² and 5 cm for the athlete sponsor on the athlete's competition vest? or the 30 cm maximum height of the manufacturing or provider logo on one of the sites of the landing area for high jump?

were acceptable to the Health & Science team. Accordingly, World Athletics has permitted Red Bull to be worn on kit for athletes and advertised meeting organisers (for example International Pole Vault competition in Uppsala, Sweden earlier this year) too.

When you are in the call room, what deviations do you often see?

Accessories of athletes are often the issue with non-conformity to advertising regulations and athletes/teams that don't have a clothing manufacturer.

Any other comment for our officials?

The advertising regulations were in force since 2014 and due to be updated! There was a demand by manufacturer on allowing a bigger size of the logo and to allow additional sponsorship opportunities for Member Federations and athletes to be displayed on the team or/ athlete kit.

The bib sponsor is a crucial partner to an event and athletes do need to wear the bib properly and not rip it off as it seems to lately the case for celebratory ending. Officials to ensure that the athletes keep bib on as per the technical regulations.

The changes in the current World Athletics Marketing and Advertising guidelines and therefore the dimensions, were defined following consultation with manufacturers, athletes, athlete representatives, meeting/race organisers, IAAF Marketing Committee at the time, and our marketing partner Dentsu. The guiding principle that we (World Athletics) wanted to where possible, increase sizes and most important include an opportunity for athletes and member federation to have an additional income opportunities by adding logo for a sponsor which are highlighted in the article.

A quick note of thanks and appreciation to the officials and their hard work and commitment to athletics!

During an EA webinar on the tasks of the Technical Delegates for one day events, we received the question if Red Bull was allowed as sponsor as energy drinks manufacturers are in principle not allowed unless...

Red Bull is an energy drink. WA does not allow energy drinks to be promoted unless it is approved by the WA CEO. This is because we need to assess each energy drink (and what it contains) on a case by case basis. WA assessed the components in Red Bull and found that they



Photo: Getty Image - Torun 2021 European Athletics Indoor Championships



OFFICIALS NEWS

EVENT OF THE MONTH: TD at Cross Country Event

Unlike what happens in official championships, where the Technical Delegate (TD) has a very active presence in the project and preparation of an international championship, at one day events the TD must intervene to be sure that the organization of the event complies with World Athletics/European Athletics technical rules without exceeding regulatory "red lines". This is due to the fact that TD travels the day before the competition and once arrived on site is not the time to come into conflict with the organizer trying to impose our criteria, which may be correct for us. This does not mean that the TD should allow situations against the rules (exceeding our red lines) but we can accept other ways of staging the competition (although this is not perfect from our point of view) as long as it keeps inside what is permissible and according to the regulations.

highly conditioned by the social and sporting environment of the event (participation of clubs and athletes, need to reward sponsors and local institutions, etc). Likewise, the TD can contribute and propose to the organizer a different vision based on his own experience in other competitions. The TD should never have a supervisory role of the competition project but should serve as advice and help so that the organizer can consider it for this event or future editions so that the event improves year after year based on the enrichment of an external vision and different from the one that the organizer himself may have. In summary, the TD must propose (not impose).

These will be some of the aspects in which the TD must be careful to be sure that the event is compliance with WA/EA regulations:



Photo: Getty Images- Dublin 2021 European Athletics Cross Country Championships

The TD must schedule his trip well in advance to have enough time to review certain technical aspects of the organization and to be able to hold a meeting with the organizer, at a time previously agreed between both, to gather the necessary information about the event. In this situation we must take the opportunity to assess how certain problems that the organizer may have are solved and what organizational innovations are proposed and that can be transferred to other competitions. In all events, however small they may be, we can learn about different ways of solving the different aspects of the competition by the organizer, considering that in that specific event it is

athletes. The circuit must be demanding, with elements that cause difficulties and require changes of rhythm, turns, muscle wasting (different from the concept of the track and road races) but this must not imply that the athletes are in danger of injuring themselves. We must also appreciate when the organizers use elements that make this circuit special and different from other courses (for example, the passage through the mills in Cinque Mulini makes it possible to cross very narrow spaces but those are one of the differential facts of this competition). Likewise, the start and finish zones must be reviewed, making sure that both lines are marked on the ground and both areas are suitably protected so that the judges can

Regulations: The TD must request the competition regulations enough time in advance to check and avoid that the regulations are not in line with the WA/EA regulations (both general and World Cross Country Tours).

Entries: The TD must receive the registrations for the competition (elite and U20 events) in advance. In this way TD will be able to detect if there is any problem with the participation of an athlete and/or the country they represent.

Course: The course will be designed and marked upon arrival. Last TD review must ensure that it does not present a risk of injury to the participating



carry out their duties without interference from the public.

Timing: It is important that the timing and results system works properly. It is necessary to have a brief meeting with those responsible for timing and results to understand how it will be managed; will it be manual (by the judges) or electronic (with a chip)? In case of electronic timing on the day of the competition it's necessary to check well in advance that results management is fully operational as well as that there is a system for annotation of the arrival and times by the judges that serves as an alternative in the event that the automatic system stops working for some reason (power cut, etc.).

Advertising: The TD must verify that the advertising in the competition and on the participating athletes complies with the advertising regulations of WA / EA.

Recruitment of elite athletes: The TD must receive the impressions of the organizer regarding how easy (or difficult) it was to meet the EA requirements of having elite athletes from different countries at the event. And, in case the organizer couldn't meet this point, what was the reason.

Medical Assistance: The TD must review the presence of medical service and ambulances that are capable of attending to any health contingency that occurs in the competition.



Photo: Getty Images - Dublin 2021 European Athletics Cross Country Championships

Presentation of the Event: A very important part is the setting and activation of the competition. Public address with specialized announcers is essential and the use of video screen is desirable to show results, especially if the competition is also broadcast on TV (or streamed) and the TV signal can be used so that the public can follow the competition through the video screen.

Anti-doping control: TD must check that the organization has prepared the control room and that it is in accordance with the WADA regulations. It should be checked that the documentation and sampling material are received and available. The TD is responsible for deciding who will undergo anti-doping control so will meet the Doping Control Officer to give indications of what positions will be subject to control in each race.



Vehicle access and parking: As these are events played on the field, it is important that the organization provides for the access and parking of vehicles coming to the event (including buses for participating teams).

Temporary constructions: For the same reason, the organization also needs to design temporary constructions (cabins for results management, timing, press area, stands, start and finish gantries, VIP area, etc). The TD must assess the suitability of these facilities according to the size of the competition.



Photo: Getty Images - Dublin 2021 European Athletics Cross Country Championships

Logistics: It will be necessary to assess the quality and suitability of the transport and accommodation used. For an event that takes place in a small city, it will be necessary to assess the balance between a lower category accommodation close to the course compared to another accommodation of a higher category further away from the place of the competition.

And finally, and not less important, although the TD must be objective in the content of his report, he must also give his personal impression of how the competition has been organized (taking into account the limitations available in different aspects of the organization) and what could be improved at the event in future editions (being the proposals for the organizer's own consideration on next editions of this event).



By Anacleto JIMÉNEZ
EA Cross Country Technical Delegate

TRIVIA QUIZ

Can you match the athletes to their current or former indoor European records and the events they achieved them in?

Abeba Aregawi		1:42.67
Sebastian Bayer		1:55.82
Kajsa Bergqvist	60m	2.08
Andrea Manuel Diaz	60m hurdles	2.42
Jolanda Ceplak		3:02.87
Dwaine Chambers	400m	3:23.37
Nataliya Dobrynska		3:33.32
Heike Drechsler	800m	3:57.91
Helena Fibingerova	1500m	5.01
Guschina, Kotlyarova, Zaytseva, Krasnomovets		6.16
Yelena Isinbayeva	3000m	6.42
Colin Jackson	4x400m	6.92
Susanna Kallur		7.30
Wilson Kipketer	heptathlon	7:32.41
Jamila Kratoschvilova		7.37
Renaud Lavillenie	decathlon	7.68
Tatyana Lebedeva	pentathlon	8:27.86
Irina Privalova		8.71
Sergio Sanchez	high jump	15.36
Thomas Schonlebe		17.92
Roman Sebrle	long jump	22.50
Lilya Shobukhova	triple jump	22.55
Teddy Tamgho		22.55
Carlo Thränhardt & Ivan Ukhov	pole vault	45.05
Ulf Timmermann		49.59
Zalewski, Omelko, Krawczuk, Krzewina	shot put	5013
		6438



TECHNOLOGY OF THE MONTH : The Start Information System

Competition and Technical Rules

The main aim for the start team is to make sure that all athletes have a fair start within the rules of the competition. The Start Information System supports the start team in making decisions.

In general, for races up to and including 400m (including 4x200m and 4x400m) starting blocks linked to a World Athletics certified Start Information System must be used for all major international competitions but are also strongly recommended for all other (international) competitions. For the ratification of World records and European records must have been used. The International Starter, when appointed, shall supervise the checking and operation of the Start Information System.

When a World Athletics certified Start Information System is in use, the Starter and/or an assigned Recaller shall wear headphones to clearly hear the acoustic signal emitted when the system indicates a possible false start (i.e when the reaction time is less than

0.100 second). The Starter shall immediately examine the reaction times and other available information from the System (like the wave form).

The Start Referee has jurisdiction to decide on any facts related to the starts if they do not agree with the decisions made by the start team except in the cases when it regards an apparent false start indicated by a World Athletics certified Start Information System, unless for any reason the Referee determines that the information provided by the System is obviously inaccurate.

Systems available

World Athletics determines the technical setting parameters for certification of SIS-equipment. New type of equipment is tested by an external, independent, institute. All complying systems are certified by World Athletics.

Currently there are two types of false start equipment on the market, based on:

- ◆ Evaluating acceleration changes (providers e.g. FinishLynx and Timetronics)
- ◆ Evaluating force/pressure changes (providers e.g. Seiko and Swiss Timing/Omega)



Photo: Matsport

Currently ATOS/MATSPORT is the service provider for European Athletics at its main events. Their false start equipment is based on FinishLynx, so based on the first type of technology, using an accelerometer. Table 1 below compares both technologies.

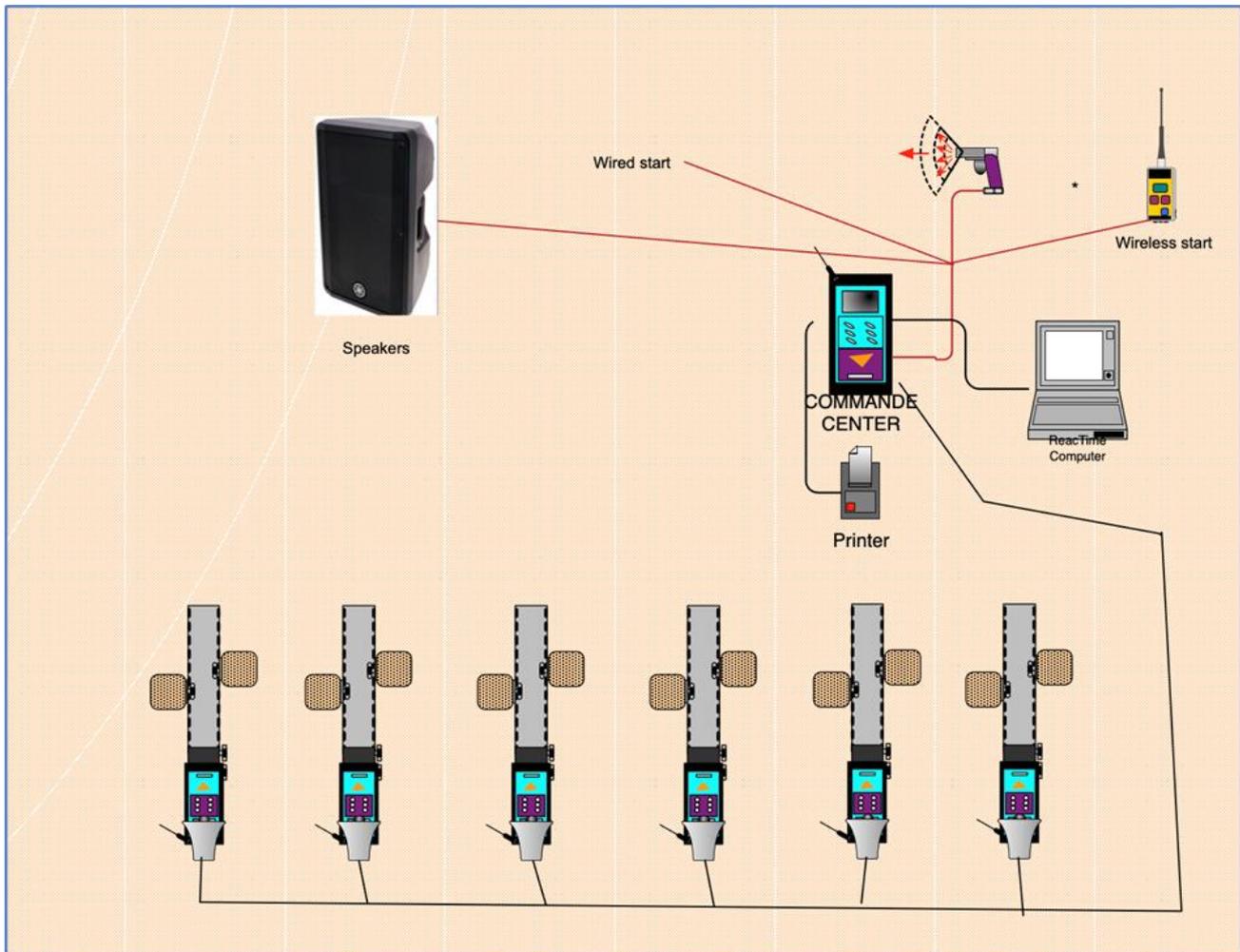


<u>Accelerometer</u>	<u>Force/pressure</u>
Flexible; Sensor can be placed on every starting block	Sensor built-in starting block
Based on movement; all movements detected; sensitivity can be varied	Based on force/pressure; threshold force/pressure
Makes use of specific algorithm to calculate the reaction time	Makes use of specific algorithm to calculate the reaction time
Filters out trembling*	Filters out trembling*
In case of false start acoustic sound on headphone starter; automatic recall available	In case of false start acoustic sound on headphone starter; automatic recall available

* Trembling = Trembling is a fast repetitive movement that may cause amplitudes up to 100ms. Trembling should not trigger a reaction time measurement.

Figure 1 gives a schematic overview of the starting signal. The (electronic) gun is linked to the external speakers and is wired or wireless linked with the starters console "Commande center" (red lines). Another input to the starters console is the signal from the starting blocks. Both signals are combined, and the reaction time is calculated using the defined algorithm. Output to the printer for the reaction times and a screen for the wave forms.

Figure 1: Starting signal – basics (source: MATSPORT)





The FinishLynx system can be mounted with a loudspeaker per block. Other systems have separate recall speakers. Seiko has integrated in its starters console video images from two HD video cameras which capture the start of every athlete from two angles (front and back). The video images and the wave form can be viewed in synchronized mode.

The output: reaction times and wave forms

The SIS has as output:

- Reaction time
- Wave form
- Acoustic signal in case of false start

Figure 2 gives an example of a regular start with reaction times and the wave form of lane 4. The first peak is the push of the rear leg, which is in contact with the rear footplate, and the second peak the push of the front leg that is in contact with the front footplate.

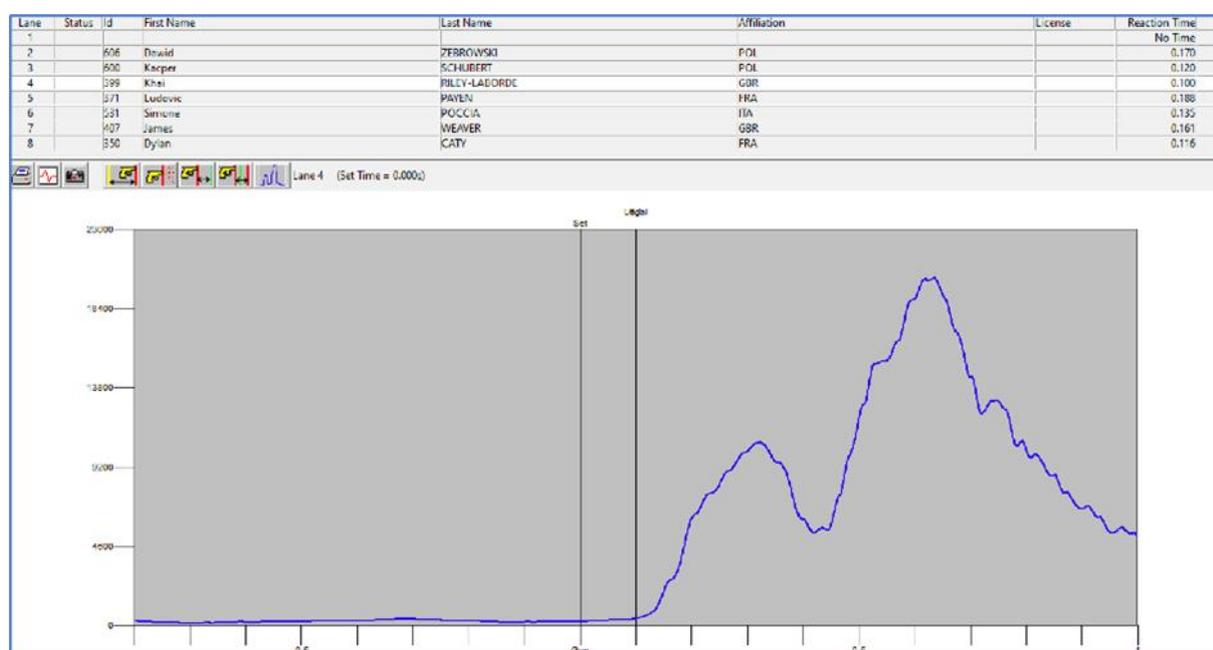
When the rear leg leaves the footplate often some vibrations can be observed. A spike on top of the first peak is caused e.g. by the heel that taps on the footplate. The waveform of a regular start shows a constant force during "set" position. When the athlete starts leaving the block the measured force increases.

However, a lot of athletes tremble in "set" position. Figure 3 shows an example of an athlete that visibly trembles. Trembling is a fast repetitive movement that may cause amplitudes up to 100ms. Trembling should not trigger a reaction time measurement.

Another phenomenon that can be seen during starts is twitching. Twitching is a single movement that occurs during "set" position. In the movement curve it is seen as a single peak during the steady phase of set position (see Figure 4). Normally twitching is filtered and does not trigger a reaction time. However, if the twitching occurs quite late and starts overlapping with the starting movement or if it is very strong and long the filter may fail, and a reaction time is triggered. According to the Technical Rules, such movement is not a false start, because the athlete is not losing contact with the footplate(s) of the starting block with one or both feet or is not losing contact with the ground with one or both hands. But the start referee may give a warning to the athlete for not being steady in set position and disturbing the start.

Finally, the false start (see Figure 5). An athlete, after assuming a full and final starting position, shall not commence the start until after receiving the report of the gun (the reaction time is less than 0.100 second).

Figure 2: Regular start - Output – reaction time and wave form lane 4 (source: MATSPORT)



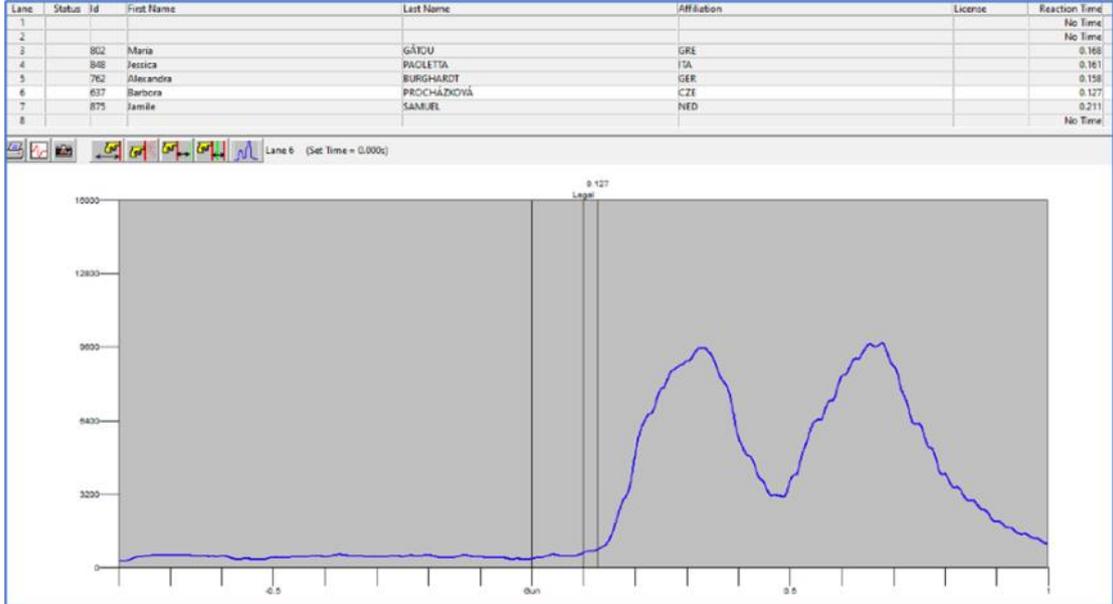


Figure 3: Start Output – reaction time and wave form lane 6 with trembling (source: MATSPORT)

Figure 4: Start Output – wave form with very strong twitching (source: MATSPORT)

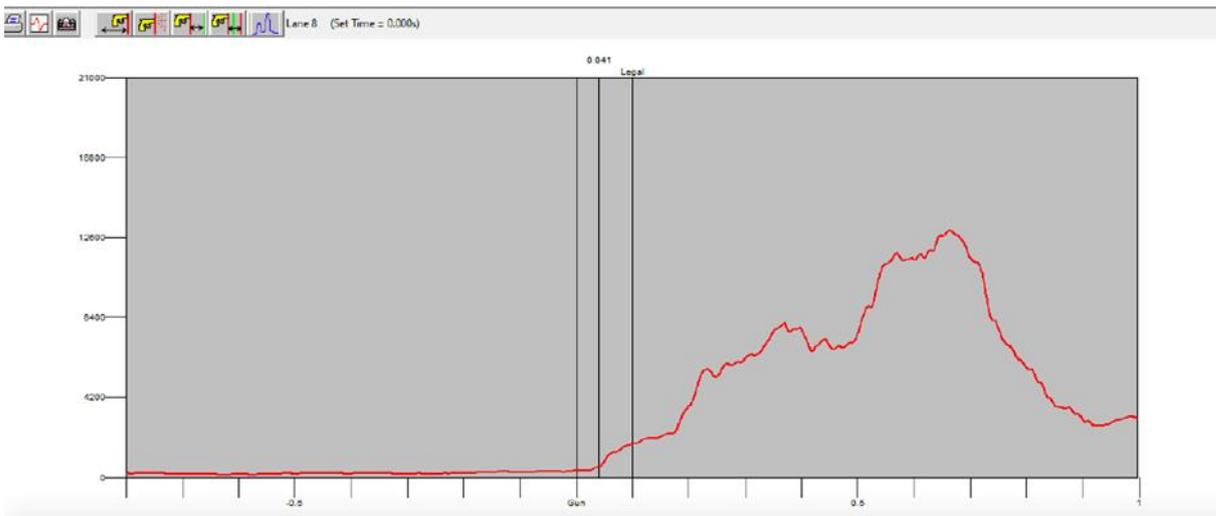
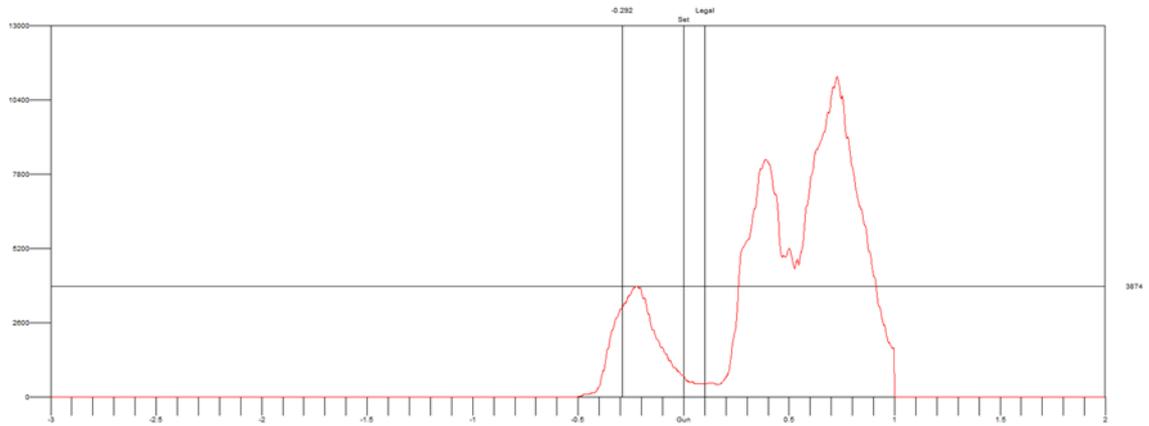


Figure 5: Start Output – reaction time and wave form lane 8 with false start (source: MATSPORT)



Some questions to Paul Castel, Timing Project Manager for MATSPORT

Can you explain the plusses and minuses between a false start system based on an Accelerometer and the force/pressure method?



The SIS accelerometer's technology is designed to be used at a larger range of competitions, as its modules will adapt to any kind of blocks, but more importantly, the measurement of the movement doesn't bring into the calculation any notion of power/weight, nor threshold concept. Basically, the system will not make any difference if the movement is triggered by a mosquito or a bull!

Therefore, the accelerometer is likely to be a more universal instrument, not discriminating the strength profile of athletes (Men/women - Elite/Youth).

One disadvantage is that more external factors may impact the measures of an accelerometer-based system (starting blocks, track surface). Using accelerometer SIS technology at major competition would require to always use the same type of starting blocks, to get result consistency all the time.

The main advantage of power/pressure metres is that the results are easier to understand. It's a little bit a caricature, and not as simple as that, but we do have to analyse the value each time. The system sets a threshold, and the result is either acceptable or not.

What are the most important attention points, when using a false start detection system?

From a timing service provider, we must make sure every single device is working properly, starting blocks, sound, modules, gun.

Then, the most important point is to meet the start team's expectations. Those can be slightly different according to starter team and stadium.

The coordination meeting with start team is the key moment, to define start positions, sound level, position of speakers etc. All those changes may have a technical impact, but at the end, this mutual inspection is aimed to establish a confident relationship between teams, judges, and the technology.

What is the strangest wave curve, you ever saw?

During an international World Para competition, where some athletes' categories use SIS, we started the first session of heats.. We had almost no traces on the waveforms and a lot of "No times" in reaction times athletes.

Everybody began to be nervous, Officials and starter. They asked us what happened with the system? Technical problem? We were under pressure.

Following the session during the debrief, the international Starter advised the starter's team to check that athletes correctly put their feet into the blocks. For the next session, everything came back to normal.

By Niels van der Aar

References

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- ◆ https://www.seiko-sts.co.jp/e/products/detail/sts_792.html
- ◆ <https://www.timetronics.be/product-page/start-information-system-falsestart-iii-pro-version>
- ◆ <https://www.swisstiming.com/services/sport-services/timing/>
- ◆ Presentation Paul Castel from MATSPORT, EA Webinar "Start Referees and Start Information System", January 26th 2022
- ◆ Presentation UK Athletics by M R Werrett, April 2010
- ◆ Presentation for Seminar for starters by Jordi Roig, January 2018 (Firenze, Italy)

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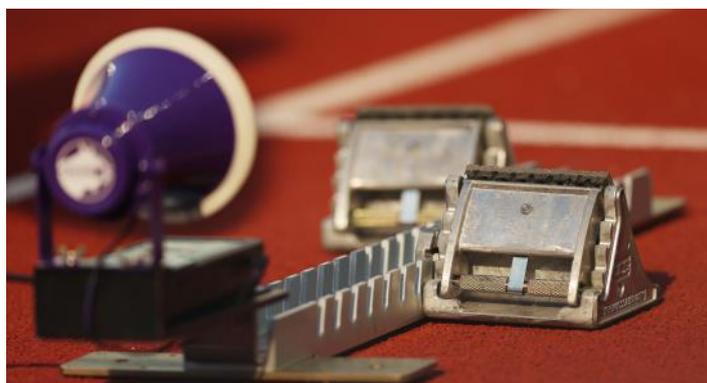


Photo: Getty Images



Coaches/Athletes' view on officiating : Tamberi

The relationships between parent-coach and champion son/daughter are always under the eye of the media. Sometimes the relationship holds up, other times it breaks out like in every family and it's one of the favourite topics for the media (including social).

Marco Tamberi is the father but also long-time coach of Gianmarco "Gimbo" Tamberi, Olympic gold medalist in High Jump in Tokyo and also World Indoor Champion in Portland and European Champion in Amsterdam in 2016 and European Indoor Champion in Glasgow in 2019. One of the greatest proponents of High Jump in the last 10 years.



Source : FIDAL

Marco, who had a good career as an international high jumper, with participation in the Moscow 1980 Olympics, is one of those coaches who "lives" technically and emotionally the competition, and this sometimes leads him to discuss with Field Officials about the management of the competition, especially at home, in Italy.

Therefore, Marco seems to be the right person to understand how the field officials are seen by the coaches of the athletes and how the direct relationship is experienced on the Field of Play.

EA: What do you think is the ideal attitude of an athletics official to put everyone in the best condition in a competition?

Marco Tamberi: to enforce the Rules by maintaining a proactive and not compulsory attitude.

EA: What can't you really stand when you experience the tension of the competition?

MT: When a judge or anyone else distracts the athlete for futile reasons and he imposes himself because he is "the judge". It happened once in Ancona (Marco's and Gianmarco's hometown) during an indoor competition; the mats weren't placed on a heavy support and during the competition were slipping back after each jump. The judge, instead of repositioning the mats, for convenience, was moving the uprights each time following the mats. He preferred not to listen that he was doing something wrong... he was the judge and he decided...

EA: What do you like instead and if you have an episode that you remember with a smile about a competition official?

MT: In general, every time they do their best to put us in the best possible condition. It happened for example in Padua during the Italian championships where the platform was broken and there was a serious risk of injury: at 2.20 they accepted to move the big mats and gave the possibility, in the middle of the event, to have an additional warm-up and to fix the run-ups in the new position of the uprights.

EA: Do you think that the time has come for a professionalism in the main refereeing roles, alongside an increase in the use of technology?

MT: Technology certainly helps but you need to know how to use it, so you also need to professionalize. Athletics is not football where chatting is an integral part of the success of that sport: on the contrary, objectivity in athletics is an added value.

By Luca Verrascina



Photo: Getty Image - Torun 2021 European Athletics Indoor Championships



WINS Project : Gender Equity in Officiating

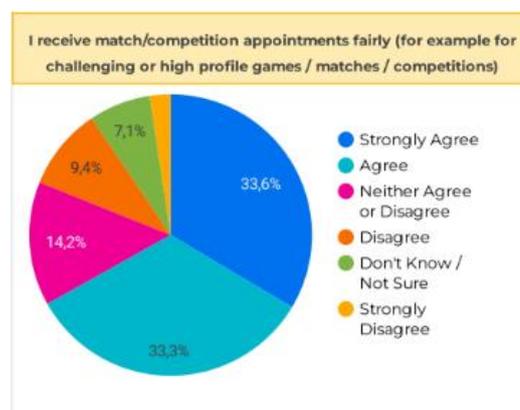
The main aim of the EU funded WINS project (www.wins-sport.eu) is to address gender equity in sport officiating – across all sports – by undertaking research into issues which affect female officials (referees, umpires, judges etc) and producing practical solutions which can support organisations responsible for their recruitment, retention and development.

2022 is the second year of the three-year project and the focus up to now has been a comprehensive programme of research to uncover new knowledge and insights into female officiating which has been traditionally lacking from the sector. The research phase is led by the University of Portsmouth and Dr Tom Webb presented the results of the research so far which included the first ever European survey of female sport officials. The survey was completed by 3264 female officials from 64 countries and initial findings uncovered that:

- ◆ Female officials who responded are generally quite happy, demonstrating a great enthusiasm and passion for officiating
- ◆ Being part of a support network such as an officiating community was particularly important to female officials

- ◆ More personal development opportunities and mentoring could persuade female officials to remain as officials for longer

Athletics Women officials were quite active in answering the survey with 709 responses (i.e 21.17%).



[click here](#) to see the whole graphical analysis of the “Athletics” results.

TRIVIA QUIZ - Answers

Abeba Aregawi	1500m W	3:57.91
Sebastian Bayer	Long Jump M	8.71
Kajsa Bergqvist	High Jump W	2.08
Andrea Manuel Diaz	1500m M	3:33.32
Jolanda Ceplak	800m W	1:55.82
Dwaine Chambers	60m M	6.42
Nataliya Dobrynska	Pentathlon	5013
Heike Drechsler	Long Jump W	7.37
Helena Fibingerova	Shot Put W	22.50
Guschina, Kollyarova, Zaytseva, Krasnomovets	4x400m W	3:23.37
Yelena Isinbayeva	Pole Vault W	5.01
Colin Jackson	60m H M	7.30
Susanna Kallur	60m H W	7.68

Wilson Kipketer	800m M	1:42.67
Jamila Kratoschvilova	400m W	49.59
Renaud Lavillenie	Pole Vault M	6.16
Tatyana Lebedeva	Triple Jump W	15.36
Irina Privalova	60m W	6.92
Sergio Sanchez	3000m M	7:32.41
Thomas Schonlebe	400m M	45.05
Roman Sebrle	Heptathlon	6438
Lilya Shobukhova	3000m W	8:27.86
Teddy Tamgho	Triple Jump M	17.92
Carlo Thrnhardt & Ivan Ukhov	High Jump M	2.42
Ulf Timmermann	Shot Put M	22.55
Watrin, Borlee, Borlee, Borlee	4x400m M	3:02.87

MF in the spotlight : The Czech Republic

We interviewed Ludmila Pudilová, former chair of the Czech judges' committee, and David Bohr, Head of Competitions Department.

How many judges and officials do you have in the Czech Republic?

We have special Register of judges. Currently there are 3567 judges on our list: 1971 men and 1596 women. For sure not all are active.

Can you say anything about the oldest and the youngest?

The oldest one, who is still active, is a man 92 years old from Olomouc. We have also 87 judges older than 80. On the other side the youngest one in Register is 16 year old. We have many younger helpers too, usually our (officials) children.

About the distribution Women and Men? And about the number of officials under U35?

There is a difference between number of men and women in the different age groups. Below is the overview and we can see that between older judges there are more men than women, but between younger ones it is equal or there are slightly more women.

The judges U35 are mostly also active athletes (over 1000). The older judges are quite often coaches.



How is your officials system structured? Do you work with various levels? If yes, how can people reach the next level?

I try to explain simply our system. The judge can be anybody over 16. For sure even the younger can help during the competitions but only on some positions. Our system has three main levels for judges and candidates. Candidate must not act in the landing area during throwing events."

It is easier to show the system in this table. (see next page)

There is one another level in place. It is special level only for judges from Level 1, who worked as a Referee during the National Championships. Such judges are named so called "central judges". The judge´s licence of all levels is valid for 5 years. It is necessary to prolong it at special seminars, where there are discussions about the latest changes of the Rules and mistakes in officiating in the last years and for sure about the safety during competitions.

Age Group	Total Number	Men	Women
Over 80	87	74 (85%)	13 (15%)
65—80	467	340	127
35—65	1608	877	731
Under 35	1318	641 (49%)	677 (51%)
Under 18	87	39 (45%)	48 (55%)

What education do you have for officials in place? Any special examples? Can you share any latest developments with respect to education?

The education of judges on lower levels is provided by experienced judges (Level 1). These courses are organized in the regions of our Republic irregularly – it depends on the interest of the clubs. The following education is organized by judges committee of the Czech Athletic Federation. We have some specialized seminars for: starters, photo finish judges, race walking judges and for judges who check throwing implements on a special device. These seminars are every year for one of the mentioned topics. From time to time, we have special seminar for officiating at the para-athletic competitions. The highest-level course is organised biannually, the lecturers are our most experienced judges. In the past two years we have faced the "covid challenge", so some seminars and closing tests (exams) were organized online. We would like to continue with it only for some types of seminars (e.g. prolongation of licence´s validity).

If you are official in the Czech Republic do you get any special fee? Standard clothing? Anything else?

The judges in the Czech Republic should wear a "uniform", which has to be bought by everyone (see picture with the special T-shirt). They also pay for all their education. On the other hand they receive some money nearly after each competition. It depends on the level/organizer of each competition and "working time". It is about 2 - 4 Euros per hour and it does not depend on their position, level of education and so on. But we do not do it for money.

OFFICIALS NEWS

Judge Level	Requested age	Requested Practice	Training (hours)	Note
Candidate	Minimum 16 years Maximum 18 years	Not necessary	Same as for level 3	Moving automatically to Level 3 at age 18
Level 3	Minimum 18 years	Not necessary	Minimum 12 hours	Following practice is necessary
Level 2	Minimum 20 years	Min. 2 years	Minimum 18 hours	Possibility to take part in the specialized seminars with this level of licence
Level 1	Minimum 22 years	Min 2 years	Minimum 26 hours	Equal to WA TOECS Level I, possibility to attend TOECS Level II education organized by EA

What is the most difficult rule for officials in the Czech Republic to judge?

Usually, the most difficult rules are some of the newest. In these days it is the take-off board at long jump, I mean namely the plasticine indicator, as video is not usual at the region competitions. We are afraid about the stability of 90° angle of plasticine during the hot summer. Does anybody know which brand of the plasticine is the most suitable? Can you advise?"

The second problematic rule is the lane infringement according to the new rule 17.4.3 and 17.4.4 TR. We have decided that during local competitions we apply zero tolerance for it in the Czech Republic. Personally, I think that it should be applied during indoor competitions only. There are narrower

lanes or some slope in the bend, but it is not the problem outdoors. The lane infringement after pushing or jostling should be tolerated completely everywhere. But it is my personal opinion...

The other problematic rule could be also the landing of the javelin. I mean the "flat" landing which is very problematic for officiating. Next one should be the touching the rim during the first turn at discus and shot put (namely at shot put). Sometime it is because we do not have enough judges (2) near the circle to see it properly and decide if there was some advantage for an athlete.



Do you have any special wish from EA or other countries with respect to officials or education?

We would appreciate some EA online seminars, workshops or even educational materials (including explanation) of some controversial situations from competitions (videos, pictures, etc.) accessible/available for all judges. It could be focused separately on events like jumps, throws, runs.

And from other countries? In current time namely young people travel more and live abroad and some of them would like to continue in judging there. This can be a problem - not due to language. We (and I think not only we but also the other countries) have no system where and who could these judges contact in their new "home". It is not so easy even if you contact the national federation by e-mail. You can receive no answer, as I have heard....

Do you have any special measure in place to encourage women and younger to become a judge, an official? Are (top-) athletes involved?

As I know we have no special measures for encouraging women and younger but this is a question for our Judge's Committee head and here is his answer:

OFFICIALS NEWS

BEZ TEBE SE NEZÁVODÍ

A picture from the Czech campaign "I am a judge": "Without you, it doesn't work!!"

"The project "I am a judge" was launched on a pilot basis in the Czech Republic. For this purpose, a marketing campaign was created, which significantly helped in recruiting new judges. A plan for the teaching new judges was drawn up, which was supported by an intensive motivational campaign with the motto "Without you...we don't start, ... we don't throw, ... we don't compete" - was the slogan and motifs of video spots shot especially for the campaign.

Several Czech top elite athletes such as javelin thrower Nikola Ogrodníková, discus throwing brothers Michal and Jakub Forejt or sprinters Jan Veleba, Dominik Záleský and Jan Jirka acted in these video spots. The result of this campaign was fast and many more people signed up for courses of new Level 3 judges than before."

I can only add that this campaign was placed on our federation website and everybody can still watch the spots on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DUf835DZ0pU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXjxkuR-cil>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gHRM-K0I1w>

The top athletes helped with this campaign, but mainly the ordinary

athletes continue as judges/officials after their active career and we are thankful to them.

We could talk much longer about this topic. If anybody is interested more deeply about our system, he or she can contact me via e-mail pudilova1@post.cz



By Niels van der Aar

NEWS IN BRIEF

European Athletics Events

The following events were allocated by the Council during its meeting held on 6 - 8 May in Munich/GER:

- **European Athletics Indoor Championships 2025** allocated to **Apeldoorn/NED.**
- **SPAR European Cross Country Championships 2023** allocated to **Brussels/BEL.**

Meanwhile at its meeting on 27 April in Sofia the Executive Board had already allocated the ECCO Cross Country 2023 to Castellón/ESP and the 2024 edition to Albufeira/POR.

The European Athletics Team Championships 2023 will be integrated in the European Games and will take place in Silesia/POL, from 20 to 25 June 2023. All Member Federations will be divided into 3 Divisions: First Division with 16 teams, Second Division with 16 teams, and Third Division with the remaining teams (approximately 16).

Each Division is to be regarded as a separate match and scored accordingly.

Officials education

The 2022 Technical Delegates course and evaluation took place in Warsaw/POL on 28 April-1 May 2022. Among the 72 candidates proposed by their members Federations, 40 have been selected by European Athletics to attend the course and evaluation, together with 8 additional out-of-stadium events specialists. Successful candidates will be included in the 2023 - 2026 panel .

The current out-of-stadium Technical Delegates panel will no longer be valid as the out-of-stadium events experts will be included in the renewed Technical Delegates Panel.

The Doping Control Delegates panel was also reviewed based on results of the evaluation which took place in Budapest/HUN on 8-10 April 2022.

Discussions are still ongoing with World Athletics about their new Referees' education project and potential impact on the format and content of the ITOs Level 2 course and evaluation to take place in Autumn 2022, for renewal of the European ITOs panel.

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Please do not hesitate to send us any questions or suggestions for topics you would like to be discussed in the next issue.

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