

South Dakota Cross Country/Track & Field Officials Association (SDCCTFOA)

Spring, 2024 Newsletter #1

Officiating Philosophy

Be Safe: Safety – for athletes, officials, coaches, fans, and media – is the number one priority. Safety is the responsibility of EVERY OFFICIAL! Be proactive in promoting safety and make sure proper safety protocols are followed. Do not be timid if you see unsafe situations or if others are not being vigilant.

Be Fair: Know the appropriate rules for the meet and the event you are officiating and apply them consistently. Don't make up rules. No athlete should be allowed to gain an unfair advantage and no athlete should have to suffer an unfair disadvantage. All athletes should be regarded as equals, regardless of ability, the level of competition or who they represent.

2024 New High School Track and Field Rules

Eleven rule revisions for the 2024 track and field season were adopted by the National Federation of State High School Association (NFHS) Track & Field Rules Committee for 2024.

To more clearly define false starts, the NFHS added the following: Extraneous motion before the device is fired does not necessarily require a false start to be charged unless the runner leaves their mark with hand or foot after the set command or leaves their mark with a forward motion without the starting device being fired. The change makes it clearer as to the definition of a false start and how it should be officiated.

Two new starting violations were adopted for 2024:

- In rule 5-7-4c, the old language required participants to remain motionless after assuming the set position. It has been replaced with: “If a runner leaves their mark with a hand or foot after the ‘set’ command but before the device is fired.”
- In addition, a new violation in (d) calls for a violation “if a runner leaves their mark with a forward motion without the starting device being fired.”

If a starter thinks any movement creates a situation of unfairness to any competitor, the starter should bring the runners up with the command ‘stand up.’ If the device has been fired, recall the race as an unsteady or unfair start and redo the starting procedure. The rules committee felt these changes offer a clearer definition of a false start and will help add consistency in how false starts are officiated according to the NFHS. This brings the starting rule closer to the NCAA and World Athletics (USATF) rule.

A significant change was approved by the committee regarding field events. In the discus, shot put and javelin, athletes will be permitted to apply tape to their fingers as long as the fingers are not taped together, and all fingers can move independently.

“Tape may be used on the hand and fingers provided no two fingers are taped together. The tape may be continuous and connect to the wrist, but all fingers must be able to move independently. A wrist wrap used in lieu of tape is acceptable and is not considered an artificial aid.”

In other changes to field events, breaking ties when two or more tied competitors withdraw from a competition/jump-off at the same time was added to Rule 6-3-2b.

“If all competitors eligible for a jump-off withdraw from competition before the jump-off begins or at a height change, those competitors shall tie for first place, and any team points shall be added together and divided equally among they tying competitors.”

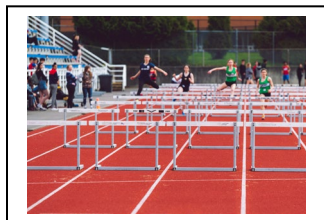
An athlete who withdraws from a jump-off concedes the higher place, but the withdrawal does not negate the athlete’s performance and is not unsporting conduct.



Another field event change was approved for the high jump and pole vault. One minute is to be allowed for the first trial by a competitor first entering the competition. The committee noted this language clarifies how the rule is to be interpreted and adds support to an official’s decision when a competitor first enters a vertical jump after the event has started.

Some language on track markings was deleted and replaced with: “Staggered markings are dependent on the geometry of each individual track,” and a competent surveyor should determine the lane staggers. This rule supports decisions to not run the 200 in the other direction, if the track is not properly marked to do so.

Under the new rules, state associations may allow participants in a track and field meet to compete in more than four events, effective in 2024. Rule 4-2-1 states a competitor shall not compete in more than four events, including relays, remains; however, flexibility was provided for state associations: “State associations may adopt different participation limitations, not to exceed six events.” Ultimately, each state will determine the number and type of events best suited for its state—not to exceed six. The SDHSAA has determined that South Dakota will limit competitors to four events for 2024.



In other changes, it is an infraction for a competitor to knock down **or displace** any hurdle by hand. The addition of displacement was added to give guidance to officials. A displacement is judged to be a contact with a hurdle that moves it from its 90-degree setting. A hurdle can be touched by a hand or both hands, provided it is not dislodged from its upright position.

Other rules revisions approved by NFHS included:

- Rules 8-1, 8-5: Clarifies cross country course layout and reorganizes the rule.
- Rule 9-6-1: New rule offers guidance on relay exchange zone for indoor track and field.
- Rule 3-8-1: Changed the requirement for two officials for FAT timing to one official.

SDCCTFOA 2024 Clinic Topics, Dates and Locations

Beginning with the 2024 Track & Field season, a clinic or jamboree will be required periodically for SDHSAA registered track and field and cross-country officials. A new official will be required to attend a clinic in their first or second year, and current officials will be required to attend a clinic every three years to maintain their registered status. See Page 4 of the SDHSAA Officials Handbook.

For the purpose of fulfilling this requirement, the SDCCTFOA will present a track & field clinic before the track season. Those clinics will be in-person presentations, with one recorded and archived and posted on the SDHSAA website for viewing. Regional Representatives are responsible to host an in-person meeting annually, prior to the track season, for the purpose of presenting the clinic in their respective area. Track coaches and athletic directors will be invited to the clinic meeting.

Clinic topics for 2024:

Topics for this year's clinic will include the new NFHS rules; starting procedure and rules, with an emphasis on the new start rule adopted by NFHS; duties of the referee and field event head judges; special consideration for the javelin, now being scored in all three classes; and an exercise on placing 16 competitors in a HJ competition. There will be time for questions, comments and observations.

Locations, Dates & Times for 2024 SD track and field clinics:

- **Tea**
 - When: Wednesday, February 21, 2024
 - Where: Tea High School Commons
 - Time: 7:00 pm Central
 - POC: Tony Waterman, 605-941-1106 twater.cups@hotmail.com
- **Webster**
 - When: Wednesday, February 21, 2024
 - Where: Webster Armory Classroom, Northeast Door
 - Time: 7:00 pm Central
 - POC: Robert Kwasniewski, 605-265-0008 rkwas1@abe.midco.net
- **Rapid City**
 - When: Wednesday, February 21, 2024
 - Where: Rapid City Central FACS Room
 - Time: 6:00 pm Mountain
 - POC: Larry Stevens, 605-877-4081 ldstevens57@outlook.com
- **Pierre**
 - When: Wednesday, February 28, 2024

- Where: SDHSAA Office, 804 N. Euclid Avenue, Suite 102
- Time: 7:00 pm Central
- POC: Steve Charron, 605-354-4716 scharron123@hur.midco.net

Key dates for South Dakota High School Track & Field

- Jan 29: First allowable practice for pole vault;
- Feb 26: First allowable practice;
- Mar 9: First allowable meet/contest;
- Mar 11: Deadline for submission for sanctioned meets;
- May 17: Last date for last chance meets to be held;
- May 23, 24 & 25: State Track & Field Meet

SDCCTFOA Officers, Regional Representatives and their duties

- President: Tim Casper, Lake Preston, 605-203-1754 tim.casper19@gmail.com
- President-Elect: J.D. Evans, Salem, 605-491-4207 jd.evans@k12.sd.us
- Sec/Treasurer: Dana Nelson, Sioux Falls. 605-280-1333 dana.nelson0007@hotmail.com

Regional Representatives

- Region 1 (Northeast) Robert Kwasniewski, Webster, 605-265-0008 rkwas1@abe.midco.net
- Region 2 (Southeast) Tony Waterman, Tea, 605-941-1106 twater.cups@hotmail.com
- Region 3 (Central) Steve Charron, Huron, 605-354-4716 scharron123@hur.midco.net
- Region 4 (West) Larry Stevens, Rapid City, 605-877-4081 ldstevens57@outlook.com
- Region 4 (West) Randy Thomas, Faith, 605-381-0394 faithlbr@faithsd.com

Regional Representatives are appointed for a three-year term, and are members of the Board of Directors for the SDCCTFOA. Regional Representatives are responsible for the officials and territory within the regional boundaries identified in the SDCCTFOA Constitution. They interact with and communicate with officials in their region and are responsible for inquiries and requests from officials in their region. They are also responsible for hosting an in-person meeting in the region for the purpose of a track and field/cross country clinic. Topics for the clinic will be identified and an agenda developed by the board. The clinic may be conducted by a designated clinician or the Regional Representative, as appropriate. The board may assign additional duties or responsibilities to the Regional Representatives, as needed.

New Officials

Do you know someone who may be interested in becoming a track & field and/or cross country official? The SDHSAA is always looking for new officials. Be on the lookout for someone to succeed you when you retire. Have them contact the SDHSAA and register.

Next Newsletter & Contributions

The SDCCTFOA will produce additional newsletters in the future, one prior to cross country and one prior to track season. Anyone with topics for the newsletter is encouraged to reach out to J.D. Evans, Dana Nelson or Tim Casper. We need additional input and ideas, and many of you have things you may like to share. Thank you and best of luck in track & field and cross country.