

AO Officials Chair Report 2022

Brian Keaveney

Thank you to Council members – As the new person on Council, I have a learning curve to complete. Perter Hocking and Lynn McFerrin have explained a lot to me over this my first year. The Council members have also filled in the blanks for me, and I thank them as the jobs they do take a lot of work and understanding. I must also thank the members for their high work ethic. I also thank Paul Osland, Anthony Biggar and staff of AO for their cooperation and work for us in the past year.

The Vice Chair has written a report covering the following topics which I will not repeat. - mentorship, virtual lessons and courses, Ontario and Canada Summer games, evaluations, officials newsletter, travel expense guidelines, travel expense form, AOOEC terms of Reference, NOC/BOC spring meetings, AO and officials Town Halls.

Events and Championships – It has been a highly successful year for meets and the officials who run them.

In all so far there have been thirteen Ontario Championships hosted, + twenty-five indoor meets, and eighty-two outdoor meets both of which had various levels of championships. As indicated above, AO officials are back in stride providing service to all these events. At many of the large meets, we had opportunities to be mentored and evaluated such as the AC Indoor in Saint John, and the Canada Games in Saint Catharines.

Please take the time to put in for upgrading opportunities.

There are 11 AO recognized cross-country meets listed by AO. Four of them are AO meets with prep meets 1 to 3 in Toronto and the Ontario Championship in Kingston at Fort Henry. I wish to point out that the prep meets have been two weeks apart and host our youngest to oldest athletes at several distances in Sunnybrook Park in Toronto. All levels of ability are present and in good numbers. The schools are back at hosting cross country weekly meets including a full OFSAA. Our AO officials have been asked to work mostly school meets.

Mentors and Evaluation – The new NOC policy and requirements are now in full swing for those who wish to upgrade. These topics will be discussed and explained at this year's Officials AGM. Be sure to attend and ask questions.

WA, WPA and WMA Rule Books - Each of these updated books are available to AO officials.

This year the WA Rule Book was free to fully registered officials thanks to AO. Most were given out at track meets. They are still available. If mailed the cost must be paid by the official. WPA Rule Books are sold by Lynn McFerrin. WMA Rule Books are available online at the World Masters Athletics website or in printed form from Brian Keaveney. As more of our meets now include master's athletes, we need to be made aware of the rules which can be very different. Please read up on all these rules which affect you.

Rules applied at Track Meets - Technical Packages are produced for each Ontario Championship both indoor and outdoor as well as cross-country. Officials need to read these

over well before working the meets to know what to expect and what rules to follow from dealing with young children to the Masters.

Athletics Ontario Procedures and Technical Rules for Ontario Provincial Championships

(DRAFT) - This document is online under AO Officials Administration but not completed.

Hopefully it will be ready for 2023.

Use of New Technologies at Meets – Electronic Distance Measurement (EDM- lasers) is being used at most of our non championship and championship events. Many officials are now comfortable with accepting the results of this equipment and taking lessons on how to set up and use the various forms of the apparatus. More officials need to take courses so that they can step in when needed. Many types of distance races (5000, 10,000, race walks, cross country, and road races) use bib numbers with antennas (chips) built into them. This makes the job of the official easier and with fewer mistakes. We need to understand the technology and trust it when offered.

Officials' recruitment and retention and appreciation – Many of our officials have not returned to working the meets because of the Pandemic. Many have just retired, and some have passed away. We all know that the average age of the members is high. Lynn and others have made it easy through education efforts to train new officials, but we must do more. What are your solutions? Please take the time to think of ways and means of attracting people and retaining them. AO officials come in all distinct levels of knowledge and abilities. It is important that we work well with each other, support each other, and help the newer officials gain knowledge and experience so that they can progress and continue to work meets. The same goes for our volunteers who without them we can't function. Angry and stressed people do not make good officials.

This year we had three very fine officials and friends pass away. They are Roman Olszewski, Sharon Clarke and Elaine Lake.

AO Championship Coordination between AO Staff/Meet Directors and AO Officials – Because of the uncertainties hosting meets in the indoor season, last-minute changes to championships in the outdoor season, and late entry deadlines, the coordination/communication between AO staff and the officials made for difficult days and lack of officials in some areas. We need to work together to plan the meets to allow for sufficient officials. Communication is key.

AO Officials AGM - This year for the first time we will have an in-person and virtual AGM as the last few years have only been online because of the pandemic. See the AO website for details, registration through Trackie and watch for emails from the chair re agenda and voting. It is up to you to have questions and give input at our meeting. Nominations are needed for Council positions (vice-chair, availability, treasurer, and secretary) and Official of the Year.

Barb Mero will not run again. We thank her for her work as secretary of our association.

Stay safe and be well.