

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

Wednesday, March 18, 2025 7:00 pm CDT via Zoom

President Tim Casper called the meeting of the SDCCTFOA to order at 7:00 pm CDT.

President Casper called the roll for board members: President-Elect J.D. Evans; Secretary/Treasurer Dana Nelson; Regional Coordinators Steve Charron, Tony Waterman, Robert Kwasniewski and Larry Stevens were present. All board members present. Attendees by Zoom included: Tim Casper, JD Evans, Dana Nelson, Randy Thomas, Steve Charron, Tony Waterman, Robert Kwasniewski. Larry Stevens, Eric Foss, Tina Baum, Tom Parquet, Al Koppinger, Mark Wendelgass, Kevin Nelson, Harry Weller, Eric Foss, Deanna Arend, Terry Sudrla, Jay Larsen, Jim Aberle, Mike Schultz, Scott Deutsch, Keith Kusler, Roger Starks, Steve Schroeder and Jared Vasquez (registered officials). The members recited the pledge of allegiance.

Items on the Consent Calendar (minutes, financial statement & payment of bills), with Secretary Treasurer Dana Nelson reporting a balance of \$1824.81 in the checking account, as follows:

- 7/16/25: Balance Forward from July meeting
\$1,824.81
- 7/29/25: Deposit from Harry Weller, Donation for HOF \$500.00
- 7/31/25: Deposit from Dakota Sports for equipment sales \$183.86
- 9/25/25: Deposit from SDHSAA for 68 officials \$340.00
- 2/10/26: Deposit Donation from Harve's Sport Shop \$ 50.00
- 2/10/26: Deposit Donation from F&G Advertising \$ 50.00
- 2/18/26: Deposit Donation from First Dakota National Bank \$250.00
- 2/26/26: Payment to Dana Nelson for Mitchell Clinic expenses (\$154.66)
- 3/18/26: Balance Forward
\$3044.01

There are no outstanding bills. Nelson noted additional funds will be forthcoming from SDHSAA in the projected amount of \$95.00 for additional registered officials.

Kevin Nelson moved ,and Tom Parquet seconded approval of the consent items, Motion was approved.

OLD BUSINESS

6. President Casper discussed items on the SDHSAA website to assist officials during the season, and noted those pages have been updated for 2026. Links for Cross Country will updated in the fall. He also noted that SDHSAA will no longer test for cross country, but the SDHSAA power point will still be required in the fall. Casper reminded officials to complete their open book test and watch the T&F video before the end of March. Among the links on the website is the pre-

meet Coaches meeting outline, guides for visually impaired athletes, Pre-Meet notes from the NFHS which features pictures from the 2025 South Dakota State Track & Field Championships, and a new link for coach's pre-meet information. Hall of Fame information is also on the SDHSAA website.

7. Casper noted that he will bring it to the attention for the Sports Council and SDHSAA that our recommended fees should be posted in place of the officials floor pay which was the result of a survey of what schools were paying two years ago. He indicated that he wants recommended fees to be displayed fairly, and that applies to all sports. Representing pay at the floor level (lowest) is not fair to officials for the time they spend officiating.

8. Selection of officials for the state meet is totally handled by SDHSAA.

9. Officials uniforms: Casper noted that SDHSAA uniforms can be purchased on-line through Dakota Sports, and our association shares a little revenue from those sales. Randy Thomas pointed out that the SDHSAA web site was not updated with last year's change from blue pants to gray pants. Now the acceptable pants are khaki, black or gray. Casper said he would get that changed ASAP.

10. New Rules: We did not discuss the new rules, but reminded officials to review those, and noted they were covered in the clinics, the newsletter and the SDHSAA On-Line Rules Meeting.

11. Facility Recommendations: Casper reinforced that facilities should be using red/white flags for field events, and yellow/white flags on the track, in order to get away from yelling foul, scratch and mark. This has been a recommendation from the SDHSAA and supported by SDCCTFOA. Additionally, Casper noted that we continue to search for quality how to videos for field events. We have uploaded a few, including those shared by the Iowa Association of Sports Officials, but we are still looking for how to videos for officiating the Javelin and Pole Vault. Members are urged to share information on videos with President-Elect J.D. Evans. Among the other things that officials should be checking at meets is the level of sand in the jumping pits, track markings (particularly if there is a discussion on reversing the 200), and track markings for start, finish and exchange zones.

Casper noted that a point of emphasis this year was better inspection of poles and collecting weight sheets for vaulters. A very thorough process for completing this was outlined in the spring newsletter. If labels are missing, or are not readable, coaches need to find the serial number for the pole and request a new label from the manufacturer. If they cannot accomplish that, perhaps they should cut the pole up and use it for relay batons for practice.

It was recommended that starters use something other than an orange cone for marking the 50 meter mark for restarting distance races. Casper recounted a situation when runners cut at the cones when they went by the cone used to mark 50 meters, rather than going all the way to break line.

There was a good conversation on the new rule to allow starting pistols of various calibers. Many officials have gone to a 9mm due to difficulty in finding 32 shells, and others have adopted 209 primers, used with the Alfa starting pistol. All are allowable, as the key is triggering the FAT timing actuator. For outdoor, officials should not use a 22 caliber, which is reserved for indoors. We learned that Sheel's carries 209 primers, and Kevin Nelson suggested that Dakota Sports also carry 9mm and 209 pistols, as well as shells/primers. The cost of 32 shells is now \$77 for 50, while primers cost something like \$60 for 1000 primers. 9mm shells run about \$20 to \$25 for 50 shells.

12. 2026 Clinic Reports: Four clinics were held in 2026 at Pierre, Watertown, Rapid City and Mitchell. All were reasonably well attended, and Tim Casper presented at all four in order to assure consistency statewide.

A. Pierre: 12 officials, 4 coaches, 1 AD, 1 SDHSAA Staff

B. Watertown: 14 officials, 2 coaches, 1 AD

C. Rapid City: 12 officials, 3 coaches

D. Mitchell: 23 officials, 3 high school coaches, 3 college coaches, 22 volunteer athletes

Regarding the Mitchell clinic, which featured live opportunities for starting runners, those volunteer athletes from Mitchell High School, DWU and Dakota State received coupons for a free Subway sandwich and for a McDonalds Meal Deal, which was reflected in the costs associated with that clinic. Those expenses were offset by donations from Harve's Sport Shop, F&G Advertising and First Dakota National Bank, in the total amount of \$350.00.

NEW BUSINESS

13. President Casper reported that the SDCCTFOA Constitution was amended last summer, following the July meeting to reflect that consensus of opinion that officers and regional representatives be elected.

14. Beginning this year, all positions are open for election, and anyone interested in serving as President, President-Elect, Secretary/Treasurer, or any of the four Regions should make their interest known to a Board member sometime before the State Track Meet. Following the State Meet, if there is interest by multiple individuals, the Board will prepare an email ballot for election to those positions, and the newly elected officials will take office following the July 2026 meeting. At this time only Region 3 Representative Steve Charron has indicated a decision to step down. Tina Baum has expressed interest in running for that position. All other incumbent officers indicated a willingness to continue to serve.

After elections and before the July meeting the Regional Representative position terms will be drawn by lot to determine the length of their respective terms. One regional representative will serve a one- year term, one will serve a two-year term and two will serve three-year terms.

15. Hall of Fame: Committee Chairman Kevin Nelson reported on the activities of the Hall of Fame Committee. He briefly explained the detailed process that the committee undertook to review and select members for the Hall of Fame. After receiving nominations, the committee reviewed qualifications through a rubric that they had previously developed, and then deliberated in the January/February time frame to select the following inaugural selections to the SDCCTFOA Hall of Fame. Dean Mann, Sioux Falls (deceased), Steve Charron, Huron and Richard (Rock) Rockafellow, Philip were selected. They will be honored at the State Track Meet, and efforts are currently underway to display these selections somewhere at Howard Wood Stadium, the site for the State Track Meet and for the Howard Wood Dakota Relays, South Dakota's two largest track and field meets. Kevin thanked the members of the committee, Tina Baum, Jim Aberle, Harry Weller and Keith Kusler. He also noted that newly inducted members to the HOF will be added to the committee.

16. SDCCTFOA Recognition: In addition to the HOF, the association is making efforts to recognize retiring officials, officials for their years of service at 25, 40 and 50 years (note the years of service are cumulative and recognize service as an official registered with the SDHSAA), recognition for official of the year and anyone receiving Region official of the year. In addition to any ceremony that SDHSAA or the NFHS may perform, these individuals are likewise recognized in the SDCCTFOA Newsletters.

17. There has been considerable discussion on the use of green, yellow and red cards for reporting starting line activity. Largely as a communication device many starters have advocated their use. The SDHSAA resisted the change but did authorize the experimental use of the cards by several South Dakota officials this season with results/observations reported back to President Casper. These cards are already in use at the collegiate, national and international level, and several of the South Dakota officials have used them at those levels. Some Iowa officials also use them reported Terry Sudrila, and we learned this winter that the State of California uses them. It is not a deviation from the NFHS rule book, but for some reason the SDHSAA is reluctant to the change. This year's demonstration effort will hopefully allay that reluctance.

18. Sites for the 2027 clinics were discussed, and tentatively will be in Sioux Falls, Aberdeen, Rapid City and either Huron or Pierre. There was short discussion and since there was one in Pierre this year, Huron is more likely. Brookings is also a possibility for Region 1. Scott Deutsch asked whether there could be two in each region, noting that football and basketball have multiple meeting requirements annually. I was pointed out that those are regional meetings and that those sports still require a jamboree every three years in addition to those required meetings, and that T&F does not require any annual meetings, but does require a clinic every three years. It was also noted that each region tries to move them around to accommodate officials to some extent. It was pointed out that we may need to consider another clinic for the south central area of the state, since that area is a long way from any of the sites. We did a clinic in Murdo last year to cover that part of the state.

19. Additional Association activities:

A. Topics for the Newsletter should be directed to Dana Nelson

B. Development of a T&F officiating class at USD—Dana Nelson reported on efforts to get this class going. USD already does similar classes for football, basketball and volleyball. USD has approved the offering of the class and we will attempt to offer it next spring on Monday evenings at 7:00 pm. Nelson is developing a lesson plan for the class and may utilize other officials for portions of the class. With Vermillion and USD and Yankton and Mount Marty, and potentially Elk Point-Jefferson, Dakota Valley and Sioux City hosting meets opportunities for real opportunities to officiate are plentiful for practical experience.

C. SDCCTFOA Revenue:

a. Income from sales of uniforms and equipment through Dakota Sports (President Casper suggested retiring officials may want to sell or gift their equipment, and should get that information to the Secretary/Treasurer which is currently Dana Nelson

b. Central collection and redemption of brass for income to the association was discussed, but not acted upon

c. Donations—similar to what was done to support the Mitchell Clinic

d. Central purchase of shells, was discussed and dismissed, since the advent of 9mm and 209 primers seem to have covered this need.

D. President Casper reported that RC Stevens coach Paul Hendry is working on some kind of indoor meet. Casper said SDHSAA is not too interested in more sports, but perhaps something can be developed by coaches similar to what Iowa does. With current facilities in Brookings, Yankton, Spearfish and Mitchell, and a new coming in the next two years in Vermillion, there may be some options.

E. Equipment wanted/needed and/or for sale/available—get this information to Dana Nelson

F. Best way to currently check schedules is SDHSAA website for sanctioned meets, where the officials are listed

20. Mentor document/voucher—Steve Charron agreed to continue to process and approve these.

21. Greater membership involvement—President Casper indicated we may develop some kind of committee structure to get more members involved, and create a path for that involvement to lead to leadership.

22. President is working with Brad DeBeer to put together a T&F/Cross Country POD cast, with the possible idea of calling it “Running More Than the Mouth.” The POD cast would feature T&F and Cross Country issues and could feature coaches and athletes interviews. Stay tuned.

23. Sports Council. President Casper is the T&F member of the Sports Council and intends to present two items to the council at its next meeting—pay recommendations versus floor pay and the use of green, yellow and red cards for T&F starters.

Randy Thomas moved and Larry Stevens seconded that the SDCCTFOA Adjourn. President Casper adjourned the meeting.

**In a post meeting discussion, Al Koppinger and Terry Sudrla discussed the reversal of the 200, and whether you could or should reverse it if the break line was straight or curved. Al insisted that if the break line was straight you could reverse it using the current one-turn stagger marks. Terry disputed that, and it got into a math/tangent discussion. Kevin Nelson contributed to the discussion. Nothing was resolved and President Casper told Al that he should make his case to SDHSAA and go with their decision.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dana Nelson
Secretary/Treasurer SDCCTFOA