

May 89

COURSE MEASUREMENT

The AAA Course Measurement Working Party was set up under the Chairmanship of John Disley in 1985, with the aim of introducing a system for the certification of road race courses in respect of events run under the AAA permit scheme. The first AAA Measurers training and accreditation seminar was held at the Crystal Palace National Sports Centre at the end of that year, and the first AAA Certificates of Course Accuracy were issued shortly after.

Previous to this, the Road Runners Club had pioneered the art of accurate course measurement in this Country, for the purpose of including certified courses in their popular standards award scheme for RRC members. A sizeable proportion of the 50 or so participants on the original three AAA funded Measurers training seminars in 1985 and 1986 came from the panel of RRC measurers.

Since then, a number of further seminars for the training and accreditation of new measurers have been held under the auspices of the Area Associations, who have all now appointed Area Measurement Secretaries. The seminars provide theoretical and practical training for measuring courses using the CALIBRATED CYCLE METHOD (sometimes known as the 'JONES COUNTER' method). This method, which utilises the consistently accurate Jones Counter device fitted to the hub of the cycle, is the ONLY one recognised by the IAAF for measuring road race courses, and therefore acceptable to the AAA. As such, Certificates of Course Accuracy will only be issued where the course has been certified accurate by an AAA approved measurer using the calibrated cycle method of measurement.

Accredited measurers are classified as either Grade 1 or Grade 2 Measurers, according to their experience and competence. Grade 1 Measurers are approved by the AAA to measure all races at National, Area and County/District levels, whilst Grade 2 Measurers are approved to measure races at Area and County/District levels.

At the start of 1989, there were 100 AAA approved measurers countrywide, distributed as follows:

Midland Counties AAA:	16 (5 grade 1, 11 grade 2)
Northern Counties AA:	28 (6 grade 1, 22 grade 2)
Southern Counties AA:	48 (12 grade 1, 36 grade 2)
Welsh AAA:	8 (1 grade 1, 7 grade 2)

There are also now in excess of 600 currently valid course measurement certificates covering events which have been certified accurate by AAA approved measurers, distributed as follows:

AAA Championship events:	17
Midland Counties AAA:	150
Northern Counties AA:	106
Southern Counties AA:	303
Welsh AAA:	25

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This represents quite a lot of progress over three years. Nevertheless, there are still a great number of road races for which AAA permits are issued that do not hold certificates of course accuracy, including some quite well known events, so to discuss progress so far and to consider how best to broaden the scope of the measurement scheme, the members of the original AAA Course Measurement Working Party, supplemented by the four Area Measurement Secretaries, met again last October. Among their proposals were:

More publicity for the AAA Measurement Scheme - this is in hand

All National, Area and County Road Race Championships in England and Wales, plus STAR*RANK 'Hot 100' races to require measurement certificates with effect from 1.1.89

All other road races in England and Wales which advertise a specific distance to require certificates with effect from 1.1.90, with Area Permit Secretaries having discretion to refuse permits when this condition is not satisfied

Each Area to organise at least one training seminar each year for new measurers to be added to the panel of approved AAA measurers.

These proposals were subsequently approved by the AAA Road Race Committee.

In addition, there is increasing international recognition of our contribution to course measurement. John Disley's assignments in the past year include the Rotterdam and Fukuoka marathons, and it is proposed to hold an AIMS/IAAF training seminar in London during 1989, which will allow an opportunity for some of our grade 1 measures to be added to the international panel.

All enquiries about course measurement - whether it be from a race organiser on who best to approach to get a course measured and certified, or from a prospective measurer requiring details of future training seminars - should be addressed to the appropriate Area Measurement Secretary, as follows:

Midland Counties AAA: Stuart Holdsworth, 3 Malling Avenue,
Broughton Astley, Nr. Leicester, LE9 6QS.

Northern Counties AA: Paul Hodgson, 29 Rookhope, Rickelton,
Washington, Tyne & Wear, NE38 9HW.

Southern Counties AA: Richard Smith, 48 Heythorp Street, London, SW18 5BN.
(Deputy: Dave Bendy, The Patch, Pemswell Road,
Minehead, Somerset)

Welsh AAA: Dave Dodwell, 10A Pencoedtre Road, Cadoxton,
Barry, South Glamorgan, CF6 7SD.

May 1989.

Mike Tomlins,
AAA Course Measurement Secretary.