

Minutes of Course Measurement Working Party

27 November 2010

Held at London Marathon Offices, Southwark Street, London

Present: Hugh Jones (Chairman), Phil Holland (Secretary & acting Measurement Secretary - Wales)

Area Measurement Secretaries: Mike Sandford (South), Kym Wheeler (Midlands), Alan Ritchie (North)

Paul Hodgson, Brian Porter (North Secretary – designate), Dafydd Ellis (Wales Secretary – designate)

Apologies: Alan Young (Scotland), John Temperton (RunBritain)

1. Welcome & farewell

CMWP expressed appreciation of the work done by Bill Reynolds, who died during the year. Bill was particularly helpful during the formation of the Association of Course Measurers.

CMWP welcomed Brian Porter and Dafydd Ellis, who were expected to take office in Spring 2011.

2. Review of Actions from meeting of 14 November 2009

ACTION – Mike Sandford to invite Alan Young to provide a list of Scottish courses for the website. - Deferred until 2011(see area report)

ACTION – Phil Holland – Report to Athletics Services re open road races held in Gloucestershire without licence and/or measurement certificate. - Done – effective action taken by AS, although still some problems.

ACTION – Mike Sandford – Invite volunteers from South for new post of Deputy Area Measurement Secretary – Decided to defer.

ACTION – Mike Sandford – Ask RunBritain manager for course measurement to be included in planned seminars for race directors – Some seminars held, with some course measurement content, but CMWP would prefer more direct involvement. NEW ACTION – Phil Holland to follow up with RunBritain.

ACTION – Phil Holland – Draft a constitution for the Association of UK Course Measurers and circulate to CMWP, then all measurers for comment. - Completed – AUKCM formed.

ACTION – Mike Sandford – Communicate CMWP discussion of multi-terrain certification to Tim Grose (Power of 10) – Done.

ACTION – Phil Holland – Confirm new wording of Rule 205.4 (ii) to John Temperton. - Done, and revision incorporated in new rulebook. Unfortunately, a printing error has 2% rather than 0.2% and action to correct this has stalled. (see also Item 4) NEW ACTION – Phil Holland to follow up with John Temperton.

ACTION – Bill Reynolds – Introduce course checks by race referees into RunBritain's consideration of referee's duties. - No information. (see also Item 4) NEW ACTION – Phil Holland to follow up with John Temperton.

ACTION – Mike Sandford – Organise GPS section of website. - Done.

ACTION – Mike Sandford – Extend development of website for Midlands and North. - Done – see Item 8.

ACTION – All – Provide a copy for the website of any general interest articles on course measurement. - Kym Wheeler has provided one article.

3. Reports from Area Measurement Secretaries

SCOTTISH AREA REPORT – 2010

By Alan Young

Measurements

Still only 2 “active” measurers. Vast majority measured by the Scottish Area Secretary

Marathon	2
Half Marathon	4
10k	7
10 mile	2
Circuit for 100k / 24 hour	1
5k	1
5 mile	1
TOTAL	18

Certificates

Traditionally none issued, but copy of the Measurement Report provided to Race Director. Draft prepared and consideration to be given to start and issue, as and when Scottish Events included on Website.

Course Measurement Website

Area Sec to commence adding Measurements to the Website, December / January.

ARC

Still no approach from them in Scotland.

Training

No new measurers have been trained, but Scottish Athletics have indicated that they are still supportive if sufficient numbers were to come forward.

Measurers

A couple of “Park Runs” have been measured by “measurers who were trained some time ago, and have a Jones Counter”. However these individuals only wish to measure events associated with their running club or local Park Run, and it has been difficult to obtain measurement reports from them.

Phil Holland added that he had met Alan in Scotland at the end of October and they had discussed details of transfer of Scottish data to the website. Phil had shown Alan the facilities available to the ACMS.

ACTION – Alan Young to add Scottish measurement details to the website.

MIDLAND AREA SECRETARY'S REPORT

By Kym Wheeler

I took over as the Midland Area Secretary from Phil Holland in April/May 2010. After a few months with Phil shadowing me to help as required, I was let loose on the system. To Phil, for all his help and advice, I offer many thanks and, to Mike Sandford for his patience with all my questions as I became familiar with the computer system, I would also say thank you.

This year, to 22nd November, 53 certificates have been issued for the Midlands area. The Midlands has welcomed a new measurer, Garga Chamberlain, who is covering the Bristol/Avon area with Phil. This brings the number of active measurers in the area to 15.

A debate has been underway about what surface actually constitutes "Road" when it was realised that well over 10% of the Stratford Marathon is run over a surface that is not tarmac or concrete, therefore making this well established race a multi-terrain event, not a road race. Mike, Phil and others have been investigating and will advise on their findings in due course.

Several certificates have already been issued for races to be held in 2011 and it would be good if more race organisers were this efficient.

North of England Report

By Alan Ritchie

This will be my final report as CM Secretary, Brian Porter will shortly be taking over the position. This will be the ideal time as the on-line administration system is adopted by the North of England.

80 measurement certificates have been issued so far in 2010. Comprising 75% new courses, and the remainder re-measured or revised. Off-road / Trail races are not measured in the North of England. However, an exception was made this year in the case of the Kielder Marathon, and a "Record of measurement" was issued. The surface is approx. 10% tar-mac, otherwise on a new rolled gravel path.

The list of measured courses on the web-site for the North dated October, will be up-dated at the end of the year.

I have five Jones counters in stock, which belong to Northern Athletics.

There are 33 measurers in the North (including some who also work in the South or Midlands) 13 are Grade 1 including 5 IAAF, and there are 20 Grade 2. We have 8 Measurers who do not use computers & email.

The Measurers' up-grading course which I intended to hold this year did not take place due to other commitments eg. the unusual number of new and revised courses which had to be measured. I apologise to the CMWP and to the many Grade 2 Measurers who are overdue their up-grading.

WALES – Report to CMWP

By Phil Holland

Background

Tim Gasser resigned in April and there was no obvious successor in Wales. The only other Grade 1 measurer is working in Orkney, and there were 4 Grade 2 measurers. There were also some problems with measurement administration in Wales.

With full support from Steve Brace (Chairman, Welsh Athletics) I agreed to act temporarily as ACMS for Wales and to transfer the measurement records to the online system. With the support of RunBritain, we also sought to train new measurers.

Progress

I collected the bulk of the measurement files from Tim in May, excluding measurement reports and certificate information later than April 2007. With assistance from Mike Sandford, this data has been transferred to the website and is now publicly available (selected pre-2000 records only). There are now 221 courses & 642 races on the website. I have since received a file of certificates issued in 2007/08 and will add this data shortly. I have been unable to obtain the missing 2007-10 measurement reports.

New measurement reports have been added to, and certificates issued from the website since July. Copies of

some of the missing reports have been supplied by measurers and race directors, and I hope to complete the data by this means.

Measurers

There are 2 Grade 1 measurers – Tim Gasser in Llanelli only measures locally, and Mike Burns measures in the southeast on his infrequent visits to Cardiff. Of the Grade 2 measurers, Dafydd Ellis covers North Wales and Lyn Rees Mid/West Wales. They are 70 miles apart (direct), nearly 100 miles by road.

The other Grade 2 measurers are clustered in the Cardiff/Newport area – 3 of the 5 are newly qualified. We are also helped by North measurers in the northeast, and Midlands measurers in the east. Additional measurers are needed in the northeast and in the Powys area.

Future

Dafydd Ellis has expressed an interest in taking over as ACMS and will attend the meeting. Dafydd is the most experienced measurer in Wales, but has yet to be upgraded to Grade 1. I hope to rectify this in the near future.

In the course of entering the data, I have examined in detail over 100 of the measurement reports from the past 10 years. I have found aspects of measurement and reporting which could do with improvement, and it is intended to organise a refresher course. This is difficult with the wide geographical spread of the small number of measurers.

ACTION - Phil Holland to arrange upgrading for Dafydd Ellis.

Dafydd Ellis commented that since he started measuring in 1986 he had had almost no contact with other measurers and little contact from the national organisation. He welcomed the change brought by AUKCM.

SOUTH OF ENGLAND REPORT

by Mike Sandford

In the last 12 months 127 new courses have been certified (Compared with 115 reported at last meeting for 2008-9). These figures include modifications to part of course which may not involve a complete remeasurement. All modifications require a new certification for a course.

The total of 127 includes 3 race walk courses. In addition to these measured and certified courses, statements of measurement were issued for 3 multiterrain measurements, which are not certified accurate since the measurement accuracy does not meet road race standards.

The total number of certificates issued (new course measurements plus renewals) was 414. 43 of these were for ARC races, the remainder being for races with UKA permits.

There were 284 renewals of previous certificates (compared to 257 reported at the last meeting.) This is a disappointing figure, very substantially less than the number which should have been issued if all road races claiming a distance had applied for renewals.

As I have said for several years there is a need to monitor race directors to check that they comply with the UKA rule that all road races claiming a distance must hold a current certificate of course accuracy. We have repeatedly brought this to the attention of Athletics Services who issue the licences and it was raised with Run Britain a year ago, and this was repeated in June 2010 I have not been informed of any positive action being taken by these authorities and presumably this is why so many race directors do not comply with the rules.

Those that do comply generally find that the on-line renewal service is efficient and timely. Occasionally people have difficulty with finding the right paper work to fill in the details for the on-line renewal application, but that is partly what the renewal process ensures – that the race director has all the necessary documentation with which to lay out the course again as measured.

I have handled a good number of queries from Power of 10 and runbritainrankings about courses where the times lead to suspicions about the course. Regrettably some of these are found not to have renewed their course certification or in some cases have changed the course without a remeasurement.

The 130 measurements since the last meeting were made by 35 different measurers. I list 47 as available for measuring. Although a few may be temporarily unavailable due to family, work or health reasons, I keep them on the list if they may at some future time be available for new measurements. Sometimes a retiree can be persuaded to turn out and adjust a course previously measured by himself or do a bit more work for his local club, and this always welcome even if he is no longer on the list of active measurers.

Paul Felton (Suffolk) has announced he is retiring at the end of the year. Paul has done very valuable service: 54 courses certified since 1996. I am very grateful for all his work and his clear reports.

During the year 3 trainees were accredited as graded 2 measurers in the South: Brian Holden (Guernsey), Rod Paris (Alderney), and John Quersret (Surrey). All completed the on-line theory courses and the practical, at Abingdon (March) or Cardiff (July).

Although we have a working coverage of the South, I hope new trainees will continue to come forward, to help especially where the load is high (eg London), and to be ready to pick up work as people retire. All measurers are asked to be on the lookout for potential candidates and to direct them to the on-line lessons.

4. Update on International Measurement Matters

Hugh Jones reported that there had been some difficulty with the consignment of Jones counters this year. These are usually brought to London by Pete Riegel in connection with his London Marathon visit. His flight was cancelled this year because of volcanic ash, and the counters were shipped by courier. UKA had some difficulty sorting out customs duty and collection of the counters.

Dave Cundy (Australia) and David Katz (USA) have been appointed as verifiers for London Marathon 2011 and Olympic Marathon 2012 respectively.

Hugh also reported that IAAF measurers had discussed the amount of off-road surface which could be included in a road measurement and had recommended adopting a figure for International races less than the UK figure. They had also discussed the confirmation of the course run (which we would like added to the race referee's duties).

[The relevant minutes from their meeting are included below]

Mike Sandford said that he had been trying to resolve the measurement of the Gibraltar 100k, where the course had been adjusted at the last minute without the involvement of a course measurer. It is possible that the adjustments were not made correctly and that the course as run may have been slightly short.

Rule 240.2

There was some discussion regarding the question of the amount of a road race that could be held on a surface other than a standard metalled road surface (grass or an all-weather synthetic surface such as the track in a stadium). HJ said that UKA (RunBritain) admitted 10% of the distance for races of 10km or less and 5% for the incremental distance for races over 10km. It was agreed that this amount was excessive for international races and that the proportion of the race distance should be no more than 5% for races up to 10km and 3% of the incremental distance for longer races. This would be proposed to the Commission for consideration.

Rule 260.28

The current IAAF Rules for World Records require the course measurer or another IAAF-AIMS course measurer in possession of the full documentation of the course measurement to ride in the lead vehicle. The Regulations for IAAF Label Road Races require that a qualified measurer or other suitable qualified official in possession of the measurement documentation ride in the

lead vehicle to ensure that the athletes run the course as measured. It was agreed that in most cases this was sufficient, whilst maintaining the current IAAF Rule for World Record homologation.

5. Run Britain report

No items to discuss. Phil Holland had provided a short news item about this meeting for the RunBritain newsletter.

6. Membership, Training & Upgrading

Phil Holland said that our constitution required the CMWP to confirm the accreditation of new measurers. The following were confirmed as Grade 2 Measurers:

Brian Holden, Rod Paris, John Querstret (South), Garga Chamberlain (Midlands), Phil Cook, Alex Donald, Ian McDonald (Wales).

There were no upgradings to Grade 1 during the year, and the need for upgrading seminars next year was noted.

Hugh Jones said that Kym Wheeler and Brian Porter had been added to the IAAF Grade B list.

7. Budget

Phil Holland said that he had agreed to produce a summary budget for RunBritain and requested details of members expenditure.

ACTION – All members – Provide details of expenditure for budget purposes.

8. Course Measurement Website

Mike Sandford reported on the improvements made to the website and promised to provide some statistics to be included with these minutes. These are included in the following report.

Website – by Mike Sandford

The developments planned a year ago have been completed and all the Midlands records have been imported into the on-line system which has been in use for the so that certified course lists are now displayed for Midlands measurers and Midland counties. A start has been made on importing the Welsh records.. We are now ready to import the other regions -North and Scotland are expected to be imported in 2011.

Once the importation process is complete for an area, the area secretary can record measurement summaries on-line, certify races, and issue certificates by email (or by post if necessary). It will also be possible for measurers to prepare their measurement summary by filling in an on-line form, which is then held in the on-line database ready for issuing certificates of course accuracy.

Developing the new uniform database structure and making the new webpages has taken approaching 2,000 hours, but in the long term this will prove to have been well worthwhile through the time saved for measurement secretaries, as well as for the facilities offered to runners and race directors to search the course lists.

In addition to my own time I would like to record the very major contributions made by two people. Firstly Phil Holland did an enormous amount of work helping to develop a common database format into which all areas' data could be imported, then massaging the Midlands data to fit, as well as a great deal of testing of the website. Once we got the site functioning for the Midlands, Kym Wheeler was introduced to it as a new user and also participated in the refinement of the user interface. She has prepared a user's manual which will be useful for other area secretaries when they start to use the facilities for their own areas.

Future development over the next year will include plotting of race locations on county maps. This becomes possible because we have introduced a new field into our records: the grid reference of the race start.

The website now receives an average of over 300 visitors per day: The the number of pages served was 464,000 compared with 354,000 last year.

Scans of the measurers' course maps are available on-line for South Courses only at present. The facilities are in place to extend this for other areas. What will need to be done is that the area secretary has to scan the course map as he certifies each course and upload this as a .pdf file. .

The pages for the runningcourse.org.uk website for the renewal of certificates of course accuracy for ARC events need to be moved to use the new system on the coursemeasurement.org.uk website, which has been designed in a way which makes it possible to handle any licensing body.

9. AUKCM Website

Phil Holland said that in sorting the Welsh measurement files he had found a number of older documents of interest, including early minutes of the CMWP. He intended to add these to the AUKCM website, which will cover matters related to the organisation and administration of course measurement in the UK. Technical matters would be on the UK Course Measurement website. The cost of the AUKCM website is minimal – less than £5 per year.

10. Guidelines for Charges – review

We last reviewed our Guidelines for Charges in 2006. It was agreed that the rates were still relevant and no change was necessary.

11. Measurement on Smooth Gravel Surfaces

Phil Holland said that this question had arisen in the case of the Shakespeare Marathon (already mentioned in the Midlands report) which included 6.8 miles of gravel cycleway. The race had been issued with a road certificate for more than 15 years and the error was not noticed until the records were being transferred to the website. This led to a difficult discussion with the race director and Phil had agreed to investigate the accuracy of measurement on the gravel surface before the 2011 race. Unfortunately this had not been possible during the summer, and Mike and Phil agreed to carry out the investigation before the race in May (probably during March).

ACTION – Phil Holland/Mike Sandford – Arrange investigation of gravel surface at Stratford.

12. Any other business

Phil Holland referred to recent difficulties with a 10k road race in the South organised by a triathlon club under British Triathlon Association rules. He had read the rules and they made no reference to the accuracy of distances stated. Mike Sandford said that he was still uncertain whether the organiser intended to obtain a UKA licence and comply with UKA rules, and would only issue a measurement certificate if this was the case.

Phil knew of other road races organised by triathlon clubs, at least some of which had UKA licences. CMWP agreed that Phil write to the British Triathlon Association to seek their views on accuracy of distance and to encourage them to adopt our standards for separate road races organised by their affiliated clubs.

ACTION – Phil Holland – Write to British Triathlon Association regarding separate road races organised by their members.

List of Actions

ACTIONS OUTSTANDING from last meeting

ACTION – Phil Holland to follow up with RunBritain inclusion of course measurement in seminars for race directors.

ACTION – Phil Holland to follow up with John Temperton correction of Rule 205.4 (ii)

ACTION – Phil Holland to follow up with John Temperton inclusion of course check in race referee's duties.

NEW ACTIONS

ACTION – Alan Young to add Scottish measurement details to the website

ACTION - Phil Holland to arrange upgrading for Dafydd Ellis

ACTION – All members – Provide details of expenditure for budget purposes.

ACTION – Phil Holland/Mike Sandford – Arrange investigation of gravel surface at Stratford.

ACTION – Phil Holland – Write to British Triathlon Association regarding separate road races organised by their members.