

UKA Course Measurement Working Party 10 Nov 2007

Minutes of CMWP - UCL, London, 10 November 2007.

Present:

Chairman and IAAF/AIMS Course Measurement: Hugh Jones
International and former BAF Measurement Secretary: Paul Hodgson
Midlands: Phil Holland
North: Alan Ritchie
Scotland: Alan Young
South: Mike Sandford (minutes secretary)

Apologies:

N. Ireland: John Glover
Wales: Tim Glasser

1. Finalise agenda, agree minute taking, and plans for approval and distribution/publication of minutes etc

It was agreed that Mike Sandford would prepare a draft of the minutes. After approval by all they would be placed on the website.

2. Reports from measurement secretaries

Midlands

Phil Holland reported that he had 6 grade 1 measurers (+2 from the South) operating in his area. There were 11 grade 2 measurers (+1 from the South). During the year 2 new measurers had qualified as grade 2. One had learnt the theory through emails with Phil, the second had done the web-based theory course. A practical had then been held at Thornbury which was successful despite very wet conditions. One grade 1 measurer had been lost, in Herefordshire, which could however be covered for the moment by measurers in adjacent counties. Apart from Herefordshire there was good coverage.

The issuing of renewed certificates of course accuracy was presently improving after the hiatus which accompanied the transfer of the permit issuing to UKA Athletics Services (AS), as a result of a circular which Phil had sent to race directors, and also with the help of the information now regularly provided by AS from the permit application and course measurement forms.

North

Alan Ritchie said measurement in his area was provided for with 40 measurers, although he noted that there was slight imbalance, with fewer races now being held in the North East, whereas there was room for additional measurers for Derbyshire and Merseyside. Two measurers had been lost. One new measurer had qualified after training with a number of grade 1 measurers.

A number of very experienced measurers were due for upgrading and he would need to have the costs of an upgrading seminar met by UKA as had been done for the Midlands and South upgrading seminar which had been held in 2006. It was suggested that Alan should provide a budget for the seminar to John Temperton at AS who had a budget for course measuring which included training seminars. He should also ask for expense forms to enable measurers to claim their travelling expenses. (ACTION: Alan Ritchie)

Alan had not been included the permit list distributions made by AS. (ACTION: Mike Sandford to email Adam Thomas of AS and request Alan being included in the emailed distribution)

Alan said that he was considering retirement at some point from his position as Course Measurement Secretary for the North of England and was on the lookout for a potential successor.

Scotland

Alan Young reported that he had measured 18 courses in the last year and Adrian Stott had measured 2. He had put out fliers requesting volunteers to undertake measurement training, but only one had come forward. However, Scottish Athletics had said they were only willing to fund a training course at the Grangemouth facility if there were a minimum of three trainees. Additionally, it had not been possible to fund the training of one new Course Measurer in Orkney, who would have perhaps covered the Northern and Western Isles.

Paul Hodgson mentioned that he had measured 3 courses for AIMS in Glasgow, and courses had been measured by other North of England measurers, for which Alan had no details. Alan said that he would make a central record of all courses measured in Scotland, and would need copies of all measurement reports. (ACTION: All measurement secretaries, and UKA measurers - Send copies of measurement reports for Scottish races to Alan Young)

Alan said that he had very little contact with Scottish Athletics. Although the permit secretary was directing to himself the race directors who declared that they needed a course measurement, he felt that many races might be relying on old measurements. It was hard to know their true status since the records which had been made by the late Raymond Hutcheson during his time as the measurement coordinator for Scotland are not easily accessible. He would welcome the support of the UKCMWP in encouraging Scottish Athletics to apply the certification standards called for under UKA Rules for permitted road races.

Northern Ireland

After some discussion the CMWP noted that John Glover for Northern Ireland had emailed to saying, "The idea of registered events stating an exact distance having accurate measuring seems to be catching on but it is a slow process - any 'encouragement' from UKA is appreciated." It was also noted that the situation in Wales may be similar to Scotland and Northern Ireland, since up to date lists of measured courses do not appear to be available. It was decided that a letter should be prepared to be sent from the CMWP to Scottish Athletics and Northern Ireland Athletics noting how the UKA rules on course measurement are implemented in England and seeking their support for the efforts of their course measurement representative in implementing a common system throughout the UK. (ACTION: Hugh Jones draft letter to be sent to Scotland and Northern Ireland on behalf of the UKCMWP.)

[Note added by minute secretary- Welsh Athletics had a well developed Measurement Certification Scheme which mirrored the practices in England. However, the latest course list displayed on the course measurement website is dated April 2006. Tim Glasser who has recently taken over as measurement secretary should be invited to indicate if he feels in need of support from UKCMWP.]

South

Mike Sandford said that in the last 12 months 127 Certificates of Course Accuracy had been issued. Measurement reports had been submitted by 29 different measurers during the year.

One new measurer had completed qualification as grade 2. Although there were some measurers who could be candidates for upgrading, no upgrading had been carried out since the May 2006 joint seminar with the Midlands. A call was made in June for new measurers especially in London, Wiltshire and Norfolk. This was advertised by direct mailing of clubs in the relevant areas and on the website. The response was encouraging in terms numbers of initial enquiries. However, the outcome has been rather disappointing so far, in contrast to previous years where we had 7 in 2005 and 2 in 2006 completing the whole online theory course. At present although 4 have completed the

introductory lesson and have been given access to the full on-line theory training, and only one (from the midlands) is progressing through the test papers. A practical seminar in London had been mooted but not been arranged due to a combination of factors. Another candidate has been doing practical training with Hugh Jones from time to time and might be encouraged to complete his qualification.

Renewal of certificates for unchanged courses had been done automatically by the SEAA permit officer up to 1 April 2007, and Mike said he then had had to handle a comparatively few direct applications for renewals. After 1 April when the SEAA handed over permitting to AS, it soon became clear that he would have to undertake the certificate renewal work, and therefore he set up an on-line renewal system for race directors to use. This started operation on 13 July 2007. Lists of permits issued were first received from AS on 12 July 2007 but copies of the measurement scheme form were not received until later so it was not until September that he could start to process renewal requests for races which had been received by AS rather than directly. As a consequence of these changes, a number of permitted races between 1 April and 1 September 2007 took place without renewal of their certificate of course accuracy. 87 renewed certificates of course accuracy have been issued since on-line system started operation on 13 July 2007.

3. Interactions with UK Athletics Services: meeting of 16 August - subsequent actions

Hugh Jones reported that nothing further had been heard from John Temperton who had said that UKA measurers were covered by UKA insurance while working as course measurers and was going to investigate the possibility of formalising the role within the Endurance Officials' structure.

(ACTION: Hugh Jones to ask John Temperton the outcome about his licence enquiries and to confirm that no further action was required to establish course measurers' role for the UKA)

It was reported that budgets for course measurement administration had been provided to John Temperton and he had confirmed that a sum had been approved for the present financial year to cover these.

4. Planning for Measurers' Basic Training and Upgrading Courses

It was agreed that training courses would continue to be arranged on an ad hoc basis as need arose (see notes in reports in section 2 above), with special attention paid to the needs of Northern Ireland and Scotland.

5. Uniform Measurement Certificates

Phil Holland presented ideas he had for a uniform Certificate of Course Accuracy to be used by all UK measurement secretaries. The meeting confirmed that they thought a uniform certificate was desirable.

It was proposed that for the sake of uniformity 3 fields that have been on the South of England's certificate (for many years some go back to before 1990) should be removed: Grade of measurer, Measurement area (which can be covered by other means), and Summary of section of road available.

Included in the proposed uniform certificate was the elevation change in m/km and start/finish separation as a percentage of course length. This will make the UKA certificates compatible with IAAF certificates. In the interests of uniformity Mike Sandford agreed to these changes to the South's Certificate, provided the field for comments was retained. [Note: After the meeting Mike Sandford decided that he should consult his course measurers to see if this was agreeable also to them.]

6. Enforcement of UKA rules for measuring on race directors.

Measurement secretaries in England had not been able to do a lot of chasing of road races which stated a distance but did not have a certificate of course accuracy. It was noted that John Temperton had said that measurement secretaries should draw his attention to cases where action was needed. AS would then contact the event organiser to inform him that a new measurement was required.

7. Use of Certified Accurate Logo and certificates by ARC races. Measurement/Certification of ARC-permitted Races.

Mike Sandford had queries and complaints about events permitted by the newly formed Association of Running Clubs displaying the UKA Certified Accurate Logo on their websites and race literature. He had circulated an example from an event which had stolen the UKA logo and modified it by inserting the letters ARC for UKA. He was concerned that this was a copyright violation. When he raised this issue at the meeting with AS on 16 August he had been actioned to write to ARC to tell them they should not be using the certified accurate logo used for UKA courses.

Paul Hodgson confirmed that he remembered how the original certified accurate logo had been created. Around 1985 he had been present when John Disley had sketched the design on a piece of paper. He had been responsible for preparing a properly draughted master for the design. This design bore the initials A.A.A. for the governing body at that time and also RRC to recognise the RRC's historical contribution to the creation of accurate course measurement. Subsequently A.A.A. was replaced with BAF. Mike Sandford recalled that he was responsible for replacing BAF with UKA and colouring the original black and white design. The meeting agreed that ARC should not be using any of the elements of the "Certified Accurate" logo, including use of that unique phrase.

Mike reported that he had written to the ARC drawing their attention to the improper use of the certified accurate logo, and the wrongly claimed certification of their events. He had also drawn attention to the guidance he had issued to South of England Measurers to the effect that

- 1) Measurers are free to decide to measure a race which declares it is going for an ARC permit, however they should feel no obligation to try and provide such services to non-UKA events.
- 2) Measurers of ARC permitted events are encouraged to submit reports of measurements to the area measurement secretary, but no UKA certificate of course accuracy will be issued. The measurers' reports will be placed on-hold in the certification systems. This means that the courses could be retrospectively certified if and when the situation gets sorted out.
- 3) Measurers are free to charge "the going rate" for ARC measurements and are not necessarily restricted to the scale of fees for UKA affiliated clubs.

Mike said that he had also suggested that it might be possible for the ARC to set up a parallel system of course certification. This would need to be independent of the present system which is funded by the UKA. He had had a positive reply from the Chairman of the ARC suggesting further discussion, and he thought that the ARC would very likely agree to the request not to misuse the UKA certification process. Phil Holland said that he had received an independent approach from an ARC steering committee member suggesting that a parallel scheme for certification of ARC courses should be setup.

The meeting noted that according to the latest information on the ARC website 115 clubs were listed as affiliated. However, many of these had also affiliated English Athletics. ARC website lists permits issued for 121 races (this figure includes multi-terrain for which certificates of course accuracy would not be appropriate). Some expressed the view that many measurers and certifiers have as their first priority the provision of accurate courses for road runners and were not particularly motivated to take sides in a political dispute between competing permit bodies. The English measurement secretaries said they would have no opposition to a completely separate

system of certification for ARC events, which did not depend in anyway on UKA funding. However it was pointed out that an ARC scheme would not have any recognition by the IAAF, e.g. in the event that a world record was run in an ARC event, since the IAAF recognises only the UKA as the governing body for road racing in the UK. No objection was expressed to Mike having further contact with the ARC about certification, provided that this was entirely independent of the UKA measurement and certification scheme.

8. High Visibility bibs for measurers

It was agreed that vests should continue to be issued to new measurers. Mike Sandford said he had a stock of 9 vests bearing "COURSE MEASURER" on the back. There were 4 sizes- small, medium, large, extra large. Phil Holland said that the two measurers he recently qualified had not been issued with vests. (ACTION Mike Sandford send one medium, one large vest to Phil Holland.)

Phil Holland said that he could get new vests made for less than £10 each depending on order size. It was agreed that Phil should purchase a further stock on behalf of UKA. (Action Phil Holland - purchase more high visibility bibs)

In this connection Mike Sandford said that he thought measurers should consider having a warning sign (compliant with road signage regulations) to be displayed on any safety vehicle protecting a measurer from following traffic. He said thought that anything that explained to other road users what was going on would be useful. Phil said he used to have a frame on his bike to support such a notice. (ACTION: Mike Sandford to purchase some signs and trial their use)

9. New Counters (a) New design of mechanical jones counter -- (b) Electronic alternative

The Jones-Oerth counter is no longer being made because the gears manufacturer has discontinued supply. There are sufficient counters held in UK to meet immediate needs. A new design, the Jones-Riegel counter, has been completed in the USA and pre-production models are about to be ordered. (See posting at <http://measure.infopop.cc/eve/forums/a/frm/f/1081087852>) The new design should be available for purchase next Spring.

It was noted that there had been considerable experimentation in the USA with use of an electronic revolution counter in conjunction with divisions marked on the front wheel. (See <http://measure.infopop.cc/eve/forums/a/frm/f/89510622>) Views were expressed that while these might be alternative to the purely mechanical type, the latter had the advantage of simplicity and almost foolproof operation even in the hands of a beginner.

10. Website: (a)status, (b)how can it be made useful for all areas.

Mike Sandford reported that the website had continued to be developed as a resource for UK road races since its revamping in June 2006. Website expenses since 1 April 2007 have been met by UKA. It now receives about 2000 distinct visitors per month. It contains:

- Contact details for Measurement Secretaries and Measurers for England (South, Midlands and North) and for Measurement Secretaries only in Northern Ireland, Scotland & Wales.
- Lists 3389 courses certified in the South since 1988. Searchable by county, measurer, name, no.
- Links to race websites in the South since July 2007
- Course maps for 450 courses in the South since February 2004.
- On-Line renewal of Certificates of Course Accuracy for race organisers in the South

- Introductory lesson on course measurement to attract new measurers.
- Downloadable measurement report forms for use in the South.
- Course measurement FAQs for Race Organisers
- Information about course measurement for Runners.
- History of course measurement – article by late John Jewell.
- Private Area for Measurers – Measurers and trainees need to be set up with a user name and password to gain access, using the registration page, or by email to the webmaster.
- Well indexed by Google – many runners find information about the course (~1500 visits per month)

Contents of private area :

- For trainee measurers:
 - # Theory Seminar for teaching new UKA measurers – 10 lessons, about 60 web pages.
- For all measurers:
 - # On-line form to fill in a course measurement summary sheet which can then be downloaded as a .pdf file for use in measurement reports.
 - # Tutorial for measurers to help them generate .pdf formatted measurement report files from word documents, spreadsheets and image files.
- For measurers in the South only at present:
 - # You can submit your course measurement summary details by filling in an on-line form. The details go straight into a database to await certification when your full report is emailed or posted to the certifier. Note - the preferred format for electronic submission of reports is a single .pdf file. But if it does not come in that form we convert it and store it off line that way. The course map & start/finish sketch is extracted and put on line as a downloadable .pdf file.
 - # Search for race directors' contact details
 - # Display list of courses awaiting certification and also display a list of courses certified, since the online database started on 25 May 2006
 - # Because courses since Jan 2004 have been scanned to produce .pdf files, it is very easy for me to supply a copy of the full measurement report. This will be free to measurers, but race directors who have lost their copy of the report will be charged £2. Pre 2004 reports still have to be scanned from the archive of paper files.

Developments being considered for private area:

- Ability to appoint additional certifiers (this requires a lot more automation of the certification process which at present goes on behind the scenes.)
- On-line calculation and filling in of measurement reports i.e. bicycle calibration sheet & Measurement details sheets. – A pilot project indicates that this is feasible but more work needs to be done.
- Production of a .pdf document containing the Theory Seminar
- Conversion of Theory Seminar to produce different versions for IAAF and for specific countries as required.

Possible developments for use in other areas of the UK were discussed. Mike and Phil had started to consider how to display courses from his offline database on the website. This would be progressed further. However, a more easily implemented extension which would be of use throughout the whole UK would be to have a common online database of contact details for all active measurers in the UK. This could be accessed from a map as can be done at present for measurers in the South. This was supported by the meeting. Phil Holland offered to convert measurers' post codes to grid references so that all measurers could be plotted on a map of the UK

to appear on the website as is presently done for measurers in the South. (ACTION: Mike Sandford/Phil Holland)

It was noted that Tim Glasser who could not be present had emailed to make an offer of help to build a dynamic, database-driven website.

Alan Ritchie said that he thought it would be preferable to provide his course data for direct display on the website rather than as a link to data on the NOEAA website where it has appeared hitherto. (ACTION: Alan Ritchie)

11. Any other items

Hugh Jones reported he had circulated suggestions from the UKA Safety Officer about safety for measurers. He thought they did not address the most important safety issues faced by measurers. Mike Sandford had extracted instructions relative to safety from the on-line training course and it was agreed that these should be tidied up into a single document to provide a safety code for measurers. (ACTION: Mike Sandford circulate draft safety code, for agreement before publication for measurers.)