

MINUTES OF AAA COURSE MEASUREMENT WORKING PARTY MEETING, HELD AT THE KENNEDY HOTEL, CARDINGTON STREET, LONDON, NW1, ON SATURDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY 1991.

PRESENT:

John Disley	Chairman, AAA Course Measurement Working Party
Mike Tomlins	AAA Course Measurement Secretary
Max Coleby	Member AAA Course Measurement Working Party
Jack Selby	Member AAA Course Measurement Working Party
Roger Gibbons	Southern Counties AA Course Measurement Secretary
Stuart Holdsworth	Midland Counties AA Course Measurement Secretary
Paul Hodgson	Northern Counties AA Course Measurement Secretary
Dave Walsh *	AAARRC Statistician

\* Co-opted in his capacity as AAARRC Statistician and as deputy for Dave Dodwell, Welsh AA Course Measurement Secretary, who was indisposed.

Representatives of Northern Ireland and Scottish AA's were also invited to attend, but were unable to do so.

1. DISCUSSION OF IAAF PROPOSALS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF WORLD ROAD RACE RECORDS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS ON THE AAA COURSE MEASUREMENT SCHEME

This item was discussed in depth by the meeting. John Disley initially provided background on the matter, and said that the various clauses were not merely draft proposals, but definitive recommendations, which he expected would be formally adopted by the IAAF in the near future.

The meeting expressed regret that no opportunity had apparently been given for an experienced and knowledgeable representative of the UK road running fraternity to provide input to the deliberations, with the result that, on the face of it, we were being asked to comment on a fait accompli.

Max Coleby circulated a paper on the subject. He said that whilst he strongly supported the intentions behind the IAAF proposals, there were shortcomings in certain of the recommendations which could work to the detriment of quality runners achieving world best performances on courses that would not qualify under the new arrangements. For example, on a flat, point to point marathon course, it would be perfectly possible for an athlete to run a world best time into a modest head wind, but under the "30% rule", such a record would be invalid. Max asked why the track and field record requirement of wind speeds up to 2 metres per second could not be adopted in major road races, and wind gauges installed along the race route to measure the wind speed? John Disley countered by saying that this had been tried but had proved unsuccessful, in that, by necessity, the equipment had to be set up very close to the course, and it had been adversely affected by passing race vehicles, and knocked by the runners themselves.

Max's paper also illustrated a situation where courses could have short but steep downhill sections, which would breach the "one metre in a kilometre drop in elevation" rule, whilst remaining predominantly uphill races.

Whilst accepting that there were imperfections in certain of the IAAF recommendations, the AAACMWP recognised that the proposals represented an honest attempt to lay down sensible ground rules for the establishment of world road race records, and accordingly the meeting felt able to support the IAAF proposals as they stand, subject to the IAAF providing opportunities for comment and "fine tuning" of the arrangements once the procedures are put to the test.

The AAACMWP did feel, however, that under the "Certification of the Course" clause, in the absence of an approved IAAF Course Measurer, which is clearly preferable, an AAA Grade 1 Measurer would be equally dependable in certifying the accuracy of a UK course for World Record purposes, as all Grade 1 Measurers on the AAA panel are vastly experienced.

As to other implications the IAAF proposals would have on the AAA Course Measurement Scheme as it stands, the Measurement Summary Form, which forms part of every measurement report, will clearly need to be amended to include details of the start and finish altitude in metres above sea level, and in cases where the start and finish points in races are not in the same locality, a note of the straight line distance between the two points will be required. Such information would be readily available by reference to the standard 2½" ordnance survey maps.

ACTION: AAARRC SEC: Subject to acceptance of AAACMWP report/recommendations, forward copy to IAAF.  
ARBA CM SECS: Amend Course Measurement Summary Form to include provision for data on start/finish altitude, and distance between start/finish points (where applicable).

## 2. PROPOSALS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHEME FOR UK ROAD RACE RECORDS

The AAACMWP then considered the separate question of UK road race records, and in doing so followed precisely the same format as the IAAF proposals.

Our recommendations were sent to the AAARRC on 21st February, and are listed again separately as an appendix to these Minutes. The AAACMWP are proposing that for UK records, the 10K and 10 mile race distance are added to those on the IAAF list (and road relays omitted). We have also slightly amended/enhanced the "Certification" and "Validation" clauses, and have endorsed the IAAF proposals on "Elevation" and "Start and Finish Points", although we reserve the right to "fine tune" these in the light of working experience. The AAACMWP thought it right to leave "Timekeeping" and "Dope Control" to the appropriate AAA experts in these fields.

ACTION: AAARRC SEC: Kindly bring the AAACMWP recommendations before the next meeting of the AARRC for their consideration/approval.

### 3. AAA ROAD RACE PERMIT SCHEME & THE PROPER MEASUREMENT OF COURSES

Despite extensive publicity and a previous recommendation from the AAARRC that "with effect from 1st January 1990, Area Permit Secretaries will be authorised to refuse a Permit to a race which advertises a specific distance, when that distance has not been certified correct by an approved AAA Course Measurer", it is clear that permits are still being issued to events stating a specific race distance, when no attempt has been made to have that distance certified as correct in the proper manner.

As a consequence, a number of races where the accuracy of the course has not been certified, are being included in ranking lists which are being reproduced in athletic journals. Specifically, ranking lists compiled by Martin Duff and reproduced recently in "AW" were significantly flawed, in that no attempt had been made to check whether the performances listed had been achieved on a properly measured course, holding a current AAA Certificate of Course Accuracy.

As a result of several years hard work by members of the AAACMWP, training seminars around the Country have resulted in the number of approved measurers on the AAA panel increasing to a figure of around 150. This is considered a sufficient number to satisfy the great majority of requests from race organisers for course certification within a reasonable time scale. We therefore stick very firmly to the original concept of "No proper measurement, no permit" in cases where events specify a distance.

In a further step to achieve this objective as soon as possible, the AAACMWP formally confirmed the proposal by Max Coleby and Paul Hodgson (already placed before the AAARRC) for a two-tier Permit scheme, which clearly differentiates between events where the race distance has been certified correct by an approved AAA Measurer and, as such, are eligible for ranking/record list purposes, and those which have not been properly measured and are thus ineligible for inclusion in ranking/record lists.

The precise agreed wording for the Race Permit Application Form and the wording to appear on the Race Permit itself (as recommended by the AAACMWP) is detailed separately on an appendix to these Minutes.

The Area Measurement Secretaries agreed to co-operate with persons compiling ranking lists, but it was felt most strongly that, as the AAARRC has an official Statistician in Dave Walsh, who is setting up a substantial data base on road race performances (including the important aspect of whether the courses have an AAA Certificate of Course Accuracy), it should be his responsibility for producing any official ranking/record lists, and, as such, the AAARRC should be publicly encouraging liaison and the passing/checking of information with him, rather than others.

#### ACTION:

AAARRC SEC: Subject to AAARRC agreement, arrange for the re-wording of Race Permit Application Form and Race Permit as set out in the attached Appendix and introduce same as soon as possible.

#### 4. SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS ON ROADS NOT CLOSED TO TRAFFIC

At the last meeting of the AAARRC, the AAACMWP was asked to confirm that on courses where the roads are not fully closed to traffic, measurers be required to follow a line that keeps runners on the correct side of the road, or as otherwise specified as being the line of the race.

In the vast majority of cases, roads are not closed, and only the left hand half of the road is available to the runners. In such cases, the measurer will take a line that could go to the crown of the road, but not beyond. Few measurers would be foolhardy enough to risk danger to themselves, and to runners in the race, by measuring the course into on-coming traffic beyond the crown of the road, although the meeting thought this might occasionally happen in the really quiet, rural situation.

Basically, the safety aspect in road running is the responsibility of the race organiser and the on-course marshals he appoints. Course measurers should do nothing to jeopardise this factor. At training seminars for course measurers, it is emphasised that "the measurer should measure the course by taking the shortest possible route that a competitor could follow within the section of the road permitted for use in the race", as defined by the race organiser. The following instruction to measurers was agreed:

"Where roads are not fully closed to traffic, measurers should follow a line that will be defined by barriers or marshals, or by written/verbal instructions provided to competitors by the race organiser either prior to the event or on race day itself".

**ACTION:**

AREA CM SECS: Please ensure that the content of this item is conveyed to all measurers in your next periodic bulletin.

#### 5. TRAINING/UPGRADING OF MEASURERS

Annual training seminars within each Area should continue as required, with each Area Course Measurement Secretary taking steps to ensure there are sufficient active measurers in place to cope with requests for certification under AAA Permit arrangements.

With regard to the upgrading of measurers from Grade 2 to Grade 1, this could be handled one of two ways. Where an Area Measurement Secretary considers that the experience and standard of work of a Grade 2 Measurer merits upgrading, he can either have a recent measurement by the person concerned checked out by an existing Grade 1 Measurer, or, probably better still, invite the candidate to attend a normal training seminar, setting them sterner tests and, perhaps, getting them to assist with the training of the new measurers.

As previously, a formal request for upgrading (together with paperwork) should then be sent to the AAA Course Measurement Secretary for processing, after consultation with John Disley.

## 6. AAA MEASUREMENT REPORT DOCUMENTATION

The meeting considered whether there was any scope for lessening the amount of paperwork necessary with regard to filing a measurement report. Often the report took longer than the measurement itself, and for busy measurers, this could prove extremely time-consuming.

The Area Measurement Secretaries all thought that the present reporting package was necessary to provide an adequate record of the measurement, and that even the full page calibration sheet was a necessary discipline, which they would be loath to dispense with.

It was mentioned that few race organisers automatically apply for a renewal of their AAA Certificate of Course Accuracy by confirming in advance of their next race that the course remains unchanged from that previously measured. A new form "Application for Renewal Certificate" has been devised and specimens will shortly be sent to Area Measurement Secretaries. The suggestion is that this form be attached to each new AAA Certificate of Course Accuracy issued, for use by the race organiser the following year.

ACTION: AREA CM SECS: Please note.

## 7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

John Disley said he thought that the possible disruption in the supply of Jones Counters was no longer threatened, as the NYRRC had located an alternative manufacturer of the relevant part of the equipment. Nevertheless, he suggested that UK supplies should be "topped up" to cover our needs for the next couple of years.

ACTION: AAACM SEC: Agreed to centralise bulk order to cover AAA stock and the four Areas, subject to advice from the Area CM Secs. of their needs.

Mike Tomlins confirmed that the AAA had agreed to fund an updated booklet detailing all the current AAA accredited Course Measurers as at February 1991. It was hoped that the proof, which would include an introductory article aimed at race organisers, would go to the printers later in the month, and the booklets available for distribution in April.

The meeting discussed the question of safety at level crossings. The policy should be that routes of road races do not cross level crossings, and unless the race organiser can produce a letter from BR confirming they have no objections to the use of the level crossing by the race, course measurers should not become involved with the measurement.

Jack Selby mentioned that, following discussions with Mike Farrell, the AAA Insurance Policy covering Race Officials, had been amended to include the reimbursement of all costs relating to accidents to measurers whilst undertaking their duties, and also any damage to the cycle itself (not previously covered).

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AAA COURSE MEASUREMENT WORKING PARTY IN RESPECT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SCHEME FOR UK ROAD RACE RECORDS.

RECORD DISTANCES

Road records will only be recognised for competitions taking place under IAAF or AAA Rules, and over the following distances:

10km, 15km, 10 miles, 20km, half-marathon, 25km, 30km, marathon and 100km.

CERTIFICATION OF THE COURSE

The course must be certified by an approved AAA Grade 1 Measurer, using an IAAF/AAA approved method of measurement.

(NB - retrospective measurement will not qualify, viz. it is the responsibility of any race director who considers the quality of entry is such that a UK record could be set, to ensure the accuracy of the course is certified beforehand by an AAA Grade 1 Measurer).

VALIDATION OF THE PERFORMANCE

Ideally, the performance should be witnessed by the Measurer who certified the course, failing which an approved representative of the AAA (such as the Race Referee), who could confirm that the race followed the measured course.

DECREASE IN ELEVATION

The decrease in elevation between the start and finish must not exceed one in a thousand, i.e. 1 metre per kilometre.

START AND FINISH

The start and finish points, measured along a straight line between them, must not be further apart than 30% of the race distance, i.e. 3 miles in a 10 mile race.

(NB - in a marathon, this rule equates to the start and finish not being further apart than 12658 metres, or 7 miles, 1523 yards).

"TIMEKEEPING" AND "DOPE CONTROL" CLAUSES

It is suggested that the recommendations for these clauses be framed by the appropriate AAA bodies/representatives/experts.