

Minimum Requirements for Certification of Race Walk Judges

Effective January 1, 1993

Approved By: TAC/USA National Athletics Officials Committee
TAC/USA Men's and Women's Race Walk Committee
November 27, 1992

Executive Summary

The following is a revision of the policies which were initially approved by the National Athletics Officials Committee and the National Men's and Women's Race Walk Committees at the 1990 TAC/USA Convention. They were revised based on comments received from Committee members. The following has now been accepted by both Committees by formal vote at their meetings at the 1992 Convention of The Athletics Congress of the United States of America:

- A two-tier system to develop and promote certified race walk judges which recognizes implementation challenges due to geography and different association circumstances
- Use of strategic resource investments to develop judging in undeveloped/underdeveloped associations
- Minimum requirements to judge record-setting performances, qualification events, national championship events and national team selection races
- Minimum qualifications for certification at each level
- Systems for promoting judges and rating competency at all levels

Revised Policy on Certifying Association, National and Master Level Race Walk Judges

As with other skilled and technical positions with officiating (e.g., starting, photo interpretation/evaluation, weights and measures) to develop an effective race walk judge requires a period of evaluated apprenticeship -- a supervised training and evaluation period to develop the necessary skills. Each TAC/USA association needs to develop procedures consistent with NAOC policy to ensure that the candidate's knowledge and skills are thoroughly evaluated by qualified TAC/USA certified judges before the apprentice official is permitted to work independently. This policy provides the basis for a consistently implemented structured training program to gain the necessary technical skills, standard body of knowledge and practical experience by establishing minimum requirements to be certified as a race walk judge.

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Minimum Requirements -- Association and National Level Certifications

Effective January 1, 1993, as part of completing the requirements to being a TAC/USA *Certified Track and Field Official* all candidates for the *TAC/USA Association Level Race Walk Judge* endorsement are to meet the following minimum requirements (in the following order):

1. Attend an association track and field certification and training clinic.
2. Take and pass the TAC/USA Official's open book examination required of all seeking to be TAC/USA certified track and field officials.
3. Meet any other criteria required by the local Association's officials certification process.
4. Submit all required paperwork to the association certification chairman (including an indication of an interest in becoming a certified race walk judge) for approval.
5. Special Additional Requirement -- A *Pre-Association Level Apprentice* period:

Work as a "*non-scoring*" judge wherein the candidates work independently ideally under the supervision of a TAC/USA certified race walk judge at three race walk only competitions. Under this arrangement, the candidate keeps his/her own judging card for recording proposed "*warnings*" and disqualification calls (i.e., "*DQ's*"), but makes no actual calls (i.e., by showing white paddle or submitting red DQ cards) during the race. Following the race, the candidate's card is compared to those prepared by certified judges for consistency and receives a positive critique of proposed warnings and DQ's. If no qualified supervisor is available, the competitors should not be subject to disqualification, only warnings.

If sufficient qualified judges are available, it is recommended that at these events, the supervising judge observe the candidate's recording of calls during the race and then discuss the calls following the race with the candidate to determine the criteria applied in making the proposed calls. As well, a file of all judging sheets during this process should be kept by the candidate.

6. For certification at the *Association* level:

Grandfather Clause. Recognizing that in some associations there are no currently active certified race walk judges, each association will be permitted to "*grandfather*" one experienced official as an *Association* level judge. As a condition of this certification, this person must be willing to conduct clinics, chair the Association's Race Walk Certification Committee (see tasks below) and help develop the local judging program by supervising the apprentice judges.

Minimum Requirements. Work a minimum of three *race walk only* competitions as an apprentice judge. as If feasible, work as an observer with an experienced TAC/USA judge holding at least the *Association* level (preferably *National Level* or higher) certification rank at "race walk only" competitions (competitions should include at least five walkers and are either to be a race walk competition which is a distinct event at a

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track and field meet or a road race limited only to race walk competitors). The official should meet all of the association's requirements for NAOC track and field certification and submit her/his paperwork to the Association Certification Chair.

It is strongly recommended that at some point during the above process (preferably as part of the clinic content/handouts) that the candidate complete each of the following:

- attend a race walk judging clinic
- view the *TAC/USA Guide to Race Walk Judging* video
- read the *1992 Race Walk Judging Handbook*
- read *Race Walk Judging in a Nutshell* by Leonard Jansen

7. For promotion from *Association* to *National* level:

It is expected that any judge wishing to secure the *National* or *Master* levels be willing to make a long-term commitment to judging races at all levels within the Association on a regular basis and is willing to travel at his/her own expense to judge major competitions outside the Association if such competition judging opportunities are not available within the Association.

An *Association* level race walk judge may apply for the *National* level certification after actively serving in a satisfactory manner for a minimum period of two years as an *Association* level race walk judge and judge at least **eight** TAC/USA sanctioned race walk competitions. As well, it is recommended the candidate should serve as an observer or apprentice judge at a minimum of **three** races involving at least three *National*, *Master* or IAAF level judges. The candidate would then submit:

- Three recommendations from certified *National*, *Master* or IAAF level judges who have personally observed the judge's competency during one or more walking only competitions;
- submit a resume of qualifying events worked; and
- provide the completed *Application for TAC/USA Certification as an Athletics Competition Official* form and any required association documentation.

This application material is to be submitted to Association Race Walk Certification Committee for review and recommendation to the Association Certification Chairman. As with the *Association* level, the Association Certification Chairman may not process any application which has not been favorably reviewed by the Association Race Walk Certification Committee.

Eligibility to Judge

Association level judges are eligible to judge with disqualification authority at local and developmental races up to and including Association Championships. *Association* level judges should participate in higher level championship competitions either in a support or in an *apprentice* "non-scoring" (i.e., no disqualification authority) observer capacity as a means of building her/his experience base at this faster and more complex level of judging. Judging at championships races higher than the Association level are limited to only those race walk judges certified at either the *National*, *Master* or IAAF levels.

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Application for Race Walk Judge Certification

Association Level. Upon completion of these minimum certification requirements, the candidate will become eligible to submit an application to become a certified judge to his/her Association Race Walk Certification Committee (if feasible, this committee should include at least two or more certified judges). The Committee will determine if the judge has the skill and experience needed to be certified at the Association level.

National Level. For those seeking promotion from the Association to National level, this application is to include:

- Favorable recommendations from at least three certified judges (holding the *National*, *Master* or *IAAF* level certification) who have observed the candidate during the apprenticeship period, a resume of qualifying race walk competitions worked
- A completed *Application for TAC/USA Certification as an Athletics Competition Official*.

The "Association Race Certification Walk Committee" is to review the application and make a recommendation to the Association Certification Chairman for processing the certification. The Association Certification Chairman may not process any application which has not been favorably reviewed by the Association Race Walk Certification and/or its Committee Chairman.

Master Level. *Master* level applicants must forward their application to the Chairman of the TAC/USA Men's and Women's Race Walk Committee since decisions concerning those to be recommended for *Master* and *IAAF* level certifications in race walk judging are made by this TAC/USA National Committee. Association Certification Chairmen are not authorized to award either the *Master* or *IAAF* certifications in race walk judging. Prior to the start of the next Olympiad, the IAAF Panel members will review applicants and submit their recommendations to the Chairs of the National Athletics Officials Committee and the National Men's and Women's Race Walk Committee.

Effective Date

The effective implementation date for these criteria/ minimum requirements is **January 1, 1993**.

Enclosure: *Application for TAC/USA Certification as an Athletics Competition Official Form*

Background — Basis for Policies

The Need: Minimum Certification Requirements and Strategic Investments

TAC/USA's National Athletics Officials Committee (NAOC) and the National Race Walk Committee policies require that all *certified* race walk judges must first be TAC/USA *Certified Track and Field Officials*. However, there has been considerable confusion as to what should be required to become a TAC/USA *Certified Race Walk Judge*. Authority given to the individual judge makes higher standards imperative. Under TAC/USA's rules, in only two officiating positions are the individual official's decision to disqualify a competitor final and without appeal--the Head Starter and the Race Walk Judge. This absolute authority must be tempered by the official having both a personal commitment to ensure fair and objective officiating to all competitors, and the appropriate knowledge and experience to exercise this authority competently and consistently.

Some Association Certification Chairmen and officials have operated under the misimpression that upon becoming a TAC/USA *Certified Track and Field Official*, all that is necessary to become a TAC/USA *Certified Race Walk Judge* at the *Association* level is to include this interest in applying for and receiving the TAC/USA officials certification card. Others assumed that one can become a certified judge by attending a clinic and could be promoted to *National* level merely by the passage of time. In fact, in race walk judging, competency can only come from actual judging experience and the certification process needs to reflect this reality.

This confusion is understandable until 1990 there were no written NAOC procedures for determining judging competency. The incorrect assumptions can be further addressed by fully implementing a competency-building apprenticeship period as a minimum requirement for being certified as an *Association* Level TAC/USA Race Walk Judge. Once implemented, it needs to be supported by *strategic investments* in judging development and strict mentoring requirements for being promoted to the *National* level. Under these policies, the National Men's and Women's Race Walk Committee's minimum level for qualification to judge a national championship or international team selection race would be holding either the *National*, *Master* or *IAAF* judging certification. Approved at NAOC's December 1990 meeting and modified as a result of comments received during a two-year trial period, the enclosed policy outlines the specific criteria to be used by Association Certification Chairmen to award the *Association* level Race Walk certification endorsement.

The Problem: Assuring Judging Competency/Consistency While Developing a National Sport Program

In seeking to provide a national cadre of judges, race walking faces a dilemma. Interest in competitive walking is growing rapidly. This growth presents a special opportunity to build the foundation of large numbers of competitors required to field a sufficient number of elite walkers to be competitive at the international level. We know, however, that we cannot build this broad base of competitors without also providing the large number of trained judges required to expose these competitors to appropriate oversight and guidance. Thus, to complement this growing interest is the need to create a nationwide cadre of effective judges who can stimulate and sustain the sport's development at the grassroots.

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The challenge in achieving this is that race walk judging clearly falls into the category of officiating which requires considerable technical knowledge, experience and skill. Due to the unique requirement that judges work independently, the current system has permitted few opportunities for the on-the-job training readily available to other officiating areas within track and field where novice officials can work as part of a "team" with more experienced officials.

It has not been possible to provide the appropriately experienced judges to serve as knowledgeable *mentors* in every community or region. Nevertheless, our most skilled judges are the very people essential to the process of transforming novice judges into seasoned judges with the knowledge and skill needed to judge elite level competitors. Thus, a comprehensive strategy must be developed which "tolerates" less than optimal judging at the outset while providing a basis for sound judging principles and practices to be developed in every region. To this end, we need to provide strategically target investments in a consistent system of training, technical assistance supports and a progression of steps supporting individual development.

The Remedy: Strategic Investments, Competency Building Apprenticeship Period, and Criteria for Judging and Advancement

The answer to the dilemma is a systematic two-tiered approach to information dissemination (via clinic content and supporting instructional materials) and a series of steps which links the level of competition to the level of available judging--via criteria for awarding regional and national championships only to those Associations with an adequate number of National and Master level judges or the resources to bring in these skilled officials. The two-tiered approach proposed here establishes one criteria initiating a judging program in an undeveloped/under-developed area and a second, more rigorous, set of criteria for judging qualifying events, national championships, record performance and team selection races. To address this dilemma, the following action steps are recommended to implement this strategy:

1. **Judging Element in Every Walking Clinic:** We must support the development of both judges and training novices to develop good technique at the grassroots level. Instruction on walking must be integrated with content focused on building interest and knowledge about judging. Therefore, the National Committee should establish a basic outline for conducting walking clinics to complement the newly revised *Judging Handbook*. This standardized clinic outline approach would include at least 40% of the clinic being devoted to explaining the rules, describing proper judging practices and techniques, with actual practice judging (e.g., while one person practice technique, other practice judging that technique) composing the remaining 60%. This outline and supporting materials must then be broadly distributed to coaches, Association Certification and Race Walk Chairs, and others.
2. **Train-the-Trainer.** The National Committee should identify regional trainers capable of training judges and identifying individual local "*mentors*" to guide the development of an area's walking judges. Grant money should be sought and strategically targeted to provide a regionally based train-the-trainer programs in those regions showing the best promise for developing a youth and intermediate walking program. To support grassroots development following materials should be distributed at no cost to all Association Certification, Race Walk and Youth Athletics Chairmen:

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- a race walk judging clinic outline
- *TAC/USA Guide to Race Walk Judging* video
- *1992 Race Walk Judging Handbook*
- *Race Walk Judging in a Nutshell* by Leonard Jansen

3. **Developmental Judging for Developmental Events.** Recognizing that it is important to have judges in areas where mentors are not available, the National Committee should tolerate less capable judges judging developmental "community" races. If these developmental programs are properly supported with instructional aids and periodic mentoring, the community based programs can mature into more sophisticated and capable walking programs--in which both the quality of the competitions and judging increases over time.

To support this step, the Race Walk Committee needs to work with the National Athletics Officials Committee to identify those experienced certified officials in undeveloped/underserved associations which show both the interest and talent to develop an association judging program. These certified officials should then receive on a "grandfathered" basis *Association* level certification as a race walk judge (see below).

At each national championship (including Youth Athletics and Masters) or national team selection event, time should be set aside for our best *National, Master* and *IAAF* level judges to conduct a clinic for local judges. As well, event planning should provide an opportunity for apprentice and *Association* level judges to observe and assist more experienced judges.

4. **Minimum Qualifications for Qualifying and Record-Setting Events.** In tolerating less than optimal judging at the developmental level, the National Committee should strengthen the integrity of record and qualifying marks by requiring that they be established at events in which at least three of the judges are certified and at least two of these judges are certified at the *National, Master* or *IAAF* levels. This would mean that initially, only certain more mature judging programs would be permitted to host national and qualifying events and that some walkers seeking to qualify for international trial events would be required to travel to these areas to achieve approved qualifying marks. Nevertheless, such a step is critical to the integrity of both the judging and the competitive results.
5. **Minimum Requirements and Regular Review Procedures for Attaining and Sustaining the National and Master Certification Levels.** In cooperation with the National Athletics Officials Committee, the National Race Walk Committee should immediately implement minimum qualifications and testing criteria for attaining and sustaining the certification levels of *National Judge* and *Master Judge*. Under no circumstances should an *Association* level judge be promoted to the *National* level without three written recommendations from currently active *National, Master* or *IAAF* level judge who have personally observed the candidate and assessed her/his judging cards for constancy and appropriate judging criteria.

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6. **Review, Designation and Retention of Master and IAAF Panel.** Extreme care must be taken in the selection and continuous appraisal of *Master* and *IAAF* level judges. These are the judges used to judge at the international and national team selection events. To address the challenge of ensuring confidence in competency of those judging our most elite walkers we must delegate the selection of these persons to the Chairman of the National Men's and Women's Race Walk Committee and/or her/his designees.

A continuous system of appraisal for retaining this certification is also needed. First, the IAAF Panel should be asked every Olympiad to evaluate the skill of those holding the *Master* judge certification to determine if this rating should be retained. Second, by December 31st of every even year, the Chair of the US IAAF Panel should require the Panel members to conduct a "*forced choice ranking*" evaluation of its members in which the 12 current members are each required to rank their colleagues from 1 (most skilled and competent judge) to 11 (least skilled and competent judge) in the areas of consistent application of correct judging criteria, judging activity during the previous two years, and overall assessment of judging skill at the international level (see enclosed rating form). *Master* judges and IAAF Panel members would be asked to supply a resume of walk competitions officiated during the four or two-year appraisal period. Any panel member receiving an average cumulative rating of 10 or higher would be placed on a two-year probationary period and if the rating did not improve, the judge not be recommended to the IAAF for continuation on the Panel. Judges in the bottom third of this peer ranking would be asked to take steps to enhance their skills. The first two-year appraisal period will **begin January 1, 1993.**