

# **RACE WALK DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

## **NAIA RACE WALK FESTIVALS**

### **BACKGROUND:**

Ask a college coach within the NAIA or NCAA ranks about why he/she doesn't have or coach race walkers at their school, or include the race walk in their home meets. And you get the two universal replies:

- 1) I don't know how to coach the event.
- 2) We don't have anyone qualified to officiate the race.

Additionally, commencing with the 2009 indoor track & field season, several changes have been made to the qualifying procedures for the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). These changes are incorporated into the coaches' manual which governs conduct of its Post Season Competitions. Two of these changes could adversely affect the very narrow development pipeline for race walking in the USA by requiring:

- 1) Collegiate athletes must qualify for the NAIA Nationals in race walk only competitions. These competitions must be conducted solely on the track.
- 2) The competitions must be judged by a minimum of three (3) USATF certified Judges for ratification of any qualifying marks.

Obviously these worthwhile and proper requirements raise several concerns. Where will local colleges find the new race walk officials? Most college meets, particularly due to the geographical dispersion of the NAIA member schools, are located in sections of the country where race walking is not popular and there are few, if any, USATF certified Race Walk officials.

This proposal provides a solution to both dilemmas.

## **NAIA RACE WALK FESTIVALS**

A series of race walk “festivals” in the format outlined in this proposal will increase the width and depth of race walking at the collegiate level, primarily within the NAIA. It provides the opportunity to improve the coaching skills of the local coaches and improve the technique of the athletes prior to the national championships. It also provides a vehicle for mentoring and training local university T&F officials in how to judge the race walk for any home or conference championship.

This plan also creates a model for introducing race walking to the NCAA and its member institutions.

Under the direction of the men’s and women’s development chairs:

- 1) A series of 6 to 8 Regional Race Walk Festivals would be scheduled for December thru February at various colleges and universities where the Race Walk is currently supported. Each Festival would be held within a distinct conference within the NAIA. The host schools would provide a facility for an indoor RW competition and 2 class rooms for the conduction of clinics. Each classroom would need to be equipped for video tape presentation.

The host school must also designate at least 3 individuals who will become USATF RW judges thru attendance at the clinic. Neighboring colleges and universities will also be invited to send adults over the age of 18 to attend and become officials.

The host school would also provide a starter for the two competitive events as well as a timing crew for the races.

Additional staff needed include at least 2 camera operators to film the races providing sequences suitable for evaluating athlete technique and legality.

The local USATF association official’s certification chair will also be invited to attend and assist with the signing up of the new USATF officials.

- 2) A team of three individuals would conduct the festival activities in concert with the hosting institution. To be a member of the team all three must be current USATF certified RW Judges. One must be a master level official trained and equipped to conduct a seminar for training local track & field officials in judging the RW. And one must be an expert coach in race walking, trained and equipped to conduct a seminar for coaches and athletes in teaching the race walk.
- 3) The “Festival” would be initiated with a "First day" 1 mile race. It would be an “open” race were all local race walkers, regardless of ability or experience would be invited to participate - collegiate, HS, open, master M&W, etc. An entry fee could be charged to help defray the cost of the clinic(s). Festival attendance could also be promoted through the use of a T-shirt, etc.

- 4) During the 1 mile race the individuals recruited by local schools to become RW judges would "shadow" judge with the current USATF RW Judges. This would provide them with the opportunity to observe how a certified RW judge officiates.
- 5) A clinic for the candidate USATF RW judges would then follow. Video tapes from the race along with currently available teaching tools would be used by the current USATF officials to instruct the candidates. An open session using the current USATF Open Book test(s) to become a USATF official would follow. Those passing the tests would not only be entry level USATF RW judges but also certified to officiate in other T&F event capacities.
- 6) Concurrently with the Judges seminar the second classroom would be used to provide a mini-camp opportunity for local collegiate athletes and their coaches. The clinician would review RW technique and help the local collegiate athletes refine their technique and become better walkers. Video tapes from the 1 mile race should be used to assist in the analysis and correction of technique and in the teaching of technique correction.
- 7) The Race Walk Festival would conclude with a race the following day at the NAIA's 3,000m indoor distance so that participating athletes could qualify for the NAIA Indoor nationals. This race would provide the new judges a chance to officiate under the mentoring eyes of the current USATF judges. The race could also be part of a regularly scheduled T&F competition.
- 8) A post race judge's review would conclude the festival. The new RW officials would receive a yellow Paddle in recognition of their attendance and completion of the course. Completed tests, fees, identification pictures, etc. are turned in to the local officials' committee certification chair.
- 9) Add names of new officials to a USATF maintained data base accessible on-line via the USATF Race Walk web site. This service could provide a ready access for finding not only RW officials to work an event but an official for any T&F event/meet.

## **FUNDING REQUEST SUMMARY**

Given the nature of this plan and its implementation funding is primarily required for travel and lodging of the clinicians. Equipment outlays are rulebooks, judging paddles and coping expenses on handouts. It is hoped that the host school could provide video equipment and the ability to display it.

- Year #1 (6 Festivals) - \$9,300
  - Travel of 3 clinicians - \$1200 per event (\$7,200)
  - Lodging - \$250 per event (\$1,500)
  - Equipment /Supplies - \$100 per event (\$600)