

14 Sept.82

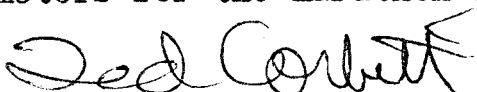
Dear Mr. Bob Baumel,

Try to get a complete description of the start and finish points of race courses (and turn around points) so that a stranger could find them or so that they could be replaced if erased accidentally (the markings). Preferably a diagram with taped distances from nearby permanent landmarks, but written descriptions when complete would serve.

The one meter rule is dead. Measure to 12 inches of curb or 8 inches edge of uncurbed road. Otherwise, measure shortest path available on road available to runners, so all runners will run at least the full distance.

After averaging two good measurements (reasonably close--e.g. not more than 8 meters for 10,000m nor more than 37 yards for marathon), add 1/1000 of race course distance (a short course prevention factor as one measurer put it or a "fudge factor" as one Regional Course Certifier put it). The IAAF permits up to 50 meters beyond 42,195 meters for the marathon but not less than that length.

Yours,



Ted Corbitt

Chairman TAC Standards Committee

REPORT ON THE ATHLETICS CONGRESS CONVENTION

Ken Young

NRDC News

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15 Dec 82

If you've ever been to a TAC (or AAU) convention, you know the pace is hectic. At one point on Friday, the Men's, Women's and Masters LDR committees and the Records committee were all meeting at the same time. I attended the Records committee meeting, then stopped by the Masters LDR and wound up missing the Women's LDR. Several decisions of interest were reached; one rather controversial issue is still being debated. I'll concern myself here with issues pertaining to course certification, the manner in which records are kept and qualifying procedures for the Olympic Marathon Trials.

The National Standards Committee (NSC) for long distance running met for two hours on Saturday afternoon. Ted Corbitt, Alan Steinfeld and myself of the NSC plus Jim Lewis from Lincoln NE and Dr. A. C. Linnerud from Raleigh NC were present.

A change in course measuring philosophy was made evident. In the past, the goal was to measure courses as accurately as possible, e.g., a marathon course should be as close to 26 miles 385 yards as possible. In line with record keeping requirements (see the previous issue of NRDC News), the goal is to insure that the course be at least the advertised distance, e.g., a marathon course should be at least 26 miles 385 yards.

Several means of implementing this goal were discussed. The procedure accepted is as follows. At least two measurements of the course must be made according to the standards already required (calibrations before and after, shortest legal route, etc.). If only two measurements are made, take the measurement that results in the longer course and add 0.1% of the race distance. If three measurements are made, take the middle measurement and add 0.1%. If more than three measurements are made, discard the shortest and longest measurements in succession until only two or three measurements are left and work from the appropriate measurement as above.

The consensus of the committee was that if this procedure is followed, the likelihood that a remeasurement would find the course short when in fact there was no difference between the original measurements and the remeasurement would be less than 1%. This procedure would not penalize a person making more measurements than required. It would also result in a longer course when measured by a person whose measurements may not be as reproducible as those made by a more skilled person. Of course, it cannot guard against errors made by not measuring the shortest legal route.

This policy is effective immediately. All courses which are submitted for certification should follow these guidelines. As an aside, Harold Tinsley, race director for the Rocket City Marathon called just after I returned from Philadelphia to ask for advice to insure that his race would meet the new standards.

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Course remeasurement to validate a record performance lies in a nebulous area between the NSC and the Records committee. As a member of both committees, I am the logical choice to co-ordinate course remeasurements. The persons chosen to remeasure courses will either be members of the NSC or will be persons known to me for their skill in measuring courses. Most of these people will be members of regional certification committees. The object will be to have the remeasurement done by someone not involved with the original measurement.

The remeasurements that have been carried out under this program to date have not shown a single example of a "long" course. It would be nice if we could simply say that records will not be accepted on courses that prove to be short upon remeasurement. This would make my job very easy....there would be no records. To maintain continuity, such tough standards cannot be applied until race directors have had a reasonable period of time to bring their courses into conformity with the new course measurement requirements. The goal is to tighten gradually the "short course allowance" in such a manner as to discard only those races held on courses that are shown to be markedly short of what we feel is a reasonable tolerance.

The policy adopted is as follows. Races held prior to 1 April 1981 on courses shown on remeasurement to be not shorter than 0.5% are acceptable for record consideration. Races held between 1 April 1981 and 31 December 1983 must have been on courses shown not to be more than 0.2% short of the proper distance. This tolerance will be reduced to 0.1% for all of 1984. Races held on courses shown to be short by any amount will not be acceptable for record consideration after 31 December 1984.

The NRDC is working to establish a travel fund which will be used to implement this program. We plan to split travel costs with the race involved with the remeasurement. Local transportation and lodging would be provided by the race organization. The measurer would contribute his or her time which can be considerable. We feel it is unfair to ask the measurer to contribute hard cash out of his or her own pocket in addition to the time spent.

We have contacted many of the major companies associated with road racing, in particular those companies which maintain racing teams or have road-racing athletes under contract. Each has been asked to contribute \$500 annually to the travel fund and an additional \$500 to the NRDC to support the record keeping function. We are pleased to announce that Adidas is the first company to support this program.

The meeting of the NSC clarified another point which needs to be stated explicitly. All courses must be cleared through Ted Corbitt before they can be officially called "certified courses." Although this may be little more than a cursory inspection in the case of Bob Letson and a few other persons, this is the only channel by which the course can be added to the official list of certified courses maintained by the NRDC. For a regional certification committee to issue a "certification" without forwarding this necessary documentation to the NSC is a disservice to the runners. No performances made on courses not on the official list will be accepted for record or national ranking consideration.