



MARCH 2024

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Midlands Officials at the 2024 World Indoor Championships in Glasgow



Several technical officials from the Midlands were part of the National Technical Officials (NTO) team for the World Indoor Championships which took place in the Emirates Arena in Glasgow from the 1st – 3rd March. It was the third time that the event had been staged in the UK, and the first time in Scotland.



Warm up day – a chance for the athletes to familiarise themselves with the newly laid track.

The appointed NTOs were as follows.

Linda Turner who was one of the Meeting Managers

Margaret Werrett was a Starter.

Wendy Kane was a Starters Assistant

Alison Jordan was the Track Referee

Dave Watson was a Chief Umpire

Noel McKakly and Jane Pidgeon were Track Judges

Adie Pottinger and Colin Palmer were Timekeepers

Fiona Hancock, Jack Lambert, Chris Lawrence and Rob Walker were Field Judges

Andy Hulse was part of the Technical Team

Stuart Paul was a Call Room Judge

Kenny Ebanks was a TIC Official

World Athletics and Competition Management were pleased with how the competition went, and the athletes and their support staff enjoyed the event in Glasgow.



The appointed officials from the Midlands for Glasgow 2024

(courtesy of Bobby Gavin, Athletics Photographer)

Thelma Barnett Remembered

On Tuesday 9th January 2024, MAFEO lost one of its founding members.

After a short illness, Thelma Barnett passed away quietly in her sleep, aged 85.

Thelma had judged athletics for almost 40 years at all levels from young athletes' league to The World Student Games in Sheffield, World Para Championships at Stoke Mandeville and the Grand Prix Final at Crystal Palace. She was made a Life Member in 2015 and at the same time was made a Life Member of the MCAA for her services to the sport.

In 2012 Thelma (and her husband Les) were jointly given the England Athletics, West Midlands Region Award for "Services to Officiating".

Her funeral took place on 30th January in Bishops Tachbrook, Warwick. It was a very well-attended event, which included many members of MAFEO.

She will be greatly missed by everyone.



A Weekend in the Life of an Athletes' Steward **at the British Indoor Championships**

By Yasmine Al-Daftary

One of the great things about being an official is that it can afford opportunities to volunteer at meetings outside of the usual officiating disciplines. The roles outside of the normal disciplines are called “ancillary” and can cover a variety of activities that are required to make a large meeting run smoothly.

Ancillary roles can be very different from the role that you would perform in your usual officiating discipline. One of my favourite roles has to be in the Call Room. The Call Room (for those that don't know) is the area where athletes report to before their event. Usually, athletes arrive about 30 minutes before their event and are escorted to their event in their groups. Sounds simple right?

Well not quite! The Call Room is run by the Call Room Manager who oversees the smooth arrival and departure of the athletes to their events. The CRM also allocates duties to the Call Room Judges and the Athlete Stewards.

Call Room Judges have a very busy time, they are responsible for checking each athlete has the correct number, pins, shoes, (event!), and many more things! If the athlete chooses to bring in a bag this has to be thoroughly checked for items that are not allowed out in the field of play. The list can be long! On top of this all items must be checked for “advertising”. Anything that the main event sponsor does not want to be on camera must be covered, in previous years this has included the stripes on clothes, logos on bags and endless cans of a certain energy drink. The call room goes through a LOT of duct tape! Once all checks are done, the group are made ready to leave (but not before the Call Room schedule says they are!) and handed over to the Athletes Stewards.

Athletes Stewards have the responsibility of getting the group to their “start” area for track and their event area for field. Sometimes an Athlete Steward will have a sign to carry that shows what event is being led out.

The great thing about working in the call room is the interaction with athletes, they often ask for help fixing numbers, sorting their kit out or with directions to various parts of the competition. I've pinned numbers on several household names – which is a bit nerve wracking trying not to get the pins stuck!

The British Championships 2024 were held at the Utilita Arena in Birmingham, a venue where I have officiated many times and been in the call room for 5 British Championships. Its quirky! The warm up area is in a large sports hall effectively in the basement of the arena, to one side is the Call Room.

One of the difficulties is getting to the track itself – this is a lift ride up what seems endless floors but in reality, it is 7! The lifts are small, slow and often malfunction (that's another story!). Once up on the Arena Floor Level, the track athletes are taken to their start area (depending on what distance) and the Athlete Steward needs to get back down to the basement to collect another group. The fastest way is the stairs! But there are many of them and you need to pace yourself.

This year the Call Room ran very smoothly and as a team we had a great time. There were several officials who had never worked in a Call Room, as well as some very familiar faces. By the end of Saturday, I had done more than 18,000 steps! After a long day it was time to go home and get ready for another busy day.

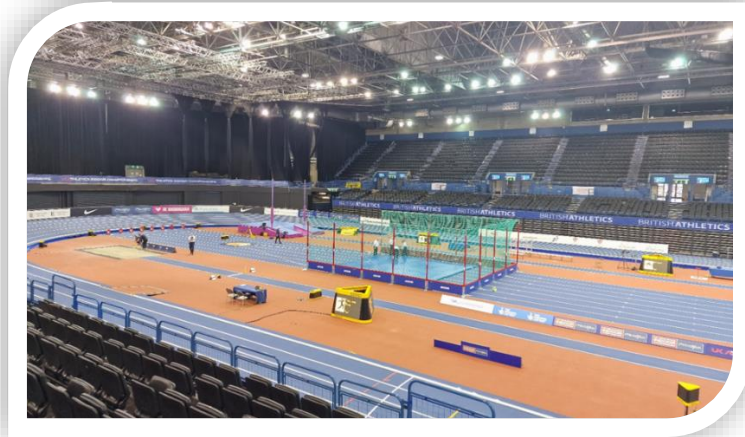


This year's Call Room Manager – Sara Fletcher & I

(one of my favourite humans!)



Lunch



The Arena – the quiet, before the busy day



You never know who you'll bump into.
MAFEO's current Chair: Fiona Hancock

Athletics Trivia Quiz Time

1. In which city would you find Harvey Hadden Stadium?
2. How many times do athletes jump the water jump in a 3000m Steeplechase?
3. What is the longest race in the athletics programme at the Olympic Games?
4. Which Midlands athletics club does European Indoor Champion Jazmine Sawyers represent?
5. Name the city in which this Olympic Stadium is located?



6. As of March 2024, which athlete holds the British Record for the Men's Mile?
7. How many Paralympic gold medals has Tanni Grey-Thomson won?
8. Birmingham will host the 2026 European Athletics Championships. In which country will the 2028 event take place?
9. In which field event is the women's world record further than men's world record?
10. Who is this former athlete from the Midlands?



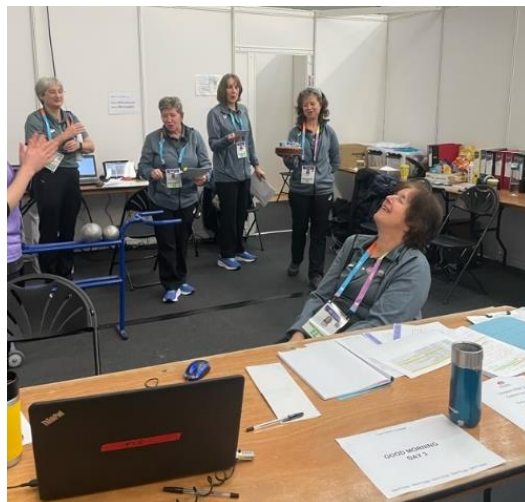
Welcome to The Technical Information Centre

By Kenny Ebanks



The TIC Team

At the World Indoor Championship, I was selected to work as a TIC official. I was rather surprised by the appointment, as I had never done the job previously at a national event but was still expected to do it at a world event. Before the event, I did seek some reassurance from Barbara Abbot (who was the very experienced TIC Manager) and she pointed out that I've got lots of experience in dealing with people and solving issues/problems through my day job and working as a starter's assistant, so I'd be fine.



It was Barbara's birthday, so the TIC team bought her a cake.

The traditional TIC is like a competition hub (or directory enquires) as you are supposed to know everything and be able to answer everybody's queries. It's also where all start lists and call room schedules are issued, and results are posted, and time stamped. This is vitally important for protests, as athletes only have 30 minutes from this time to make one. All field implements are also signed in (and then passed onto the equipment team). If they are rejected (as many were in Glasgow) it was the job of TIC to call the athlete and explain to them what had happened. Some athletes were not happy with the item being rejected and we sometimes had to call the International Referee to re-explain to an athlete (and coach) why their implement had been rejected. We also had to return all the confiscated items from the call room.

As part of World Athletics process to modernise and become more sustainable they have introduced a Virtual Technical Information Centre or V – TIC. This was used at the recent World Indoor Championships that were held in Glasgow.

The V-TIC is a computer program which all National Team Managers and competition managers have access to. It contains all relevant information and documents that users may need including start lists, official results, photo finish images, some video streams, and waveform images from the starts. In addition to this, general enquiry forms, protest forms and doping control request forms* were also on the program.

*For a national, area or world record to be ratified, athletes need to request a drug test from the doping control team.

The idea is that rather than team managers going to the TIC in person to complete a form, they could remotely put in a query, request or protest from wherever they were via their electronic device, normally a smart phone. If they had any queries or questions, the team managers could send an email directly to TIC, and the TIC could assign the email to the relevant member of the competition management team. If the TIC knew an answer, they could reply directly to the question.

The program proved to be effective for team managers who wanted to put in a protest after a result that they were unhappy about was published. They could make their protest online, and request to see the various video streams, and speak to the relevant referee if necessary. In these cases, the team manager would have to come to the TIC office as the video viewing room was located at the back of the TIC. However, the relevant referee would still be required to write their response to the protest online to close the protest. If the team then wanted to appeal the judgement, they would do this online and have to agree to \$100 being deducted from their country's account. The Jury of Appeal would then consider all of information available to them and then write their response on the V-TIC system. World Athletics hope to develop the V-TIC into an app.

From a TIC point of view, the V – TIC enabled direct contact with all of the team managers via the email system. This was especially useful when athletes had left items around the stadium, and they were given to the TIC as lost property. These lost items included athletes' accreditation and team kits. Using the team managers email we could simply send a message to them, so that they could send a representative to collect the lost items.

Despite the intentions of the V-TIC, the TIC team still were required to print off and display all the start lists and official results. We were also still required to take in field implements (and return them) as well as dealing with the confiscated items from the call room. Team declarations for the relays were also supposed to be on the V -TIC but they didn't work so we set up a table outside the TIC room for team managers to do it on paper. There were also occasions when the designated team manager with access to V-TIC was never around (sometimes not even in the country) so the athlete would have to use our laptops in order to make a protest.



However, some countries found the V-TIC difficult to use, so they still came into TIC for help or to complete a form online. Also, when an athlete set a national, area or world record we still had to print off all the relevant documents and get them signed by the relevant referees for ratification purposes.



Working in the TIC was a long day. We had to be on the first bus to the stadium at 6.45am and leave at the end of the evening session once all the protests and appeals had been concluded.

It was a really enjoyable experience, working with a fantastic team. I believe that I was able to further develop my diplomacy skills when dealing with difficult and challenging situations. Overall, it gave me a fascinating insight into what goes on behind the scenes, and processes involved in running a large global event.

Your MAFEO Committee Members 2023 – 2024

Chair – Fiona Hancock (Chairman@mafeo.net)

Vice-Chair – Kenny Ebanks

Hon. Secretary - Derek Prince (HonSecretary@mafeo.net)

Membership Secretary - Maureen Bullen

Hon. Treasurer - Yasmine Al-Daftary (HonTreasurer@mafeo.net)

Margaret Afford, Stuart Paul, Andrew Hulse, Stewart Barnes, Maggie Murphy, Noel McKakly, Derek Redfern, Barry Parker, Chris Blyth

Committee Meeting Dates 2024 (all provisional dates)

Wednesday 20th March

Wednesday 26th June

Wednesday 25th September

2024 AGM: TBC

If you have any issues you wish to be raised at a committee meeting, please let us know.

ATHLETICS TRIVIA QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Nottingham
2. Seven
3. 50km walk
4. Stoke AC
5. Montreal
6. Steve Cram
7. Eleven
8. Poland
9. Discus
10. Bob Weir



MAFEO STOCK PRICE LIST

MAFEO clipboard	£5
Landscape weather writer by Paperdry	£20
Portrait weather writer by Weatherwriter	£30
Large (A4) band	£2.50
Small (A5) band	£2.50
Pens	£1.80
Pen Refills	£1.20
Rule books	£5.50
MAFEO Mug	£4.50

Should you wish to order please email:

mafeopayments@gmail.com

NEXT NEWSLETTER – AUTUMN 2024

If you have any suggestions for articles or information you wish to share with other MAFEO members in the next newsletter, either pass it on in person to a member of the committee or email it to

Chairman@mafeo.net

MEMORIES FROM GLASGOW WORLD INDOORS 2024

