



from the editor

E. Garry Hill

THE NCAA CHAMPIONSHIPS: 1 MEET OR 2? That was a question I posed in this space back in June of '11, saying, "As nice as it was to see the NCAA finally embrace the women's side of the sport, the decision to have a combined championships, to my way of thinking, has created a meet that's just too long and too hard to follow.

A new way to stage separate-sex NCAA Champs at the same time

"Anything more than 2-3 hours for just about any sporting event and you simply lose the ordinary fans' attention. The NCAA has a slam-bang 3-hour final day, but with both sexes competing you only get to see 7 events for each sex and only 1 for each is a field event.

"I don't see that as much bang for the buck for those fans (and there are many) who only really care about one of the sexes.

"As a big fan of team scoring, I also think that experience is diluted by the dual-sex setup. With so many events going on, it's never easy to keep track of what's going on in the team race, and when you double that requirement you've made it harder on the fan, and no sport should ever do that. I'm sure that financial considerations will prevent a divergence of the men's and women's meets, but it is fun to dream."

The collegiate coaches group (USTFCCCA), driven somewhat by the demands of TV (see p. 54), has actually come up with an idea that might work: there's no extra cost involved in having both teams in town the same weekend because you can simply split them by day. D'oh!

A draft of a potential schedule that could be used as early as next year in Eugene works this way: Wednesday is all men's events, plus the women's heptathlon Day 1. Thursday is all women except for the men's decathlon Day 2. Friday is then all men (16 finals in the span of 3 hours) and Saturday all women in the same time frame. You could obviously rotate the first sex from year to year. I like it. And so does influential committee member Vin Lananna, who told Curtis Anderson of the *Eugene Register-Guard*, "A track meet is often referred to as a 3-ring circus, and there is a lot of truth to that. Too many things are going on at once. How can someone tell the story when they don't even know what the story is?"

"These are great athletes and those are exciting events. Unfortunately, not enough people are watching. I think what we can do is take [the meet] and repackage it so it's more TV-friendly. Now that ESPN has signed a 13-year agreement with the NCAA, we need to push the envelope to make sure we have a show which is media-friendly and popular with fans."

The USTFCCCA is very concerned that under the old CBS contract there was 5 hours of live coverage which has now been lost. And while the new schedule wouldn't guarantee anything, the committee needed, "We know from previous broadcasts by CBS that they felt our Championships were a convoluted story that did not deliver in these areas, and we believe these schedule changes offer the best opportunity to reacquire live television broadcasts of our Championships."

If it were my meet, I'd move the multis to Monday/Tuesday on their own, like they used to be, and use the time savings to get in some proper field-event qualifying. But I think their way is definitely worth trying.

Track & Field News
The Bible Of The Sport Since 1948
Founded by Bert & Cordner Nelson

E. GARRY HILL — Editor

ED FOX — Publisher

EDITORIAL STAFF

Sieg Lindstrom Managing Editor
Jon Hendershott Associate Editor

BUSINESS STAFF

Janet Vitu Executive Publisher
Jenny McGinnes Office Manager
Teresa Tam Art Director

WORLD RANKINGS COMPILERS

Jonathan Berenbom, Richard Hymans, Dave Johnson, Nejat K k, R.L. Quercetani (Emeritus)

SENIOR EDITORS

Bob Bowman (Walking), Roy Conrad (Special Projects), Bob Hersh (Eastern), Mike Kennedy (High School Girls), Glen McMicken (Lists), Walt Murphy (Relays), Jim Rorick (Stats), Jack Shepard (High School Boys)

U.S. CORRESPONDENTS

John Auka, Bob Bettwy, Bret Bloomquist, Bill Buchalter, Mike Byrnes, Tom Casacky, Pete Cava, Gene Cherry, Keith Conning, Toby Cook, Cheryl Davis, Elliott Denman, Peter Diamond,

Jim Dunaway, Andy Friedlander, John Gillespie, Becca Gillespy-Peter, Rich Gonzalez, Ed Gordon, Ed Grant, George Grenier, Ben Hall, Sean Hartnett, Jeff Hollobaugh, Mike Hubbard,

Tom Jennings, Roger Jennings, Andrew Jensen, Tom Jordan, Kim Koffman, Don Kopriya, Ruth Laney, Dan Lilot, Charlie Mahler, Paul Merca, Larry Newman, Lee Nichols, Jack Pfeifer, Shawn Price, Harv Rentschler, Kirk Reynolds,

Brian Russell, Rich Sands, Kevin Saylor, Mike Scott, Jim Spier, Jesse Squire, Don Steffens, Larry Story, Paul Swangard, Carol R. Swenson, Gary Trigueiro, Steve Vaitones, David Woods

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENTS

Steven Downes, Matti Hannus, Ian Hodge, Jonas Hedman, Atsushi Hoshino, Mike Hurst, Mirko Jalava, Paul Jenes, Alfons Juck,

A. Lennart Julin, Duncan Mackay, Peter Matthews, Phil Minshull, K. Ken Nakamura, Bob Ramsak, Sergey Tikhonov, Chris Turner, Mel Watman

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Claus Andersen, Errol Anderson, Greg Armstrong, David Benyak, John Burke, Rich Clarkson, Giancarlo Colombo, Lisa Coniglio, Tony Duffy, David B. Dumas, Don Gosney, Jeff Jacobsen, Anthony R. Jones, Kirby Lee, Bill Leung, Jiro Mochizuki, Brian J. Myers, Randy J. Osga, David Peterson, Victor Sailer, Mark Shearman, Kim Spir, Geoff Thurner, Cheryl Treworgy, Chai von der Laage