I think their way is definitely worth trying.

used to be, and use the time savings to get in some proper field-event qualifying. But

in these areas, and we believe these schedule changes offer the best opportunity to

CBS that they felt our Championships were a convoluted story that did not deliver
guarantee anything, the committee needed, “We know from previous broadcasts by

hours of live coverage which has now been lost. And while the new schedule wouldn't

more TV-friendly. Now that ESPN has signed a 13-year agreement with the NCAA,

people are watching. I think what we can do is take [the meet] and repackage it so it's

brace the women's side of the sport, the decision to have a combined championships,

we need to push the envelope to make sure we have a show which is media-friendly

on in the team race, and when you double that requirement you’ve made it harder

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.