

THE FUNCTION OF COMPARATIVE STATISTICS IN ATHLETICS

From the Athletics Omnibus of Richard Stander, South Africa

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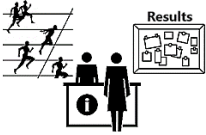


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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Comparative statistics are widely applied in the world of athletics. Office Bearers, Administrators, Selectors, and Coaches apply comparative statistics differently to achieve their objectives.
- 1.2. **In Coaching** - Comparative statistics are commonly used in coaching to inspire the athlete to achieve higher excellence levels.
- 1.3. **In Excellence Programs** - As excellence programs are expensive to fund and maintain, excellence programs will apply comparative statistics to select the right athletes to prepare them holistically for a championship.
- 1.4. **Competition Organizers** - Competition Organizers apply comparative statistics to ensure high-quality competition levels that will be popular to spectators, and attract sponsors. Also, by limiting the total number of participants, Organizers reduce overhead expenses, reduce logistical and financial risks, and reduce safety/injury risks during the competition or championships, etc.
- 1.5. **Office Bearers** - Office Bearers e.g., Board Members and Executives will apply comparative statistics to maintain a balance between participation and excellence. Experienced Office Bearers understand the value of excellence in athletics to encourage participation at the entry-level, and attract more sponsors who want their products to be associated with the excellent achievements of athletes
- 1.6. **Commissions and Office Executives** - Commissions and Office Executives will apply comparative statistics to limit project expenses and to limit hidden expenses related to competing venues with weak

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infrastructure, and hidden expenses related to too large representative teams. Experienced Commissions and Office Executives understand the importance of athletes winning medals, to encourage more participation at the entry-level, and the value of communication platforms such as printed media, electronic media, and social media platforms who want to write inspiring stories on the successes of competition and the achievements of athletes.

- 1.7. **Selectors** - Experienced Selectors understand the importance of avoiding a populist approach during the selection process and apply comparative statistics to select athletes that, at the very least, reach the semi-finals at a championship. Also, experienced Selectors know the negative impact on the morals of even the most experienced athletes in the team, when too many athletes in the team do not progress beyond the heats of a championships.
- 1.8. **Team Management** – Experienced Team managers understand the difference between preparing a team and presenting a team and know how they apply comparative statistics to keep the team focused. Team Management knows that during the preparation phase, the coach and support team can prepare the athlete to be a strong medal contender. However, during the presentation phase, the athlete is in the hands of the team management. The reality is that weak or inexperienced team management can destabilize the most experienced athlete, causing the athlete not to progress through the heats in the championships, whereas mature management will guide the athlete into the finals.

2. THE MOST BASIC COMPARATIVE STATISTICS APPLIED IN ATHLETICS

- 2.1. Basic comparative statistics in athletics require 1 or 2 technical standards as published in the rules and regulations that guide the execution of competitions, e.g., age group categories, race distances according to the age category, gender of the athlete, the weight of implements e.g., a discus, height of equipment and distance between equipment e.g. hurdles according to age group.
- 2.2. The fixtures list which lists competitions, which are published well in advance, and with competitions listed in chronological order in the build-up to a championship is also a basic comparative statistic that will ensure the progressive enhancement of the athlete's excellence level.

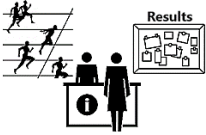
3. MORE ADVANCED COMPARATIVE STATISTICS APPLIED IN ATHLETICS

More advanced comparative athletics statistics require the application of 2 or more technical standards, as well as a series of competition results, e.g.:

3.1. Entry form

- 3.1.1. Entry forms at the entry level will generally rely on basic comparative statistics e.g., technical standards to enter the athlete for a competition.
- 3.1.2. However, in championship events, entry standards (see Advanced Comparative Statistics) will be required to participate in the championship.
- 3.1.3. The entry form will reflect if the athlete is a registered member of a school, club, or province e.g., a license or registration number must be reflected on the entry form.

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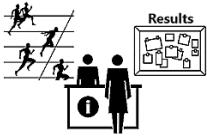


- 3.1.4. The entry form must also reflect the athlete's ID Number, age group, and gender of the athlete to enable the Organizer to verify that the athlete is participating in the right age category and gender category.
- 3.1.5. The entry form must also require the athlete to sign an indemnity form, which will confirm that the athlete understands, and will obey, the rules and regulations of the competition or championships
- 3.1.6. The entry form will also require the personal best (PB) of the season, as reflected on a result sheet, obtained from a legitimate competition, listed on the provincial or national fixtures list.
- 3.1.7. The comparative statistics on the entry form will be applied to determine how many heats will take place, in which heat, and which lane the athlete will run, in which order the athlete will take place in the jumps and throws, and in which block the athlete will be bundled in road races with large participation numbers.
- 3.1.8. Lastly, it is the responsibility of the competition organizer to check that the statistics on the entry form are factually correct and report the eligibility status of the athletes listed on the entry list to the Referee and Competition Delegate before the event can take place.

3.2. Drawsheets

- 3.2.1. Draw sheets are used in championship events to place athletes in a specific order in lanes on the track, the order of jumping or throwing in field events, and in road races with large participation numbers, in blocks of 50 to 100 athletes, to ensure that the best athletes are positioned closest to the starting line.
- 3.2.2. However, a drawsheet is much more complex as it requires input from a range of comparative athletics statistics, e.g. the competition record, the provincial record, the national records, the position of the athlete on the Top 10 list, the performance of the athlete in the previous round of competition e.g. heat, the personal best (PB) of the athlete, the season best of the athlete (SB), etc.
- 3.2.3. It also indicates which school, club, province, or country the athlete is to domicile in. Technically, if the name of the athlete appears on the drawsheet, it means that the Organizer has verified that the athlete is in good standing with the school, club, province, or country of the athlete to domicile too, and that the athlete qualified according to the entry or qualifying standards
- 3.2.4. The draw sheet will also reflect the venue and date where the drawsheet was used, how many draw sheets were issued per event e.g., drawsheet 2 of 4, what time the event is scheduled to take place took place for appeal purposes, and which Chief Judge and which Official signed that the content on the draw sheet is correct.
- 3.2.5. The signature of the Referee on the draw sheet confirms that the placement of the athletes took place according to the rules, that the content on the drawsheet is factually correct, and that the event is now ready to proceed to the next level e.g., to report to the call room, assistant starter, Chief Judge, Technical Information Centre (TIC), announcer, etc.
- 3.2.6. **Note: These draw sheets play an important role in making the event more attractive to the spectators and athletes before the event starts. This is achieved by the announcer, the printed and electronic media, the social media platforms, etc., which will use the comparative statistics on the draw sheet to create a positive vibe in the build-up to the start of the event. This "propaganda hype" will also inspire sponsors, and potential sponsors to invest more into the competition or championship.**

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3.3. Starting height, cut-off distance, and cut-off time

Note: Attempting a starting height, cut-off distance, or cut-off time can be stressful for athletes attempting these restrictions for the first time, and athletes should be educated during training on how to cope with these restrictions.

3.3.1. Starting Heights – Vertical Jumps

- 3.3.1.1. As a point of clarity, the capacity of an athlete to execute vertical jumps in a competition is limited to approximately 10 – 15 jumps. If no starting heights are set, as many as 30 jumps may be required to determine the winner which firstly will be time-consuming, and secondly, it will not be a true reflection of the winner's potential.
- 3.3.1.2. To avoid the athletes from being exhausted before the athletes have reached his/her full potential, the bar is set at a height that will limit the total of jumps from the start to the finish of the competition e.g. if it is expected that the winner in high jump will reach a height of 2.20m, the starting height of the high jump will be 1.80m.
- 3.3.1.3. The increments the bar will be raised during the competition e.g. 5cm will also be determined by the competition organizers before the competition starts.
- 3.3.1.4. With fewer vertical jumps from start to finish a personal best or competition record is more likely.

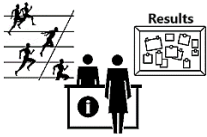
3.3.2. Cut-off distances in horizontal jumps and throwing events

- 3.3.2.1. Horizontal jumps and throwing events take much longer to complete than track events and can take several hours to conclude if all the trials of the participating athletes are measured and recorded. As a result of the delay in determining a winner, a ripple delay effect will take place throughout the program.
- 3.3.2.2. These delays in the program will cause security and injury risks for both competitors and officials doing duty as field events can take place on both sides of the infield, e.g. javelin throw from the north side of the infield, and hammer throw from the southern side of the infield. Effectively, implements will travel in mid-air from the front and the back of the officials, which can be life-threatening to the officials and traumatic to the athletes and spectators when the accident takes place in full view of them.
- 3.3.2.3. To avoid these risks, cut-off distances will be set, and only athletes achieving distance further than the cut-off distance will be allowed to progress to the next round.

3.3.3. Cut-off times in distance races

- 3.3.3.1. Distance races on the track, e.g., 5000m and 10000m can also take too long to conclude if some of the athletes are running too slow. This can also cause delays in the program, which can impact the readiness and injury risk of athletes to compete in the following events such as sprinters and hurdlers. Furthermore when athletes are lapped the risk of wrong times and placement of athletes by the officials increases exponentially. To limit these risks, athletes who are lapped on the track will be removed at the 200m mark. After how many laps the athletes will be removed must be approved

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by the organizers before the start of the race, and explained to the athletes before the race starts.

- 3.3.3.2. In competitions where the race distance is longer than 21.1km and/or the finishing time is more than 4 hours, the organizers will implement cut-off times at the halfway mark to prevent athletes from developing health risks such as dehydration, exhaustion, sunstroke, etc. Effectively, organs such as the heart, lungs, kidneys, etc are at great risk of failing, putting the athlete's life at risk. Organizers may also implement cut-off times at the finish line for the same health risks as mentioned above, as well as to avoid delaying the medal ceremonies and prize giving for too long. These cut-off times must be agreed on by the organizers before the race starts and explained to the athletes before the start of the race.

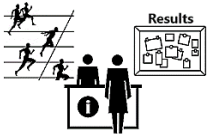
3.4. Result sheet

- 3.4.1. There will be individual result sheets for every level of competition e.g. heats, semi-final, and final.
- 3.4.2. The results sheet is very similar to the draw sheet but reflects the outcome of the competition. It will reflect the position of each athlete who participated in the event, the time, distance, or height achieved by each athlete, and if a record performance was achieved.
- 3.4.3. The result sheet will also reflect the names of the athletes who did not start (DNS) or did not finish (DNF)
- 3.4.4. It will also reflect if the competition is accredited e.g., listed on the national or provincial fixtures list, that the performance is legal e.g., if the correct equipment and implements were used e.g., the weight of the shot, or if the wind reading was legal e.g. +2.0m/s if the technical officials that prepared the result sheet were qualified as listed on the list of accredited Technical Officials, that it took place as published e.g. time and date, and that the competition area was certified by an accredited land surveyor, course measurer, etc.
- 3.4.5. Each result sheet must be signed by the Chief Judge, Referee, and Technical Delegate (Member of Commission) of the school, club, province, or country.
- 3.4.6. Also, the Chief Judge, Referee, and Technical Delegate must check if a new record was set, and if it was recorded correctly, according to the event rules and regulations, before the record is signed off by the Referee and Technical Delegate.
- 3.4.7. Once all protocols are adhered to the result sheet will be sent to the Technical Information Centre (TIC) where the original result is captured electronically for processing into various types of comparative statistics.
- 3.4.8. A copy of the result sheet will be distributed to the announcer, notice board, media and communication platforms, VIP area, Selectors, Statistics Committee, etc.
- 3.4.9. The result will be stored for safekeeping by the domicile school, club, province, and country for future reference or appeals, for at least 5 years.

3.5. Records

- 3.5.1. Every athletics competition has a best-ever winning performance e.g., time, distance, or height, and is referred to as a competition record. Effectively it means that the record performance is the best-ever performance in the history of the event, **which is a powerful statement to make.**

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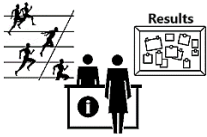
- 3.5.2. If the competition record does not appear on the draw lists and result sheet, the athlete and coach will not be focused on trying to break the competition record.
- 3.5.3. Neither will the announcer, spectators, printed and electronic media, and social media have comparative statistics to evaluate the quality of the performance, other than that the athlete has won the competition.
- 3.5.4. Winning a competition is always a subjective comparative statistic in the world of excellence as the athlete with a weak winning performance in a competition will be disappointed at the next competition at a higher level of excellence unless the athlete and coach have other comparative statistics e.g. scoring tables, to motivate and prepare the athlete for the higher level of competition.
- 3.5.5. Higher levels of competition are district-, provincial-, national-, continental-, world championships, and ultimately the Olympic Games.
- 3.5.6. To win the World Championships or Olympic Games is a powerful comparative statistic in its own right, but will always be in the shadow of the athlete that holds the world record, which has bragging rights that he/she achieved the best performance ever in the history of the competition.
- 3.5.7. These bragging rights exist at every level of competition primary school competitions, high school competitions, age group competitions, and senior competitions, and are a powerful comparative statistic to motivate the athlete to improve on his/her personal best (PB).
- 3.5.8. Achieving the best performance ever in the history of the event captures the imagination of people at every level of society, inspires the media to write about it, and inspires potential sponsors and donors who want to associate them with a success story.

4. COMPARATIVE STATISTICS NEEDED FOR PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL EXCELLENCE PROGRAMS

4.1. Introduction to the world of excellence in athletics

- 4.1.1. Most nations in the world, embrace the Olympic Games as an opportunity to do nation-building. South Africa also uses the Olympic Games as an opportunity to transform South Africa into a "Winning Nation".
- 4.1.2. This philosophy is captured in both the South African Department of Sport, Art, and Culture Development Plan and the ASA Constitution. As a result, the world of athletics functions on a 4-year cycle which peaks at the quadrennial Olympic Games.
- 4.1.3. The success at the Olympic Games is determined by the relationship of athletes and coaches on the one side of the proverbial coin, and Office Bearers and Administrators on the other side of the same coin, with athletics competitions that embody athletics as a sport. The success of this relationship is determined by the availability of comparative statistics derived and processed from the competition results.
- 4.1.4. Although most of the comparative statistics are compiled by Organizers and Committees, and processed by Administrators, the National and Provincial Commissions have to ensure that all these comparative statistics are in place and functional.
- 4.1.5. Failing that, the advice and recommendations of Commissions to the Board or Principal will be inaccurate or subjective and will reflect in the capacity of athletes winning team competitions in age group competitions, or winning medals at specialist major Championships, and ultimately the Olympic Games.

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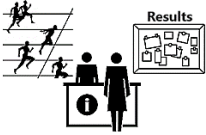
4.2. Personal best and season best

- 4.2.1. As mentioned earlier, the results sheets will reflect the position of each athlete who participated in the event, the time, distance, or height achieved by each athlete, and if a record performance was achieved.
- 4.2.2. The result of the competition or championship may be disappointing to the athlete who did not win the championship. To soften the athlete's disappointment, coaches and administrators will point out to the athlete if he/she has improved on his/her previous personal best (PB) performance, or if the athlete has achieved his/her seasonal best (SB) performance.
- 4.2.3. Effectively, the athlete who did not win, but did achieve a PB or SB, will be motivated to endure higher training loads, in preparation for the next athletics season.
- 4.2.4. Also, the support base of the athlete, e.g., parent, training group, friends, school, clubs, country, etc., will have comparative statistics to motivate the athlete who did not win the championship.
- 4.2.5. Ideally, the result sheet should not only identify the winner and placement of all the athletes who finished the event but also reflect which athlete has improved on his/her previous personal best (PB) performance, as well as if the athlete has achieved his/her seasonal best (SB) performance.

4.3. Top Lists

- 4.3.1. Of all the comparative statistics used in athletics, the Top Lists e.g. the South African Top 10 list, and the World Athletics Top List, are the most important comparative statistics in the world of athletics as it is used to update and maintain other more advanced comparative statistics, such as the World Athletics Top Ranking Lists, the WA Scoring Tables, the South African APE Tables, the South African All-Time best Top Lists, etc.
- 4.3.2. As Top Lists act as a window into the excellence level of the school, club, province, or country, all the results on the Top List e.g. Top 10 List, must be verified by an independent Committee e.g., the South African Association of Athletics Statisticians (SAAS), before listing the result on the Top List.
- 4.3.3. These statistics committees report directly to the Executives e.g. Board or Principal of the school, club, province, country, etc., as the Top List is applied when strategic planning is done to improve the excellence level of the athlete or team.
- 4.3.4. The Top-10 lists contain specific statistics such as the province, club, or school where the athlete comes from. It will assist the Excellence Committee of the country, province, club, and the school, to identify talented athletes early, and mandate coaches and competition organizers to create opportunities for these talented athletes.
- 4.3.5. Top Lists are commonly used by administrators, scout hunters, and coaches, to identify athletes for support programs, such as sponsorships, incentive programs, and preparation squads at all levels of excellence.
- 4.3.6. **Note: The Top List must reflect the correct source to enable the relevant institution e.g. country, province, club, or school, to identify the depth of talent in each event in the province, club, school, etc., and refer them to the relevant excellence support program, e.g. a Preparation Squad for a Championships, and Sports Academies where the athlete will be prepared and supported holistically.**

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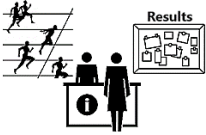
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- 4.3.7. Top Lists are also used by Selectors, Team Management, and athletics administrators in doing medium-term planning, e.g. to budget a year in advance the expected expenses related to accommodation, transport, and team attire to present a team.
- 4.3.8. It also enables the Team Management and athletics administrators to do more accurately future traveling and accommodation arrangements for representative teams, e.g., provincial or national teams.
- 4.3.9. It also assists Team Management and athletics administrators in advising athletes well in advance to obtain passports and visas in the case of being selected to represent South Africa in another country. Also, refer to the chapter on "Team Presentation for a Championships).
- 4.3.10. At the very least, there should be a Top List in every official event, and in every age group for both male and female athletes, before a National Championship, as well as within a week after the National Championships
- 4.3.11. Only results of athletes that participate in credible competitions e.g. competitions listed on the WA, ASA, and Provincial fixtures Lists can be considered for listing on the Top 10 Lists.
- 4.3.12. The performances of all athletes participating in an event e.g., the 100m are listed according to the quality of the performance.
- 4.3.13. The best performance will be listed as the no. 1 performance on the Top 10 List, and the slowest time will be listed at the bottom of the Performance List.
- 4.3.14. Top 10 lists can be accurately compiled in Track And Field Events, Road Running Events, and Race-Walking Events, as the comparative statistics e.g., rules and regulations of the event enable the compilation of accurate Top 10 Lists. Also, there are software programs in place that can sort and refine the statistics to arrive at a Top 10 List within minutes.
- 4.3.15. In less regulated competitions such as Cross Country, Top 10 Lists are less accurate. However, Top lists in Cross Country are possible if courses and routes are standardized and race distances are certified as standard distances.
- 4.3.16. To ensure the faster capturing of data used to compile comparative statistics, the Top Lists must be prepared in a standardized software program that can capture and sort data as needed on computer platforms such as desktops, laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc.
- 4.3.17. Due to the volume and range of information that must be processed, the Statistics Committee normally functions in, or close to the Technical Information Centre (TIC) from where they will capture the statistics on a standardized template
- 4.3.18. These statisticians require a high sense of responsibility and commitment to prepare the statistics with 100% accuracy according to the required format, as they understand that any mistake in the athletics statistics can lead to an athlete not being selected to represent their province or country, or being overlooked for merit awards, incentives, etc.
- 4.3.19. For top lists to be effective, they must be updated regularly, and regularly published in the public domain via communication platforms and social media, as coaches motivate their athletes to improve their ranking on the National and Provincial Top lists.
- 4.3.20. As a point of clarity, during the heats of a championship, the athletes are placed according to their performance level, e.g., the athlete with the best performance level will be positioned in lanes 4 and 5, the most favorable lanes, in field events the order of the trails will favor the top performers in the heats.
- 4.3.21. The Top 10 List may also influence the draws of the athlete. For more information in this regard refer to the chapter on "The principle of competitiveness".

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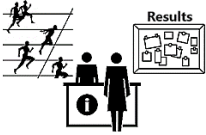
4.4. Top-Ranking Lists

- 4.4.1. As a point of clarity, a Top List refers to the best performance of the athlete in a specific year or month, whereas a Top-Ranking List refers to the summary of all the best performances of an athlete during a specific series of competitions e.g. the WA Diamond League Series.
- 4.4.2. Some series of competitions in a league may span across the 12 months of a calendar year, while other league series may span over a few months in the build-up to a final or a championship.
- 4.4.3. During the league series, the results will be captured and transformed into a point system from where the best athlete will be determined on points based on the WA Scoring Tables for senior athletes, and the South African APE Tables for school athletics. The winners will be announced after the final event in the series takes place.
- 4.4.4. The primary purpose of league meetings, and for maintaining a Top-Ranking List, is to provide athletes and coaches with a consistent series of competitions in preparation for a championship or to qualify for a representative team to represent the club, province, and country.
- 4.4.5. League meetings are also important as they assist coaches and athletes to plan their training programs accordingly. It also assists Selectors in limiting their selection periods according to the league period, when the athlete is in peak form and without injuries.
- 4.4.6. League meetings have also commercial value as potential sponsors have a longer period to expose their product or service to potential customers.
- 4.4.7. Also, the printed and electronic media have enough comparative statistics to write articles that will capture the imagination of the people.

4.5. Scoring Tables

- 4.5.1. There are many types of scoring tables used in athletics, but the most prominent scoring tables are the World Athletics Scoring Tables, mainly for senior athletics, the scoring tables for multi-events, e.g. pentathlon, decathlon, heptathlon, etc., and the Athletics Performance Evaluation Tables (APE Tables), for schools.
- 4.5.2. Scoring tables are calculated, based on the average performances of positions on the Top lists, or positions in the finals at various levels of competitions, over a period e.g. an Olympic cycle.
- 4.5.3. These quadrennial adjustments to the scoring tables will reflect the upward or downward fluctuations of the performance levels of individual events.
- 4.5.4. These scoring tables are another form of comparative statistics used by Office Bearers, Administrators, and Competition Organizers, to identify the best performance of the day, determine the winning team at a competition, etc.
- 4.5.5. Over and above the athletes whom has won a medal, or achieved a PB or SB, the scoring tables can motivate every athlete in the team.
- 4.5.6. Effectively the scoring tables can compare the performance of the sprinter, with the performance of the distance runner, jumper, and thrower, by transferring each performance into points.
- 4.5.7. This is achieved by transferring the performance (time, distance, or height) of every athlete in the team into points e.g., team "A" consisting of 10 athletes with a score of 1000 points, 950 points, 900 points, 850 points, 800 points, 750 points, 700 points, 650 points, 600 points, 550 points = 7750 points, their team performance will be 2250.
- 4.5.8. If team "B" scores 7700 points team "A" with 7750 points will be the winning team.

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- 4.5.9. The above scoring process may sound complex, but by capturing all the results in an electronic format (which is done anyway) the computer software will do the transformation of the time, distance, or height in split seconds, and the winning team can be determined within 5 minutes after the last result sheet was loaded onto the template of the software program
- 4.5.10. Also by using the points system in a team competition, each athlete's achievement, irrespective if the athlete was first or last in the competition, the collective points of each participating athlete will determine which team is winning.
- 4.5.11. In age group championships, this format of determining a winner through the team winning, rather than the individual winning, significantly reduces the pressure on winning in an individual event develops a stronger team spirit between team members, and significantly reduces the negative emotion of the athlete when he/she did not win, or achieved a PB or SB.
- 4.5.12. The scoring tables are also used by coaches to guide and motivate athletes at the beginning of a new season when statistics are not freely available yet.
- 4.5.13. The scoring tables are also valuable when a new athlete joins the training group to establish at what level of competition the athlete is, or if the athlete participates in multiple events, to determine which event is the strongest based on the point score of the scoring tables.

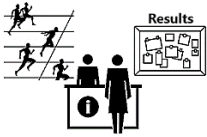
4.6. Entry standards

- 4.6.1. Organizers of Competitions and Championships will set entry standards e.g., time, distance, or height, as well as a closing date for entries, which may be 2 weeks to a year in advance.
- 4.6.2. Furthermore, the entry standards may also include a limit on the total number of athletes that can be entered per event, or team.
- 4.6.3. The entry standards to enter a championship are put in place to ensure the quality of the athletes participating at an acceptable level of excellence
- 4.6.4. The Top lists are also used to set entry standards to limit the total heats and semifinals during a championship, to ensure that the event takes place within the time slots allocated in the program.
- 4.6.5. The entry standards also limit the total number of participants for logistical, financial, and safety reasons.
- 4.6.6. Local governments where the championship is hosted will also set entry standards according to the capacity of the competition venue, the capacity of the local community to accommodate a large influx of athletes, supporters, and officials according to the transport network, accommodation capacity, and the capacity to provide food and refreshments,
- 4.6.7. The Joint Operational Committee (JOC) will also set entry standards according to their capacity to control large crowds, provide traffic control support, medical and first aid support, provide safety and security during the event, etc.

4.7. Qualifying standards

- 4.7.1. As an excellence support program is expensive to maintain, some countries, provinces, clubs, and schools, will over and above the entry standards set by the organizers, also set qualifying standards.
- 4.7.2. The qualifying standard is usually higher than the entry standard, which effectively means fewer athletes will be selected to represent the countries, provinces, clubs, and schools.

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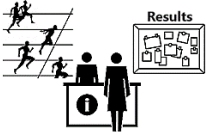


- 4.7.3. With fewer athletes being identified and selected, the countries, provinces, clubs, and schools have financially and logistically a better capacity to support both the athlete and the personal coach, in their preparation for the championship.
- 4.7.4. Qualifying standards, along with Top Lists as a cross reference, also give athletes and personal coaches objective goals to achieve in their attempt to reach the final of championships.
- 4.7.5. Also by ensuring a higher quality athlete to represent the country, province, club, and school, there are not so many athletes that fail to progress through the heats during the championships.
- 4.7.6. When too many athletes finish at the lower end of the competition during the championship, it will be demoralizing for the athletes who have an objective to finish in the final.
- 4.7.7. Also, the tension levels of the medal contenders rise significantly, as the frequent failure of teammates impacts negatively on the athlete's self-confidence and assertiveness levels.
- 4.7.8. Athletes who "scraped" through into the team on the entry standard, often do not achieve the starting height in the vertical jumps, the cut-off distance in the horizontal jumps and throws, or the cut-off times in distance races, which is very embarrassing to the athlete and his/her support team. As a result, it is very difficult to motivate the athlete to continue training.
- 4.7.9. On the contrary, athletes who were selected on qualifying times are more likely to reach the semi-finals and finals. Once the athlete has reached the semi-final or final, the athlete is motivated to work harder, as the possibility of winning a medal is now within reach.

4.8. Total medals won and total athletes in the final

- 4.9. At the entry level of athletics e.g., school and club competitions, there is a strong focus on participation to cultivate a passion for athletics.
- 4.10. The higher the level of competition e.g., provincial and national championships, the focus will change from participation to excellence e.g., to reach the final and/or to win a medal.
- 4.11. At the international level, e.g., World Championships and Olympic Games the emphasis is primarily on the excellence level. Provinces and countries that do not make the transition from participation to excellence will fail poorly in winning medals to bring honor to the athlete, the country, the province, and the local support base.
- 4.12. The harsh reality is that at the Olympic Games, only the total gold medals won by a country are considered to rank the excellence level of a country in the world.
- 4.13. However, at the World Championship level, the total of athletes reaching the finals is counted to rank the country's excellence program.
- 4.14. World Athletics also uses the total of gold, silver, and bronze medals to guide countries on what is needed to achieve success at the Olympic Games.

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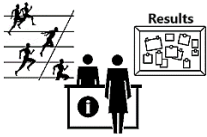
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- 1.2. Short relays Manual
- 1.3. Hurdles Manual
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- 1.12. Hammer Throw Manual
- 1.13. Javelin Throw Manual

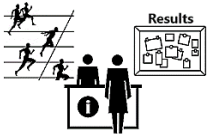
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- 3.5. Code of Ethics
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