



## Officials and Volunteers Day 2023 – Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2023

On a cold but dry day, Havering AC in conjunction with Essex CAA, hosted a second officials and volunteers day, with great success, despite clashing with Mother's Day and the Tri County Meeting at Lee Valley. The day grew from last year's success, again focussing on field judging and this time the more technical roles extended to include disciplines such as track judging and timekeeping.

Each session was interactive and fun with many attendees not only refreshing their knowledge but also learning lots more too. The group who worked with John Askew looked at the technical elements of an athletics meeting and were able to see how to calibrate the pole vault stands from start to finish and how to check if a bar has the correct amount of flex.

Out on the track, Diane Wooller led the track judging group around looking at key elements of that role at different points on the track while the timekeeper group, led by Graham Bungay, practised stopping and starting their watches at the correct point to achieve an accurate time.

Finally, the field judging group was looked after by experienced officials, Kevin Diedrick, Paul Manson, and Tamsin James, looking at the throws and jumps elements of field officiating. The attendees got an opportunity to look at some of the many different roles require to judge the seven field events, including spiking, pull through and athlete call up. Throughout all the sessions the experienced officials told stories of their careers in the sport including the highs and the (few) lows!

The sessions were targeted at the varying experiences of the volunteers attending and one attendee commented, "Thank you for organising the day. I am a Level 2 field official, and it was an excellent opportunity to refresh my understanding and interpretation of throws and jumps; including the current rules relating to the take-off board, now that there is no plasticine." Another one commented, "I had done my online timekeeping course back in December and was very grateful of a chance of a refresher of the key points."

After a short lunch break, there were groups that looked at how to be a field or track referee and had the opportunity to set up and use some of the different technology involved with judging. The EDM group got lots of advice in carrying the F2 machines correctly to the different areas of the field and to practice setting them up for the various field events. Whilst the photo finish group got an opportunity to experience using Simon Wright's photo finish system. One attendee commented that, "It was nice to have a chance to move the EDM to different places to see how the machine was set up slightly differently depending on the event that it would be used for. It was a lot easier than I thought once I had levelled the tripod."

Unlike last year we were lucky with the weather and many who attended were very grateful for the day that Havering AC in conjunction with Essex AA had put on. One commented, "I thought the session was a great advert for athletics and was very impressed by the level of effort that all the officials went to present." Whilst another said, "Thanks again for organisation. It was clear that both Havering AC and Essex Athletics had gone to a lot of effort to put the session together."

Everyone who attended the day, can't wait to put their new and refreshed knowledge to the test during this year's track and field season and beyond.

Thanks go to the following for making the day such a success: John Askew, Diane Wooller, Graham Bungay, Kevin Diedrick, Paul Manson, Tamsin James and Simon Wright





