# Iowa Association of Track Coaches

Fall Meeting Agenda
November 8, 2026 @ 9:00am
Waukee Northwest High School

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**9:00 AM**
Call to Order -President Abby Schmitz/1st VP Tom Trygstad
Mike Parker made a motion and Steve Roth seconded

Meeting Minutes -Spring Meeting Approval
Greg Thompson made a motion and Tom Trygstad seconded

**2nd Vice President -Abby Schmitz**
Matt Pries nominated Kenny Wheeler all voted and motion passed.

**Introduction & Welcome -President Abby Schmitz/1st VP Tom Trygstad**

**Attendance -Sign in for Attendance / virtual (Peggy McGuire)**

**IGHSAU,IAHSAA -Jim Duea (IGHSAU) & Tyler Lown (IAHSAA)**

Jim Duea begins talking about the regular season. Very challenging with weather issues, heat related early and then rain. Host sites really helped make these meets happen. Spoke about 8th grade legislation. For the winter now the 8th grader can go back and forth where as in cross country they could not.

Tyler Lown spoke about how impressed he was that coaches were able to find opportunities for kids even though the weather was rough.

Jim said there will be more guidance coming out on what to do with some of the heat issues this fall. Moving to the state qualifying meet he was thankful for people who hosted. Some challenges on site placements and getting courses ready. A huge thank you to SE Polk for being able to host despite construction issues. State meet…the boys send out a survey.

Tyler spoke of state qualifying that they try to find sites by September 1st. In northwest Iowa it can be hard. He said some 1A schools were able to help which is great. They were able to place teams really well because of the rankings. 2A is the most challenging on the map because the boys are strong in northwest Iowa and the girls are strong in northeast Iowa. He mentioned he would love for us as coaches to let them know if we can ever host a meet.

Jim said if you go to a meet and notice they run a good meet and have a fair course, talk to a coach at that school to see if they will host a state qualifying meet.

Tyler shared results of the survey. The internet was really rough. The pictures went better, but they will continue to work on the connectivity piece. He pulled some numbers for 8th grade. 2 individual boy qualifiers that were 8th graders. He shared data and said on the boys side said that 8th graders did not make a huge impact except for some schools.

Jim shared that 25 8th grade girls ran at state for the girls. It had a huge impact on the 1A champion. Otherwise need to look at individual classes to see impact.

Tyler shared that it was a bit clunky with the transition from state qualifier to the state meet. The timer was a bit frustrated with knowing who their final lineup would be. Tyler shared that the advisory committee meeting is soon.

A question is asked if Jim and Tyler think the 8th grade rule will be the same for next year? The legislators are the ones in charge. A coach shared that the "yo-yo-ing" can be controversial back and forth for the 8th grade athlete.

Matt Pries asked if there was a reason why they changed it. Tyler and Jim shared that public comment made it change. Tyler shared that a big driver of this is girls basketball. Eric Cogdill clarified how many games 8th graders can play and varsity games.

Jim shared a huge thank you to the rankings committee for their hard work.

Kyle asked if the host sites may get announced later? They said they can discuss it at advisory.

Cedar Falls coach asked about the 2 gators. He thought it was smoother than he can remember. Is there a way to rope the whole thing off to prevent parents from overcrowding? Jim said he can talk to Fort Dodge about this. He shares that this could be a challenge.

Kenny Wheeler shared that an idea could be to widen the first 1K of the state meet. Eric Cogdill shared that we ask for that every year and thinks it does get better every year.

**Drake Relays -Blake Bolden**

Shared that his committee has already met and have set the blue standards. He shared that these will be released on the first day of practice for high school. On the boys side 10 of the boys' standards will be improved. 12 on the women's side. 172 entries did meet or exceed for the boys. Women the 224 met these standards. The high school selection committee…the members are Carolyn Hill, Jean Berger, Chuck Schofner, Gary Ross, Kirk Schmaltz, Tim Bell, Mike Mohr, Stephanie Janks.

He shared notes about how athletes are selected and if a coach forgets to enter someone (a new coach) what is the process. They ask for you to send an email to a committee member.

Eric Cogdill suggested that they send an email back saying, "This email has been received."

Blake shared to enter athletes who are close to the cutoffs. There is a higher level of specialization, so you never know where an athlete may enter.

Blake mentioned that some schools have reached out about a discount rate for the Grand Blue Mile and Drake Relays Road Races. He shared that Grinnell brings their team to all run the Grand Blue Mile as a teambuilding event and the registration is $10, but that is also available to others. There are stipulations for what they can offer

as a discount rate to our high school teams. He shared that they are flexible to help make it work for high school teams.

Blake has a map/blueprint of a Drake Stadium renovation. It helps to host the big NCAA meets. The city of Des Moines likes this because when Drake Stadium is full, the hotels are full. It's a huge economic impact. He shared that last year was the first time we lost a bid (to New York) other than (Eugene, Oregon).

Blake shared some notes about what it takes to host these large and prestigious meets. Is it centrally located? Is there a standing local committee that has the staff capacity and track and field knowledge to host a huge meet? Is there a facility that meets these requirements? He shared Drake can compete, but unfortunately now money is changing from going to stadiums to paying student athletes. Just wants to keep us in the loop with things going on with the Drake campaign.

501c Foundation. If you know a community leader that is a CEO of a top business, not even just in Iowa, someone to help.

He thanks Ben Duea for having a meeting with donors to help award a coach who builds a community on their team. He hopes to announce more about this early in 2027 to help celebrate quality coaches in our state.

Blake asks body for feedback on FloTrack versus RunnersSpace, or other subscriptions (FloSports). Many are monthly or annual subscriptions.

Erica Doughlas shared it is a good idea to consider what grandpa and grandma will find easier to watch. Chris Wood shared that it would be nice if Mike Jay's voice can be integrated into it?

Eric Cogdill shared he thinks it best to see what can be integrated into athletic.net. Most of our meets are on that platform. His second comment was a great model with Tim O'Neil and his crew was very well done.

Matt Pries asked when we can expect to see changes and Blake shared a primary and secondary plan with possible time frames, but nothing is certain.

**Membership Report** **-Secretary Treasurer, Peggy McGuire**

Abby Schmitz shared how many schools have paid per class.

Social Media & Website Report -Abby Schmitz

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Hall of Fame Committee -Hall of Fame Committee Chair, Mike Jay (Abby Schmitz will read notes)

Steve Roth shared for coaches to make sure to let them know you can attend and stressed the importance of attending. He praised Mike Jay for his hard work.

Awards at HOF Banquet -Awards Coordinator, Greg Thompson

Greg Thompson shared the importance of attending and also praised Mike Jay for his hard work.

**XC Team Rankings -Rankings Chair, Ben Duea**

Ben shared committee members who are in attendance at the meeting. Ben shared how well the committees did and shared the benefit of using James Mills website. He said it's good to follow teams who do not run very often (this year was unique because of weather conditions). Suggested maybe going back into the by-laws and make an addition about weather. A team can lose their spot if they do not run in 14 days, but this year was different because of weather.

Matt Pries didn't think the by-laws needed to be adjusted…everyone seemed to understand because the weather was rough statewide.

Ben Duea shared that the committees of 6-8 coaches…Ben shared it is fun to see this grow…7 years of hard work. The committees form a bond and email/video meet to share thoughts. There is not a lot of turnover, which means people enjoy it. Ben shared that they always finish with a 20 minute zoom meeting, which is an excellent way to keep great communication with the association and union.

**Individual Rankings -Rankings Chair, James Mills**

James Mills shared that if a runner does not have activity in 14 days, his website will drop them. He shared that eventually the runners will pop back on when they race again.

HIs next point is that the survey results show that head-to-head competition is what his system uses. Should the margin of victory change things? He has run the data past other systems to get data to see which one is better?

Matt Pries shared the accuracy was spot on. Kelley Grothus also agreed. Doug Cutler shared that with only 3 weeks in, the final result is great. Keep it as is.

Eric Cogdill asked if he would consider pulling in JV State and Nike XR data? James shared that he can, but could be a bit of a challenge. Data could be skewed because of outside factors.

**IATC Exchange Zone Podcast -Podcast co-host, Kyle Wagner**

Kyle Wagner shared that he is grateful for Ben. He shared about the large amount of work that goes into making the podcast awesome. He shared that it is great to share stories of runners on the podcast to the next level. Kyle shared while it would be great, they cannot have one for track and field unless they get help.

**Dick Washburn State Meet -Meet Director, Eric Cogdill**

Eric shares that this was year 13. Last year we had over 1600 registered runners. He shared that this year we had over 1700 runners. Eric shared that he had to change the course that morning. He shared that the good news is that this 2026 meet was probably his best state course yet.

This year he received zero complaints total. He shared possibly a little wider on the start line. Easy fix. Three years ago the profit was $18,000 last year $47,000 and this year was $38,000.

Darin Akema asked if there were any comments about 8th graders being able to run both the high school and the 8th grade meet? We talked about the power of leaving it to the head coaches to ask advice about each individual athlete.

Tom Trygstad shared he did receive some comments from his parents. He explained to his parents the perspective of the decision that our board made at the start of the season.

**Apparel Report -Apparel Director, Eric Cogdill**

Overstock items are 1500 items. They track what sells to keep our overstock low. Look at a new design to next year.

**Mentorship Program -Kelley Grothus, Madrid**

Kelley shared we had 11 matches. She enjoyed seeing the mentors connect. She shared that 5 mentees were able to bring their teams to the state meet, which is exciting. Kelley asked if you know of a new track and field coach that would like to be matched with a mentor, please let Kelley know. You can let her know if you know someone who would be a great mentor.

Mentors and mentees shared about their experiences.

**Academic All State (XC) -Academic All-State Coordinators (Abby Schmitz & Sara Schwendinger)**

Sara shared that she had 87 boys earn this honor and Abby shared that 88 girls have earned the honor. Both commented on the smooth process of how this award is communicated.

**All State (XC) -All-State Coordinator, (Chris Perkins, Peggy McGuire)**

Abby Schmitz shared that the teams are posted on the website. Athletes will not be penalized for schools not paying membership fees.

**Joint XC Advisory -Present members**

Emy Williams and Eric Cogdill are present and their meeting is December 1st. Please let me them know if you have items to go to the meeting.

**Joint T & F Advisory -Present members**

Erica Douglas shared about how it is determined who goes in lane 8 and lane 1 after state qualifying. She can do a follow up with what the state decided. Ben Duea shared an update that lane 1 can be the worst…he shared lane would be the 15th fastest athlete. The top 7 of 8 in the fast heat and fill lane 1 in with the 15th fastest athlete. This helps with not dreading to be in lane 1. This applies to the 400, 400 hurdles, and 4x200.

She said they shared what the idea size is of the 800 race. If it is 13 runners or more you run two heats. Members shared their feelings that this can be important to share with your athletic directors about the needs of athletes with this.

Erica shared that videos can help track volunteers become educated on how you run each event.

In the spring the committee a person discussed should the para athletes scores be attached to the team scores? Our committee shared that they looked at what the NCAA did and we did something similar.

Mike Parker brought up the long jump, about adding sand to the pit. He shared that keeping long jump pits standard is important for keeping things fair for state qualifying meets. Members also shared about the fairness of boards to a painted line.

Erica shared that phone calls are favorable instead of "section O". They just want to make sure your phone numbers are correct.

Erica shared that JV entries can feel like they are happening less and less. If we want to have a sport that is open to everyone, we need to provide opportunities for these athletes. The advisory said you have an opportunity to use your scrimmage…please use it. Just remember those scrimmage meet performances cannot count in Bound.

Erica shared that the Saturday of the state meet does not have field events. Jared Chizek shared that only 2 coaches have reached out to share they have interest in adding a field event. Make sure to share your opinion with your athletic directors, the association, and the union.

**IATC Indoor Championships -Meet Director, Ben Duea & Entry Coordinator, Eric Cogdill**

Eric Cogdill shared the new schedule with the boys association now hosting the boys state tournament in Ames. Ben shared that the Iowa State administration said we can have it on the dates we picked. The other solution was Monday and Tuesday or spring break. He shared the bigger schools on Friday because of spring break. Smaller schools are not as likely to have spring break. Hopefully we run the meet so well, we can go back to our old schedule in 2028. Ben is looking at a different livestream partner. They will provide field event livestreaming as well. He will update team trophies this year and make it more custom. Ben shared from the officials that they are recommending that athletes only get 4 jumps in long jump. They are concerned about tracking kids down with all the sprinting events. Ben is hesitant to agree because the shot put will still get to have prelims and finals. The body shares that 4 jumps is ok at this point in the season because of the wear and tear on your body. Ben just wants to make sure to clarify, especially to parents, that there is a difference between shot and long jump.

Eric and Ben shared this year placing to 8 and trophies to 2 teams.

**Mike Henderson State Meet -Meet Director, Eric Cogdill**

Eric shared about limiting the field events, especially in discus. He thinks the profit last year was $66,000. We have talked about adding Tim Thomas to the meet.

Eric makes a motion to add Tim Thomas to the middle school meet. Eric made a motion to change the name of the meet. Nate Hopp second it. The motion passed.

Matt Pries suggested that we have had successful profits. Is there a way to use this profit money to have an IATC subscription to James Mills website?

**IATC Outdoor Championships -Meet Coordinator & Host, Mike Parker**

Mike shared that this is a free opportunity for athletes to have in the state of Iowa. It is just supposed to be Iowa athletes who have completed as 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders.

Mike shares that it is nice to have stats on these athletes, so please stick to this routine. Please encourage everyone to come to this meet. Further discussion now though because 8th graders can be in high school competition.

**State Pentathlon -Meet Coordinator, Nathan Hopp**

Nate shared to really encourage kids to compete in the state pentathlon. He shared to make sure to have guidelines/manuals so volunteers know what to do. (for example: How to set the hurdles). Do we want to change the scoring? Discussion was also had about switching to metric. People do not want to lose their records is what we are hearing about the controversy with switching to metric.

Coach of the Year Voting -Assistant COY, Middle School COY, High School COY (Abby Schmitz)

New Business -National High School Coaches Association (Tom Trygstad)

2025-2026 year moving on National Coaches
Andy Everett, Dan Saucer, Cristy Nimrod, Tim O'Neil (longevity…years of service…)
High School Alex Oliver, Derek Homewood

-Clinic intros volunteers (Tom Trygstad)

-Past presidents dinner-New date December 2027 (Abby Schmitz)

-SheCoaches and North Polk Clinic (Abby Schmitz)

-Clinic meeting 5PM at Gateway Center (Abby Schmitz)

**Adjournment -President, Abby Schmitz**

Steve Roth made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Greg Thompson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.