

# Relay knowledge: how to follow track

by Jack Spencer

photo by Becca Moreno



CCC runner Ericka Pengelly hands off the baton to teammate Hannah Waite during the Southern Region Championships on May 9.

Scoreboards are an indicator to both spectator and participant of who's winning. Some sports use the scoreboard more than others. Basketball, for instance, is a sport in which the players need to be able to see it during the game. The scoreboard shows the score, how much time is left in a game, and in some cases even statistics that may only be interesting to a select few. Now we come across the curious case of track and field.

Most venues that hold events for track and field are fit with a scoreboard. Only thing is, there is no way to display track and field events on that scoreboard. With the countless number of events that are participated in at these competitions and the way in which they are scored, the JumboTron at Jerry World would have trouble showing you who is winning.

How exactly are you supposed to figure out the score? Well there's a couple of different ways. First off, the announcer. Now you're probably thinking this is amazing, some guy over the P.A. telling you the results of the event you just watched; wrong. Most announcers have a select number of players that they are sup-

posed to memorize; there are hundreds of participants so it takes some time for them to figure out who just ran. Also it takes more time to actually get the results to the booth so that they can be announced. By then the next event is under way and lots of people have a very confused look upon their face. All except for the athletes, who are clearly acclimated to the process.

"They do a really good job around here," said Clackamas Community College track and field thrower Courtney Pardee.

There definitely is a large work crew making sure that everything is running very smoothly, so it must just be the difficulties of revealing results to the crowd. All the athletes seemed to have their routine, usually getting a fair amount of downtime in between events to rest and check their results, which leads me to the second way they are displayed, on the wall.

After each event, the NWAC would run around to gather accurate times or distances and hustle to get them posted on the walls around the stadium. This would seem like a tool meant for the participants so they can see what just happened; it's probably pret-

ty hard to count when you're running that quickly. Also, the walls that had the scores displayed were surrounded by athletes checking their results. Some athletes prefer to wait until the event is finished to check the results.

"I like to always be looking around the track and seeing what my team's doing and if I can cheer them on in any way, but ultimate goal is to focus on what I'm doing and concentrate to do the best that I can," said CCC track and field decathlon competitor Zack Supple.

Trying to interpret these results was a little difficult because there was a lot of unfamiliar language to me. Language like heat, fly and P.R. (personal record) were all terms that were displayed and also thrown around in conversation by the athletes.

"People ask me that all the time, like what's a P.R.," said CCC track and field thrower Rachel Mckinnis.

The language was a little difficult to understand, but thanks to the athletes it was fairly easy to pick up. As far as reading the scores go, might be better just to leave that for them to interpret.

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