

**NCCWMA Championships, San Jose, Costa Rica,  
August, 21-24, 2014  
Reports to CMA Board  
September 17, 2014**

**Stadia Report:**

This report is as seen through the eyes of the NCCWMA Stadia Vice President

It is always exciting and a bit unnerving putting on a championship in a developing country. You never know what to expect.

**Technical Visit:** Sandy Pashkin, Vern Christensen, and Brian Keaveney made an official visit in January when all venues were seen. We also met the head of the Costa Rica Sports. She gave the LOC some funds to help run the championships and pay officials.

**Location:** Costa Rica, San Jose National Stadium built by the Chinese four years ago. The limitations were that it had only limited throwing and jumping venues. The agreement was signed by the LOC and the NCCWMA president at the finish of the visit.

**Weather:** It rains very hard most afternoons. Thunderstorms are common.

**Schedule:** Each day we had to start at 7:00 am in order to finish before the rains. It worked. It did mean athletes had to get up early and organize their food for the next day. In future we will need to build the schedule differently. Sandy Pashkin made the schedule based on past practice of older women to younger and men older to younger. We will make changes to fit the venue and other factors.

**Venues:** When I arrived, I had to measure and paint the hurdle lines for all races on the straight. The LOC did not buy all of the weights as promised. Athletes had to use a heavier weight. Only three sets of 27" hurdles were made out of older hurdles. This caused problems and delays. The cage for the throws was only for discus and was short. We required a hammer cage. We did not host the weight throw since it was not known in the region. The pole vault mats had never been used and were a great puzzle to put together. No LOC pole vault poles were provided. PV is not popular in the area.

**Officials:** Local and National officials of Costa Rica were hired to work the championship. They were well trained but had not worked with Masters. I brought in six international officials from the USA and Canada plus myself as Chief Race Walk Judge. Without the internationals who knew Masters well, the championship would have not been a success. I thank them all and hope they help us out next time.

**Photo Timing:** Friday disaster – The starting apparatus attached to the gun broke down several times and gave poor results in many cases. The finish line was always manned with hand timers. Hand times for the most part were used for the Friday results. No records can be gained from 400m and lower this day. The wiring was repaired. Times went well for the rest of the championship.

**Awards:** The awards presentation was wonderful. Spanish and English, music, national anthems, three level stand, flags and very well organized.

**Food:** Little if any food was available for purchase in the stadium. Not even coffee was allowed at track level. Security was everywhere.

**Washrooms and Change rooms:** Washrooms were provided but no showers or change rooms except a small changing area in the warm-up hall.

**Transportation:** After the first day the bussing went well. Coaches were hired to run between the meet hotels and the stadium. Busses were provided to the Opening Ceremony hall as well.

**Opening Ceremony:** A basketball hall was used for the opening on the Wednesday evening. There were a few speeches, gymnastics by children, folk dancing, and a walk-in of athletes. Well done.

**Announcing:** There was virtually no announcing in Spanish or in English.

**Photographs and Certificates:** Commercial photographers attended and sold athlete photos in the TIC room. The LOC produced a free certificate for every athlete who attended. They were hand signed. Great idea!

**Presence of President of the WMA Stan Perkins:** No president of the WMA has attended the NCCWMA Championship in decades. The presence of Stan Perkins was positive. It gave him a chance to see how we produce our championships, allowed athletes to meet him and give him feedback on the WMA.

**NCCWMA Meeting:** The highlight of the meeting was the presentation from Mexico and the election of a new women's representative Magdalena Molina of Costa Rica. She was the prime mover behind the San Jose LOC.

**Athlete's Party:** The party was held Sunday evening at the TRYP Hotel San Jose. This was one of the main hotels. The dinner was good. It was difficult to hear the band from the dining halls, but many people enjoyed the dancing.

**2017 NCCWMA Championships:** A presentation was made by a border city in Mexico. A vote was taken to accept this location based on a positive technical visit which will include an extensive safety audit. Juarez City, Mexico presented its bid. The city officials want to change the face of the city to the world. Cesar Moreno has been involved with training of officials. There are 4 tracks. There will be one main track and the others if needed. A video was presented outlining the city's benefits. Great hotels. Good athletes' experiences. Weather is one of extremes. No dates set yet. Hotel rates are reasonable, includes breakfast. Discounts on airfare will be available. Safety is a paramount concern.

Results and some photos can be found on <http://nccwma.com/> website.

Submitted,  
Brian Keaveney

### **Non-Stadia Report:**

This is further to Brian Keaveney's report on the Stadia and organizational aspects of the NCCWMA Championships held in San Jose, Costa Rica.

**My Status:** During the Championships, as Vice-President, Non-Stadia of NCCWMA, I served as the main (only?) liaison between NCCWMA and the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) regarding all Non-Stadia events. As there were three Non-Stadia events on the 4 days, each beginning at 7:00 am, I had little time for other activities, but by luck I was able to compete in my one Track event, as it

took place at 7:30 am on the one day when there was no Non-Stadia event scheduled. Because of the early morning starts, I obtained a great appreciation of the time that Brian must have put in during the many similar events with which he has been involved over the years

**Advance Visit:** During our advance visit to San Jose in January, we had met the person who was responsible for putting on the Non-Stadia events. His name was Victor Lopez Jiminez, and he owns a running store in San Jose. At that time, we agreed on the main aspects of these events – the location of the 8K Cross Country, the 10K Road Race and the 10K Road Race Walk; the use of chips for timing; the age groups; the rough time of day for the events; the requirement for certified measurements for the Road Race and the Race Walk and reasonable measurement of the Cross Country; and other points. We saw and approved the locations for each of the events.

**Review before the Championships:** I arrived in San Jose two days before the Championships began, and was able to arrange to visit the event locations the day before the start of the Championships with Victor and the persons who were responsible for most aspects of putting on the races, including start line, measurement, course marking, starting, marshalling, water, timing, announcing, lap counting, etc., etc. Most of these persons were employees in Victor's store, and most spoke only Spanish – my rudimentary Spanish proved very valuable. That day, as the Cross Country was scheduled for the following day, we concentrated on the XC course, which had not been laid out or measured. We were able to go over the 2K course 3 times, to decide on the exact location, to measure it with a Jones Wheel, and to decide on the location of caution tape, pylons to mark any dangerous spots, and where and how to do four road crossings, including one bridge which had to be built over a ditch. I also had time for Victor to drive me over the 5K Road Race course, to be run twice for the 10K Race.

**All Events:** Victor's employees, or those he hired to carry out specific duties (for example, the timing crew) had obviously put on hundreds of similar events, as they were very efficient, professional, and knew what they were doing so well, that setting up for each event, and closing down after, was among the most efficient examples that I have ever seen. Although I did have to insist on certain changes being made, all of his crews were equally efficient, and were willing to help in any way that they could. It made the events run very smoothly, and made my job much easier than it would otherwise have been. The announcements during the events were very animated and informative, although by a person who spoke only Spanish.

**Cross Country:** The Cross Country was run in the Parque La Sabana, next to the Estadio Nacional, over a combination of 50% flat and 50% fairly rough and hilly terrain, with two large hills in each 2K loop. The road crossings were mainly covered with straw and sawdust. Two races were run, one with the women and older men and the second with the other men. The course was largely marked by 6:00 am on race day, but I went over the course several times before the races started, to ensure that it was safe, and that the runners could understand where they were to run. Some posts for the caution tape had been stolen during the night, so they had to "make do". Even during the races, small issues came up, including sponsor marking signs which continuously fell down because of the strong wind. Each of the loops went through the finish line, unlike many cases where the finish line is off to one side, but that caused no problems. Counting of the laps was done by a small group who did this for all of the Non-Stadia events. There was also a timing mat at the 1K mark, so there were actually 8 recordings of each athlete's progress. There were marshals at every questionable spot. I realized during the first race that the medical aid had not arrived, and it was only after my insisting that they arrived from the Main Stadium. I hope they weren't taken away from the events in the Stadium! Each race started exactly on time, and there were no issues with the timing. I was handed a results list shortly after each of the races was finished. Strawberries were served to the finishers after each race.

**10K Road Race Walk:** The Road Race Walk took place on a 1K straight street, Avenida de Las Americas, which runs alongside the Stadium and the Parque La Sabana. With the turns at each end of the street, it forms a 2K loop, which was walked 5 times. The course had been used for the Central American Championships a year earlier, and had been measured by Bernie Conway from London, Ontario, in November, 2012. I had to request changes in the placement of the cones at each end of the street, in order to make the course agree with the map which was part of the measurement certificate, and allow the athletes to have a gradual turn. Most of the same persons who were involved with putting on the XC carried out the same duties for this event, including timing, lap counting, announcing, etc. In addition, there were a number of young volunteers, who delivered the warning notices from the judges to the central recording location. Because only half of each side of the boulevard-type street was closed to traffic, it was a little squeezed for space in the two inner lanes plus the boulevard. It also resulted in some confrontations with motorists, as cross-boulevard access to side streets was blocked. The finish line was at a cross walk, which made it a little dangerous for tired athletes when they finished their event, and wanted to cross to where the food and medical attention was located. Despite these problems, the event seemed to have been completed without any major problems, and results were provided shortly after its completion.

**10K Road Race:** This Race took place about 5K South-East of the Estadio Nacional, in mainly a residential area, twice around the 5K loop, at 7:00 am on Sunday morning. The course had been measured by Bernie Conway, just a few days before I arrived. The same persons involved with the other two events were involved here, and the efficiency of their “put-up” and “tear-down” was quite evident. A number of volunteers were placed throughout the course at every cross street, and a police car preceded the lead runners. Water was available during and after the race, and apples were provided. Medical attention was available. The only negative was that the K markers weren’t provided, so I drove one of the cars to the K locations (marked with a nail and red paint) and, together with Bill Quinlisk from Rochester, NY, pasted masking tape onto the road to clearly indicate each of the 4 Ks. The athletes had been brought to the start by two shuttle buses from the main hotels, and they were returned to either the hotels or the Stadium in the same way. An announcer provided commentary during the race, in Spanish only. Results were provided immediately after the race.

All in all, the Non-Stadia events were well-run, with a few specific shortcomings which, for the most part, could be easily corrected. A better arrangement for the traffic during the Race Walk, or police presence, would have solved the most significant issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Vern Christensen