

APPX18.6 STARTER, STARTER'S ASSISTANT, CHECK STARTER

All starting officials should view the Starting a Race Tips Video on the ACC web site at: <https://www.accsport.asn.au/carnivals/athletics/officials-info/officiating-video-tips>

Separate starters and their assistants are designated for the short distance events (SD - Hurdles, 400m, 100m, 200m & Relays) and long distance events (LD - 1500m and 800m). Athletics West normally supply the SD Starter and this person is the senior official.

On arrival at the venue, the Starter should check to see that the starting equipment is working properly, and if a loud hailer is used, that the command can be clearly heard in all lanes. The Starter shall so place himself/herself, that the distance between him/her and each of the competitors is approximately the same.

When Photo Finish is used, the Starter is to be familiar with gun connections with the underground calling. **Photo Finish** auto timing is used for SD track events only. LD track events use manual timing and are not connected to **Photo Finish**.

The Starter should check equipment, check that timekeepers can see the flash of the pistol (or starting apparatus) and check the mechanism of the gun.

The Starter should brief the Starter's Assistant.

In liaison with the Starter's Assistant, the Starter shall check to see that starting blocks are correctly in place when used. When in position on the track, no part of the starting block must overlap the starting line or extend beyond the lane. If the Starter notices any starting blocks, which do not conform to the rules, he/she immediately notifies the Track Referee.

When the athletes have finished adjusting their starting blocks, they are placed in the hands of the Starter's Assistant and Starter.

The Starter's Assistant:

Moves the runners up to 1m behind the start line and if requested by the starter briefs the runners regarding the starting procedure.

When the competitors are on the assembly line, and the Starter is ready, the Starters Assistant should ask the competitors to take off their track suits - but this should not be done too early, especially in bad weather.

Shall assist in the supervision of the regularity of the start.

Ensures that starting blocks are correctly used and removed from the track or well behind the start line after each race.

In case of any start that does not comply with the requirement of a correct start, he shall give the sign of a recall by firing a pistol or by providing a visible signal or whistle to the starter.

This means that in the case of a false start, either the Starter or Starter's Assistant can fire the recall pistol. But only the Starter applies the warning, and any disqualification.

The Check Starter:

The Check Starter, as the name implies, checks the starting line-up.

Checks to see that the competitors are competing in their correct event, division and event number.

Checks that all competitors' names/numbers are on the result sheet and that each runner has their correct lane number sticker visible on the outside (lateral) of their right leg.

Any runner not on the result sheet must be added and provided with a lane sticker if they do not already have one.

The check start must ensure that all competitors are in their correct lanes before the start.

The check starter then places runners in their lanes 3 metres behind the Start line. When all competitors are placed in the assembly line, the Check Starter signals to the Starter that all is ready. The Starter or starters assistant will then take over and conduct the start of the event.

Once the race has started the check starter is to deliver the results sheet to the photo finish results room immediately.

The check starter should work with the marshals to always try to have at least two races marshalled on the track in readiness for the start of the next event.

The moving through of runners from the marshalling area to the start assembly line in a timely fashion is the role of the check starter.

The Lane Stickers Supervisor:

Gives each runner in short distance track events (Hurdles/100m/200m/400m/last relay runner) their lane sticker number in the marshalling marquee before the race begins.

These stickers must be worn on the outside (lateral) of the right hip/thigh/knee so the **PHOTO FINISH** camera can help with the identification of athletes for judging positions. *See Appendix 17.4.3*
Must ensure that stickers are visible and not obstructed by the runner's single/shirt.

The Start

It is not now usual in top line competitions, for the Starter to give the method of starting to the competitors, but this is often done in junior competition e.g., I will say 'on you marks', 'Set' (as the case may be) and then fire the gun. Athletes should know the command.

The Starter will be provided with a radio and must ensure that all officials are ready (i.e., Photo Finish, Track Referee, Track Timekeepers, Track Umpires and Finish Judges). The Track Referee signals with a white flag when the track officials are ready for the start. The starter must wait for this signal before starting any race.

The Start is under the COMPLETE control of the Starter.

Start. In a clear voice the Starter shall give the command "**ON YOUR MARKS**"

The Starter's Assistant should then check the hand and foot positions of the competitors.

In Straight Events the Starter can observe the competitors on their marks but in circular events this is usually left to the Starter's Assistant who signals to the Starter.

A competitor must not touch either the starting line or the ground in front of it with his hands, feet or baton when on his Mark.

After the command 'On your Marks':

In a race (or leg of relay) not more than 400 metres, the Starter, when all competitors are on their marks, then orders "**SET**", and when all competitors are 'Set' and STEADY he shall fire the pistol or starting apparatus.

In an event of more than 400 metres, the command is 'On your Marks' and then the pistol is fired. (There is NO 'set').

Failure to comply with the Starter's command after a reasonable time shall constitute a false start - and the competitor(s) shall be warned.

In races up to and including 400 metres, where a crouch start should be used, both hands must be in contact with the ground when the competitor is in the 'Set' position. **NOTE:** The rule only says 'hands' and not 'feet' - so the feet, whilst in the starting blocks need not be on the ground. **A standing start or a crouch start without blocks may also be used.**

If a competitor leaves the mark with hand or foot after the word 'On you Marks' or 'Set', as the case may be, before the pistol is fired, the Starter or Starter's Assistant shall fire a second shot to recall competitors. A false start will be called - and the competitor (s) shall be warned.

ACC Follows the "Old" False Start Rule (as of 1/1/2003). This rule is now covered as per Rule 162.8 (In Combined Events).

The rule states that only one false start per race is allowed without the disqualification of the athlete(s) making the false start. Any athlete(s) making further false starts in the race shall be disqualified. The IAAF Technical Committee has suggested that any competitor(s) responsible for a false start will be warned. At the same time, all the other competitors will also be warned. This is to make clear that any athlete making a further false start will be immediately disqualified. The starter at ACC carnivals will use some discretion and take into account the skill level of the runners when interpreting this rule.

If the starter or Starter's Assistant was of the opinion that the Start was not a fair one, he shall recall the competitors by firing a pistol or audible starting mechanism.

If a competitor, after the command 'On your Marks', disturbs the other competitors in the race through sound or otherwise, it may be considered by the Starter, to be a false start.

If for any reason the Starter is not satisfied that all is ready for the start after the competitors have been called to their mark, he/she should ask the competitors to stand up and they go back to the assembly line.

If there is a false start, the Starter should order the competitors to stand up; the Starter shall put the competitors again 1m behind the starting line.

If after a command 'On your Marks' or 'Set', the Starter wishes to speak to any competitor he must order all competitors to stand up and commence his command again.

If there has been a false start the Starter should make sure that all the relevant officials are ready before re-starting the race.

Relays: In a relay event, the first runner may have the baton touching the ground or off the ground behind the start line, whichever is more convenient. The baton cannot touch the ground on or in front of the start line.

There is no fixed holding time after the command 'On your Marks' or 'Set' (according to the distance) - as soon as all competitors are steady on their marks, the gun is fired.

The Starter has COMPLETE control of the start and even if the Referee feels that the Start was an unfair one, the Referee has no power to interfere.

Appendix 18.6 cont...

If the Referee were to receive a protest on a start, the procedure would be for the Referee to ask the Starter if he considered the start to have been a fair one. If the Starter is satisfied with the start, then the Referee has no power to take any action.

It is usual for a Starter to wear a Starter's Shirt so that he can be easily recognised by everyone - athletes, judges and timekeepers. He needs to have two guns - one for starting and one for recalling - as well as a whistle attached to a lanyard around his neck.

The Starter's Assistant, after the Starter has given the command 'On your Marks', checks each competitor to see that hands are behind the line (in circular events it is not possible for the starter to see this) and if all is ready, signals to the Starter.

If there is a false start, the Starter asks all competitors to stand up and they are then in the hands of the Check Starter, to again be placed on the assembly line.

If the competitor came to the mark without shoes on his feet, the Starter is to ask the competitor if he has permission not to wear shoes? If permission has not been granted, the Referee is to be advised (see list of exemptions). **COMPETITORS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO START AN EVENT WITHOUT SHOES.**

If the Starter's Assistant noticed any starting blocks that did not conform to the rules this should immediately be reported to the Referee. The rules regarding starting blocks are Rule 162 (9) in the IAAF Handbook.

In relay events, it is the responsibility of the Starter and their assistants to see that relay batons are available for the first runner. Each schools should however provide their own baton.

It is NOT the duty of a Check Starter to judge if a competitor has had a false start - this is a matter for the STARTER and STARTER'S ASSISTANT only.

In all races up to and including 400 metres, where a crouch start should be used, both hands must be in contact with the ground when the competitor is in the 'Set' position. (Note that there is now no longer reference to 'feet', so therefore feet, whilst in the starting blocks do not have to be in contact with the ground). Standing starts are permitted. **A standing start or a crouch start without blocks may also be used.**

After the Starter has called the competitors to their mark, and the Starters Assistant has signalled that all is ready, the Starters Assistant should stand back from the track and after the race has commenced should see that all starting blocks are removed. He/she then proceeds to see that all competitors are ready for the next event.