

# ORGANISATION OF A SPORTS MEETING: A PRESENTATION OF THE CHECKLIST

A. Mwisukha, Kenya National Sports Institute, Kasarani

## ABSTRACT

The organisation of sports meets or tournaments is one of the major functions carried out by personnel involved in the management and administration of sports. The process of preparing any given sports meet entails a wide range of activities which sports managers and administrators must be well-versed with. Unless adequate time, care and effort is put into the whole process, it becomes possible to have some important areas vital to the success of a sports meet being omitted, ignored or overlooked. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to present a checklist for those who are or who may be charged with the responsibilities of making preparations for sports competitions.

**Key Words:** organisation, checklist, sports meet.

## INTRODUCTION

The task of organising sports meets is one of the major responsibilities of a sports manager or administrator. Consequently, they must be well equipped with all the necessary knowledge and skills that are crucial to the organisation of sports tournaments and competitions. The success of any given sports meet rests entirely on the shoulders of the organisers and their ability to take care of all the essential factors vital to the preparation of such a meet. Keller and Forsythe (1984) point out that well-organised sports contests are not the result of accident. Attending of competitions or tournaments is evidence of good planning on the part of the sports manager or administrator.

The entire process of organising a sports meet entails a number of tasks, some of which could easily be omitted, ignored or overlooked unless organiser(s) take care. This calls for the need to avail a checklist that can assist in carrying out the entire process.

## FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN THE ORGANISATION OF A SPORTS MEET

It must be noted that although there may be some variations in modalities of organising sports meets for the various different sports disciplines, there are several underlying factors that are common in most of the cases. A checklist of those organisational aspects is provided below.

1. The organiser of a sports competition must enlist the assistance of qualified personnel concerned with the particular sports competition being organised. One way of doing this is for the organiser to involve officials of the sports organisations or federations in the organisation of the sports meet (Keiler & Forsythe, 1984). Once these personnel have been identified, they may constitute an organising committee, of which the principal organiser (sports manager) becomes a member. Further to this, it may be necessary to set up sub-committees to take care of the various aspects of the sports meet.
2. Another important consideration for the success of the sports meet is the identification and provision of suitable and adequate facilities and equipment (Bucher, 1979; Dauer & Pangazi, 1990; Fait, 1976; Fordham & Leaf, 1978). The facilities should be availed in a venue that can easily be accessed (Kirchner, 1978). The facilities, both indoor and outdoor, must be marked properly according to the required dimensions, cleaned and cleared of any physical hazards (Keller & Forsythe, 1984; Kirchner, 1978; Robertson, 1994).

The sitting and parking areas must be adequate. The equipment for the competition(s) must also be of acceptable standard and adequate in quantity to avoid wastage of time by competitors standing and waiting to perform activities in turns (Dauer & Pangazi, 1990; Keller & Forsythe, 1984; Robertson, 1994). In addition to the sports equipment, there should be provision for a Public Address Equipment or any other suitable device for use in facilitating communication, and for some entertainment during rest intervals in the competitions (Kirchner, 1978).

3. An elaborate programme that shows the order and timing of events or competitions must be drawn to avoid delay, wastage of time or any possible omission of some (Fait, 1976; Frost, Lockhart & Marshall, 1995). A precondition of drawing the actual programme of competition is the careful identification of the date and day of competition such a date should not collide with any other important event in which the organisers may be involved or which may interfere with the sports meet (Frost, Lockhart & Marshall, 1995; Keller & Forsythe, 1984). The programme that is drawn must clearly show the nature of tournament or competition format that is to be adopted, for instance, the round robin format, league-cum-knockout, knockout, byes, heats (in track events), and so forth (Dauer & Pangazi, 1990; Kirchner, 1978). Further to this, any competition or tournament rules should be spelt out, clarified and posted to all participants (Dauer & Pangazi, 1990; Keller & Forsythe, 1984).
4. Critical to the success of a sports competition is the quality of officiating. Organisers of any competition must, therefore, recruit technically qualified officials to officiate at such event (Dauer & Pangazi, 1990; Fait, 1976; Robertson, 1994). A suitable guest of honour and any other guests should also be identified (Frost, Lockhart & Marshall, 1995). It is also a good sign of courtesy and a way of ensuring security to invite and or communicate to inform the local administrative authority about the intended sports meet (Frost, Lockhart & Marshall, 1995).
5. All the necessary invitations should be made in good time to enable the concerned persons prepare themselves adequately for the intended sports meet. Invitations should be sent out to teams, officials, guests, guest of honour, First-Aid/medical personnel, members of the press, and any other relevant persons. The invitation letters should contain details of location (of venue), date and time for the competitions (Keller & Forsythe, 1984). In competitions involving youth, there may be need to inform or seek the permission of their parents and or their school authorities (Keller & Forsythe, 1984).
6. Consideration should be given to the need to publicise the meet through the media, posters or any other available channel (Frost, Lockhart & Marshall, 1995; Keller & Forsythe, 1984). This includes extending an invitation to the members of the press to provide coverage of the event.
7. Proper arrangements for meals and accommodation for participants must be made especially if the event is to last for a period exceeding one day. Special care should be taken in ensuring that suitable accommodation is provided for participants of all ages and sexes. In addition to this, adequate means of transport should be availed to facilitate movement of those involved in the sports meet. Such transport is required in the process of making the necessary preparations and also on the material day(s) of the meet.
8. The organiser or organising committee, of whom the sports manager is a member, should draw a budget for the sports meet. This involves identifying areas that require funds and the source(s) of the funds including seeking for sponsorships.
9. Organisers of any given sports event have a moral and legal obligation to ensure the safety of those involved in the event (Fait, 1976; Frost, Lockhart & Marshall, 1975; Keller & Forsythe, 1984; Robertson, 1994). Elaborate security arrangements must be made; security personnel should be availed to ensure safety of the participants and their property, and also handle occurrences of violence; control traffic, and so on. Medical and /or First Aid personnel should be available to take care of any participants who get injured or fall sick in the course of the competitions. Such First Aid and medical personnel can be sought from the nearest hospital, dispensary, health care, the Red Cross organisation, and so forth. Medical personnel are also be required in carrying out physical examination of athletes for any traces of doping (Keller & Forsythe, 1984).

10. It is important that score sheets, cards, stationery and all other writing materials required for the sports meet are prepared and provided (Frost, Lockhart & Marshall, 1995)
11. Morale and performance of participants in a sports meet is enhanced when they anticipate some form of incentives or awards. It is, therefore, consequently crucial for organisers of any sports meet to avail such incentives as prizes, token rewards, participation certificates, trophies, medals, and the like.
12. Once the sports meet has been staged and concluded, its organisers should remember to conduct an evaluation of the entire process. This enables them determine the areas of success and failure, the basis from which organisation of future events can be done.

## **CONCLUSION**

It is clearly evident from the foregoing checklist that the entire process of organising a sports meet is fairly intricate and demanding in terms of planning and time. Therefore, a sports manager or administrator involved in the preparation of any sports meet must embark on the task early enough, co-operate with "others" and put much effort and time into it to be able to have a successful meet.

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