

TIMEKEEPING



Where do I stand?

Technically, timekeepers stand on the outside of the track. Whichever side of the track you are on, make sure that you stand about five metres back from the track and in line with the finish line to get the most accurate view of athletes crossing the line. It is preferable for timekeepers to sit on an elevated stand to ensure a good view of the finish.

Who do I time?

Contrary to what a lot of people believe, timekeepers are allocated a place, not a lane to time e.g. first place not lane one. Ideally, three watches are used to time first place.

When do I start timing?

The Starter will check with the Chief Timekeeper that everyone is ready before he or she starts the race. Watch for the raised starting device. Start timing when you see the flash or smoke from the starting device—not when you hear the sound. It is desirable to eliminate any waste motion of the hand holding the watch. This can be achieved by bracing the elbow on your knee or holding the elbow with the other hand. The stop/start button on the watch should be activated by a finger, never by the thumb.

When do I stop timing?

Stop timing when the athlete's torso crosses the line. Disregard the legs, arms and head.

What do I do at the end of the race?

At the end of the race, the Chief Timekeeper will ask for the time that you took for your designated place. Times are taken to the 10th of a second e.g. 10.41 becomes 10.5 (round up).

What if I make a mistake?

Mistakes do happen, even when experienced timekeepers are timing. Sometimes you miss the start, your stopwatch doesn't start or stop when you press the button, or confusion happens over which place each person was timing. If this happens to you:

- Don't panic
- Don't let on to the athletes that there is a problem
- Quietly let the Chief Timekeeper know and they will deal with it

What are some "Handy Tips" for timekeepers?

- Don't tell all the athletes their times at the side of the track – it slows things down.
- Hold the stopwatch in one hand with your finger on the stop/start button.
- If in a timekeepers stand, remain seated so timekeepers behind you can see.
- If standing to time keep, remain still so timekeepers behind you can see.
- Have two sets of timekeepers, to start the next race immediately after the previous race has finished.