

Indoor Track: the DCIAA's marathon meet

There was a full slate of events contested at the D.C. Interscholastic Athletic Association indoor track and field championships on Monday, and marathon wasn't one of them. But that's exactly what they got at the Prince George's Sports and Learning Complex. Several coaches said they arrived at the Landover facility around 10:30 that morning and, although the meet was scheduled to end at 7 p.m., didn't leave until closer to 9.

In a way, the meet continued until Thursday when scoring was finally finalized and team champions were crowned. A deep Dunbar girls' team breezed to its fourth straight title by 170 points, followed by H.D. Woodson and Coolidge. Coolidge won the boys' championship over H.D. Woodson and Dunbar.

Track meets are notoriously long, but the District's seem to get bogged down worse than Maryland's or Virginia's. At the very least, after a long day of competition, the winning teams should be able to celebrate a victory with their teammates and in front of their peers, not be left in anticlimactic suspense.

"It's unprofessional," Coolidge Coach David Allen said. "We didn't even have blocks. It takes forever to start the races and the kids sit around all day. That's too long for a championship-caliber race."

Another coach, who spoke under the condition of anonymity in order to speak candidly, said his runner arrived at the meet at 10 a.m. and didn't step onto the track until 4 p.m. He said the delays negatively impacted his runner's performance. "That's crazy," he said. "She could've stayed in school and came out there the last period of the day. She could've had her body at a rest state and been able to come in and run some crazy fast times."