

CYO TRACK – COACHING GUIDELINES FOR A CYO TRACK MEET

PREPARING YOUR TEAM FOR A TRACK MEET

It is imperative that you, as coach, be as prepared “as you can” when you show up at a track meet. This preparation covers three areas:

- Making sure that your athletes are prepared
- Making sure that you (the coach) are prepared
- Managing your team at a track meet

With proper preparation, a lot of headaches, confusion and mistakes for yourself and your athletes can be avoided.

● MAKING SURE THAT YOUR ATHLETES ARE PREPARED

At a CYO Track Meet, it is not uncommon that 25-30 different teams will be participating in each age division. This means that you could be sharing the stadium, track and stands with approximately 200-300 athletes and their parents. You and your athletes can get very confused, very quickly if you don't know what to expect and how to act at a meet.

To help your athletes “get ready” for their first track meet you should –

- make sure that your athletes (and their parents) understand the CYO Track Rules
- explain the purpose for stickers (labels) that you will be giving your athletes at a track meet
- discuss and “walk through” the process of staging an event and discuss how the athletes should behave in the staging area
- explain how events are “called” at a track meet and discuss how important it is that your athletes listen for their event to be called (1st, 2nd, and 3rd and final call)
- make sure that your athletes and parents know to arrive a track meet at least 30 minutes before the meet is scheduled to start (for their age division)
- make sure that you (the coach) are notified if an athlete will not be attending a meet
- establish and discuss “meet behavior rules” for your team (e.g. staying in the stands between events, staying off infield areas and not going under stands, do not leave the stadium area without notifying the coach, etc.)
- make sure that your athletes and their parents know how to dress for the weather (layered clothes, rain gear)
- make sure that your athletes (and their parents) know to bring a water bottle to a meet (you don't want to share water bottles) and some money for the concession stand.

● MAKING SURE THAT YOU (THE COACH) ARE PREPARED

Before you (the coach) show up a a track meet, you should -

- prepare your team breakdowns for the meet (e.g. one team for a grade/gender level or more than one team if you have a lot of kids)
- identify which events each of your athletes will be participating in and on which team
- create the individual event stickers that each athlete will need at the meet and also create the relay stickers that identify all the relay team members' names (required for the 4th runner of a relay team)
- have the entry fees ready to be paid to the meet administrator when you arrive at a meet (\$2/participant)
- get a good night's rest before the meet!

Things for a coach to take to a track meet

- First Aid Kit
- Field Event Equipment (optional for practice at a meet)
- Batons (at least 2)
- Team Roster with Emergency Contact Information
- Cell Phone
- Clipboard(s) & Pencils/Pens
- Event Scheduling Worksheets
- Completed Individual Event Stickers and Relay Team Stickers
- Blank Individual Event Stickers and Relay Team Stickers
- Relay Spotting Aids (optional)
- Check/Money for Entry Fees

● MANAGING YOUR TEAM AT A TRACK MEET

When you are at a track meet, at times it can seem like “confusion reigns”! Here are a few suggestions to help you manage the day at a track meet.

- establish a regular seat location for your team (try to sit in the same area of the stands at each meet)
- put up a sign/banner in the stands for your team (so that your parents know where to find you and their kids)
- report in at the press box when you arrive at a track meet to identify your team breakdowns and pay your entry fees
- listen for and attend coaches meetings (usually 15-30 minutes before meet starting time)
- identify the staging areas, starting lines, and field event locations
- try to keep your athletes in the stands when they are not participating
- listen for event staging calls (1st, 2nd and 3rd and Final Call) and then direct athletes accordingly
- remind your athletes to pay attention in staging areas and at starting lines
- distribute the stickers to your athletes
- record your athlete's times / distances
- control who picks up awards for your team (don't allow a bunch of kids go to pick up awards)
- if there is a problem, you (the coach) should work it with the meet officials. Do not let your athletes or parents approach meet officials. All protests must be made by the head coach.
- make sure that all your athletes are picked up before you (the Coach) leave the stadium – NEVER leave an athlete by themselves at the end of a meet..

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