

Track & Field Basic Information

Good sources for information: www.khsaa.org/track and <https://ky.milesplit.com/>.

What is Track & Field?

- 18 events (described in more detail below)
 - 12 track events
 - 4 relays
 - 2 hurdles
 - 6 open events (range from 100m to 3200m)
 - 6 field events
 - 2 throws
 - 4 jumps
 - 2 horizontal
 - 2 vertical

What Track & Field IS NOT

- Track is NOT Spring XC.
 - Other than the two sports have running events, track has nothing in common with XC.
 - The longest track race is 3200m; varsity XC races are 5000m.
 - Scoring is different in the two sports.
 - XC and road racing is all about long, slow twitch. Track is about quick twitch. You must get your motor going and sprint for track distance events. Racing different in track. We don't use the word pace – WE DON'T PACE! There is a difference in racing and pacing. We use splits.
 - Track distance workouts are different than XC.
 - Stretching different/warm-up different.
- Track is NOT just distance running.
 - There are essentially only two distance events in track – the 1600m and the 3200m. The bulk of track events are sprints or mid-distance events. We need kids that can sprint and run short distances fast!
- Track is NOT only about running.
 - This is where the "& Field" part comes in.
 - There are six field events that involve little to no running.
 - We need kids that can learn technique to throw, jump and vault.
 - Field event athletes do not train like track athletes. Running is limited.

Some Track Basics

- The track is 400 meters. Each straight is 100 meters and each curve is 100 meters.
- There is a common finish line for all track events. The start will depend on the distance of the race.
- In each running event, girls run first.
- Order and description of track events:

Event	Type of Event	Brief Description
4x800m relay	Mid-Distance Relay	Four athletes run two laps each. Baton must be passed in exchange zone. First leg moves to 1 st lane at break line (usually after 100 meters).
100m/110m hurdles	Sprint Hurdle	Girls run 100m hurdles; boys run 110m hurdles. Athlete runs the straight and 10 hurdles. Athlete stays in lane the entire race. Hurdle height is 33" for girls and 39" for boys. Middle school girls and boys run 100m hurdles at 30".
100m dash	Sprint	Athlete runs the straight and stays in lane entire race.
4x200m relay	Sprint Relay	Four athletes run a curve and a straight. Baton must be passed in exchange zone. Athletes stay in lane the entire race.
1600m run	Distance	Athlete runs four laps. Athlete moves to 1 st lane at break line (usually after 100 meters).
4x100m relay	Sprint Relay	Four athletes run 100m each. Two athletes will run a straight and two athletes will run a curve. Baton must be passed in exchange zone. Athletes stay in lane the entire race.
400m dash	Sprint/Mid-Distance	Athlete runs one lap. Athlete stays in lane the entire race.
300m hurdles	Sprint Hurdle	Athlete runs a straight, a curve and a straight and eight hurdles. Athlete stays in lane the entire race. Hurdle height is 30" for girls and 36" for boys. Middle school girls and boys hurdle height is 30".
800m run	Mid-Distance	Athlete runs two laps. Athlete moves to 1 st lane at break line (usually after 100 meters).
200m dash	Sprint	Athlete runs a curve and a straight. Athlete stays in lane the entire race.
3200m run	Distance	Athlete runs eight laps. Athlete moves to 1 st lane at break line (usually after 100 meters).
4x400m relay	Sprint/Mid-Distance Relay	Four athletes run one lap each. Baton must be passed in exchange zone. First leg must stay in lane. Second leg can move to 1 st lane at the break line (usually after 100 meters).

Some Field Basics

- Field events occur at the same time as the track events.
- Most meets contest the long jump, triple jump, shot put and discus “cafeteria” style where you are given a certain amount of time to complete three jumps/throws. A field athlete may have to check out his/her field event to go compete in a running event or a different field event.
- At some meets, there may be finals in the long jump, triple jump, shot put and discus. The top athletes after the first round are invited back for three additional jumps/throws. The number invited to finals depends on the size of the meet. In other meets, the meet host may agree to give each athlete four jumps/throws in lieu of finals.
- Typically, girls compete first in the following field events: Long Jump, Discus, Pole Vault. Typically, boys compete first in Triple Jump, Shot Put, High Jump. Meet management has the discretion to change this order. Field athletes should listen for the calls for their event.
- Brief description of field events. Bold words are defined below.

Event	Type of Event	Brief Description
Shot Put	Throw	Athlete throws a steel round ball with one hand. Throw is outward. Girls shot put weighs 4 kg. (8.81 lbs.); boys shot put weighs 12 lbs. Middle school girls shot put weighs 6 lbs.; middle school boys shot put weighs 4 kg (8.81 lbs.).
Discus	Throw	Athlete throws a disc made of wood-steel or rubber with one hand. Throw is outward. Girls discus weighs 1 kg. (2.20 lbs.); boys discus weighs 1.6 kg. (3.53 lbs.). Middle school girls and boys discus weighs 1 kg. (2 lbs., 3.27 oz.).
Long Jump	Jump	Athlete runs down a runway , plants one foot on board and jumps off the plant foot into a sand pit. Jump is off one foot.
Triple Jump	Jump	Athlete runs down a runway , plants one foot on board and jumps off the plant foot (first jump). Land on same foot and jump again (second jump). Land on opposite foot and jump again into a sand pit (third jump). Each jump is off one foot.
High Jump	Jump	Athlete approaches a horizontal bar using a running approach. At the bar, the jumper will jump off one foot and attempt to jump over the bar backwards – head first. Upon clearing the bar, the athlete lands on back/shoulders on a foam rubber mat.
Pole Vault	Jump	Athlete runs down runway carrying a fiberglass pole placing the tip of the pole into a box . The momentum lifts the vaulter up off the ground and into the air. Vaulter turns loose of pole while in the air and attempts to clear a horizontal bar. Upon clearing the bar, the athlete lands on a foam rubber mat. Pole length depends on vaulter’s strength and ability. Pole strength is rated for vaulter’s weight. Each vaulter must weigh in at a track meet.

Definitions

- **Runway:** a lane or alley jumper runs through before jumping
- **Box:** steel 6” deep area where vaulters place pole tip before vaulting
- **Board:** painted area on runway where jumpers plant one foot for jump

Track & Field Meets

- Types of Meets
 - All-Comers
 - Typically, local and during the week
 - Opportunity for athletes to compete and fight for invitational meet spots
 - Opportunity to try a different event
 - Coaches do not usually have to pre-enter athletes in events, so more flexibility in who competes
 - Invitationals
 - Typically held on Friday nights or Saturdays.
 - Coaches must pre-select who will compete in each event four to seven days prior to the meet. Substitutions are usually permitted if athlete is on that meet's roster.
 - Typically medals/ribbons awarded to top athletes in each event and team trophies awarded to top teams.

- Points/Scoring
 - Point values assigned to 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. in each event to determine team score. Number of places scored and point values awarded depend on number of teams competing in meet.
 - Girls and boys teams scored separately.

- Meet Environment
 - Organized chaos.
 - A meet typically lasts +/- 4 hours.
 - Athletes are permitted to leave meets with parents after they complete all scheduled events. Must inform coach that they are leaving.
 - Although only one track event occurs at a time; there could be up to six field events contested at the same time.
 - An announcer will notify athletes/spectators by making 1st, 2nd and 3rd calls for specific events. Athletes should check in with the track marshal or field event judge at 1st call.

- Entry Limitations
 - Meet management will determine how many entries are permitted.
 - Typically, invitational meets allow one relay per relay event (with 4 alternates) and two athletes per event for all other events. (Some meets will allow more or less entries or allow schools to enter multiple teams i.e. "A" team, "B" team.)
 - Typically, all-comers meets allow unlimited entries. However, as a courtesy and to help with the length of the meet, we limit our entries at all-comers meets to four individuals and two relays. This limit is flexible depending on the size of the meet.

- Other
 - Athletes can participate in a maximum of 4 events per meet.