



Junior Development Athlete & Parent Handbook

**An Introduction to Track & Field and Cross Country
Running**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Thank you to all who were involved in developing this manual.

Sincerely,

BC Athletics Board of Directors

Chair, Greg White

WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF BC TRACK AND FIELD!

The purpose of this handbook is to provide those new to the sport of Athletics/Track and Field, with some basic information that will allow smooth entry into the sport.

This handbook is specifically aimed towards those in the Junior Development (JD) age group programs (ages 9-13). In keeping with the Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) Model, programs for this age category focus on developing the fundamental movement skills of running, jumping and throwing, with the emphasis on FUN! See the link below for more information about the Athletics LTAD Model.

http://athletics.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/LTAD_EN.pdf

GETTING STARTED

The first step is to join a BC Athletics affiliated track and field club. BC Athletics is the provincial governing body of track & field, road running, marathons, cross country, and race walking. Clubs are community based organizations that provide coaching and host track & field and cross country meets. See the link below and click "Clubs" to find a club in your area.

<http://www.bcathletics.org/TrackAndField/ClubFinder/>

Another option is to register directly with BC Athletics as an "unattached athlete". "Unattached" means that you are not a member of a BC Athletics affiliated track and field club. To enter a competition, you will need to be a registered competitive athlete member of BC Athletics. See the link below and click "Individuals" to register as an unattached athlete.

<http://www.bcathletics.org/TrackAndField/Membership/>

EVENTS

Track and Field is comprised of three components: running, jumping, and throwing.

Running Events – Sprints, Hurdles, Middle Distance

Sprints are 60m – 300m (400m races are for those 16 and older).

Middle distance races are 600m – 2000m.

Hurdles can be sprint or distance events.

Relays can be sprint or medley races.

Race walk events are 800m and 1500m.

Jumping Events – Long, Triple, High, Pole Vault

Long jump is a running jump into a sand pit.

Triple jump involves a hop, step, and a jump into the sand pit.

High jump involves jumping over a bar onto a mat.

Pole vault requires using a long pole to launch oneself over a high bar.

Throwing Events – Shot Put, Discus, Javelin, Hammer

Shot put involves putting a metal ball.

Discus involves throwing a disc.

Javelin involves throwing a spear-like implement.

Hammer involves throwing a metal ball that is attached by a wire to a handle.

Combined Events - Pentathlon

Pentathlon is comprised of five events: hurdles, high jump, shot put, long jump and a middle distance event (600m or 800m). Your result in each individual event gives you an overall score.

See the complete BC Athletics Events and Technical Specifications [here](#).

BC Athletics Junior Development - Events for each Age Group

The chart below shows the events for each age during the JD years. Note that not all events are available for all ages.

TABLE 4.1A - Junior Development Track & Field and Race Walking Events										
Age Group	Tyke		Pee Wee		Pee Wee		Bantam		Bantam	
Age	9		10		11		12		13	
Gender	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Events	60m	•	•	•	•	•				
	100m	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	200m				•	•	•	•	•	•
	300m						•	•	•	•
	600m	•	•	•	•	•				
	800m						•	•	•	•
	1000m	•	•	•	•	•				
	1200m						•	•	•	•
	2000m								•	•
	60mH	•	•	•	•	•				
	80mH						•	•	•	•
	200mH						•	•	•	•
	800mRW	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
	1500mRW								•	•
	4 x 100m Relay	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	1200m Medley Relay				•	•	•	•	•	•
	High Jump	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Long Jump	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Triple Jump								•	•
	Pole Vault								•	•
	Shot Put	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Discus			•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Javelin			•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Hammer						•	•	•	•
	Pentathlon	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

LEGEND: H = Hurdle Events | RW = Race Walk | 1200m Medley Relay = 200m, 200m, 200m, 600m

Table 4.1A – JD T&F and RW Events (BCA Events and Technical Specifications)

Para Athletics

Athletes with a physical, visual, or intellectual impairment may compete in certain events based on their impairment rather than their age. Overall, para athletes compete in almost all of the same events as able-bodied athletes with some exceptions. For example, athletes who compete in wheelchair events don't compete in hurdle races, hammer throw, or jumping events. Conversely, these athletes can compete in a unique throws event called the club throw. Para athletes may also use specialized equipment to compete, such as a running blade, racing chair, or a seated throws chair.

For more information regarding:

Athletes with physical impairments, contact BC Wheelchair Sports at:
info@bcwheelchairsports.com or SportAbility at: rossm@sportabilitybc.ca

Athletes with visual impairments, contact BC Blind Sports at:
mike@bcblindsports.bc.ca

Athletes with intellectual impairments, contact BC Special Olympics at:
info@specialolympics.bc.ca

PRACTICE

It is important to be on time for practices. Your coach will teach you warm up exercises to ensure your muscles are warm at the beginning of your workout. A good warmup helps prevent injury. Athletes should dress appropriately for the weather and bring a water bottle.

Runners and Spikes for Training and Competition

Runners and jumpers usually wear speciality shoes called "spikes" when training and competing. Spikes are light weight shoes with needles in the sole that prevent slipping when running and jumping, especially in wet weather.

For JD athletes, middle distance spikes are recommended as they have more heel cushion than sprint spikes. Your coach may have information about a sports store where staff are properly trained to fit athletes with appropriate runners and spikes. Clubs may also have gently used spikes that older athletes have outgrown.

During the JD years, athletes can use the same pair of spikes for running and jumping. Serious throws athletes will benefit from the use of rotational throws shoes.

Coaching

Coaches are committed to a child's long-term development not only as an athlete, but also as a person. BC Athletics requires all coaches to pursue NCCP training.

It is important not to disturb or interrupt practices. Any questions can be directed to the coaches before or after practice.

Should you have any concerns, questions, or problems with a member of the coaching staff, contact the club's president who will then discuss the situation with the coach and everyone concerned.

Getting Involved

Clubs can always use help with coaching, officiating, or administration. BC Athletics offers NCCP Coaching courses, and Track & Field Officiating courses.

See the links below for more information on coaching and officiating track and field in British Columbia.

Link to Coaching Information <http://www.bcathletics.org/Coaches/>

Link to Officials <http://www.bcathletics.org/Officials/>

COMPETITIONS

Competitions are a fun way of measuring the progress you've been making in practice.

Meet Registration

Check with your coach as to how your club does track and field and cross country meet registrations. Some clubs will ask what events you'd like to do and then sign you up; other clubs prefer that you register yourself (don't worry, it's a simple online process). Either way, make sure you register on time! The deadline is usually a week before the competition. Event fees may vary depending on the meet but there is always an increased fee for those who register after the deadline.

Consult with your coach as to which events and how many you should enter. Look at the meet schedule when you're making this decision. Try to avoid signing up for events that are scheduled at the same time or close together as you may not be able to do both. It is recommended that you limit the number of events to no more than 3 or 4 per day.

What to Bring to the Meet

- Warm up clothes (track jacket and pants), competition uniform, and athletic shoes (spikes or running shoes). Athletes must wear a club singlet or t-shirt while competing.
- A towel to wipe off throwing implements.
- Weather protective items (e.g. hat or toque, sunscreen, gloves, raingear, umbrella, blanket)
- A bag for warm up clothes and shoes while you compete.
- Hair elastics
- First aid kit with required medication.
- Water bottle
- Healthy drinks, lunch and snacks. Leave the junk food at home.

Competition Day

Arrival

- Arrive at the meet at least one hour before the start of your first event.
- Find your coach or designated club parent and get your competition number and pins and attach it to your singlet. Athletes are required to wear their assigned number when competing. If you misplace your number, let your coach know and they will get you a replacement.

Before Competing

- Listen for announcements mentioning event times. Event can start late or up to 30 minutes before the scheduled start time.
- Do a proper warm-up about 30 minutes before your event.
- Athletes must check in for their events prior to the event beginning. Check in for field events often occurs at the field event, while track events occur at a marshalling tent.
- If you are competing in two events scheduled to start at the same time, check in at both events and let them know that you have a conflict. You will often be able to compete in the field event until the track event is ready to be run. Depending on how far the field event has progressed, you may be able to fit back into the field competition although you may miss a turn or have to miss some heights at high jump.
- HAVE FUN.

After Competing

- Keep a record of the meets that you attend and the results you achieve so that you can track your improvement.

General Etiquette

Competitions are opportunities to have fun! Support and cheer for your teammates while they are competing and respect your fellow competitors. Do not distract them while they are competing. Be polite to the officials and treat them with respect. Remember that they are volunteering their time and that without them, there would be no competition. Remember to thank them when your event is finished.

Avoid going on the track unless you are warming up or competing. If you must cross the track, look both ways before crossing to make sure you won't interfere with an event. Do not run next to an athlete on the track; this will cause them to be disqualified. Also, avoid going on the infield; it is closed to those who aren't competing or officiating. There are usually designated spectator and coaching areas.

EVENT PROCEDURES

Track Events

Races can either be run with heats and finals or as a timed final. Heats are preliminary races that all the registered athletes compete in. [The eight finalists are chosen according to IAAF rules](#) and race again in the final.

Timed finals, are similar to heats in that all the registered athletes in an age group compete. However, the overall placings are determined from the results of the races ran; there is no advancement.

Field Events

In field events, JD competitors are allowed three attempts. The overall placing is determined by the best of those three attempts.

In high jump and pole vault, athletes are allowed three attempts at each height. Athletes are eliminated from the competition when they have three consecutive failed jumps.

Protests

All results will be posted at the competition venue, usually within an hour after the event is completed. If you think an error has been made with the results, find your club coach and discuss the matter with them. Only coaches, or a coach designated club representative, may lodge a protest; do not approach the meet director or officials yourself. You have 30 minutes from the time of the results posting to lodge a protest.

BC ATHLETICS CODES OF CONDUCT

Please review the BC Athletics [Spectator Code of Conduct](#), as well as the [Codes of Conduct](#) for Athletes, Coaches, BC Team Members, Officials and Volunteers linked below.

**Support all the participants.
Respect and thank the officials.
Respect and thank your coach.
Have fun!**

