
EPTFA Meet Preparation

The following information provides Coaches with a step-by-step approach to properly prepare their team for track meets. The first step is to print off a copy of the week's Meet Schedule (available on the website). The Meet Schedule provides Coaches with their order and time of events for each meet. The remainder of this document will provide Coaches with helpful tips by event.

Running Events

Sprints

- Coaches should have their meet recording sheets ready before their team arrives to the track.
- As each athlete arrives, write their name on the recording sheet, assigning them to both a heat and lane.
- There are 6 lanes for the 50M, 100M and 200M dashes and 55M hurdles. After athletes cross the finish line, they must stay in their lane, until released either by a Timer or Team Manager.
- The 400M run will be a dash start (using the tear drop, staggered line) for each grade. Athletes on the outer lanes may cut in when they have sufficient room as to not impede runners who have the inside positions. After athletes cross the finish line, they must stay in order and move to the finish shoot located to the left infield of the track. Hurdles will be properly positioned in order to "guide" runners into the shoot area. A meet official will issue each finisher a numbered place card which represents their place order. Athletes must stay in the shoot until all finishers have received their time as recorded by the Team Manager.
- Coaches or Team Managers must check-in with the Clerk of Course at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start of their running event. It is recommended that all Coaches or Team Managers within each grade, meet at this time in order to determine how many full heats each team will run. The Clerk will assign teams their heat order and make sure any extra athletes that don't make another full heat of six, are assigned to a heat with another team within your same grade. This will ensure that we have the maximum number of runners per heat.
- Make sure that your Team Manager has a copy of the heat and lane assignments at the finish line. This will allow them the ability to quickly and accurately record the times for each athlete.

- Each meet will have six individual Timers, each assigned to time one lane/athlete. There is also one Head Timer who is responsible for running the Ultrak electronic timer. This timer issues Coaches a print-out of each athlete's place and time per heat.
- After the first meet, Coaches will have established their first set of times for each athlete. For future meets, Coaches should prepare heat assignments based on those athletes who obtain similar speed results. This will allow the athletes to challenge each other. Coaches should match equal abilities, with the goal of one athlete not always "blowing away" slower runners. This makes for a more naturally competitive and fair method of matching skill levels.

Relays

- Kindergarten teams will perform the 4x25 Meter Relay.
- Grades 1-6 will perform the 4x100 Meter Relay.
- Prior to the start of the meet or at least 20 minutes prior to the scheduled relay event, Coaches should organize runners into teams of 4 and assign a running order of 1-4, using the Relay Recording Sheet. Please include the team number and Coaches name so the Clerk of Course can effectively keep track of each heat.
- When setting up relay teams, strive to create competitive teams. For example, individual 100M times will be established at the first meet. Split an equal number of faster, middle and slower runners among relays. Typically the fastest runners are assigned to the 1st (starting) and 4th (ending) positions with slower runners at positions 2 and 3.
- Coaches or Team Managers must check-in with the Clerk of Course at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start of their event, in order to receive heat and lane assignments. Heat and lane numbers will be assigned on a first-come/first served basis. Teams can check in with the Clerk at any time during the meet, prior to their event start time, as long as the Clerk is caught up with current races and the team is present and "ready to go."
- There is a red-flagged Relay Check-In station, located on the infield of the track, by the starting line. All grade-level Coaches should meet to determine whether any team has extra runners. Any extra runners will be combined with athletes from other teams to allow everyone to participate in the fewest possible heats. Please note that it is the Coaches responsibility to organize any extra runners into additional relay teams.

- Coaches should remain near the Relay Station with ALL of their runners until their heat is called to the staging area.
- The Clerk will call for each 4-person relay team in the heat, to line up behind the orange cone (in the relay staging area) that corresponds to their running lane.
- The Clerk will then assign a Relay Volunteer to escort the 4th position runners to their exchange, the 3rd position runners to their exchange, etc. The lead off runners will be escorted to their starting lines by the Clerk. In this way, the runner will only need to remember their lane and not worry about their running order as well. For younger runners it works well to write their lane number on the inside palm of their hand.
- The Relay Volunteer will make sure the runners are lined up correctly. Once the runners are ready, the Volunteer will hold up the white flag to signal the Starter that their exchange zone is ready.
- We will attempt to mix the relay races this year so that each heat contains at least one relay group from each team.

Field Events

Long Jump

- Kindergarten will perform the standing broad jump from the end of the runway.
- Grades 1-6 will use a running start and take off from the white board on the runway.
- Coaches will provide the Team Manager with the field event recording sheet at the start of the event.
- The athletes are sent in order listed on the field event recording sheet. Please maintain the same athlete order for all events. This will keep your athletes in order as you move from one event to the next.
- Each athlete receives two attempts/jumps.
- After each jump, the distance is called by a Meet Volunteer reading the mark in the sand (*from foot, hand, body, etc.*) that is closest to the takeoff board.
- Measurement is taken from the end of the board (or end of the runway for Kindergarten).
- Distance is recorded for that athlete by a second Meet Volunteer.

- After the recording is complete, the Meet Volunteer rakes the marks out of the pit and signals to send the next jumper.
- Watch for a scratch (“teaching moment” = foot going over the end of the board before the jump).
- Allow for a scratch, unless it is more than the foot size of the athlete (use good judgment).
- If they go substantially over the board you may have them do another jump or adjust the distance recorded – as there is NO penalty - be more forgiving for the younger athletes.

Softball Put/Shot Put

- All grades will use the “put” technique for this event.
- Kindergarten through 3rd grade will use a softball.
- Grades 4-6 will use a 4-pound shot.
- Athletes are called to throw in the order they are listed on the event recording sheet.
- Each athlete makes two attempts/puts while they are in the ring.
- A Meet Volunteer will measure the distance from the outer edge of the ring to where the ball/shot lands.
- The shot put must NOT be thrown like a ball.
- Meet Volunteers will not call foot faults (stepping outside the circle/ring).
- Encourage athletes to enter & leave the circle from the back.
- Athletes will be allowed to try again if they make a mistake.
- The Meet Volunteer will call out the distance to the Team Manager, for recording.

High Jump

- Grades 4-6 perform the high jump.
- Grade 4 will start at 32 inches.
- Grades 5 & 6 will start at 36 inches.
- Each athlete will jump in the order that is listed on the event recording sheet.
- Coaches determine how quickly to move the standard up in inches (i.e., 2 inch increments) before the first athlete jumps – coordinate this with the coaches and meet volunteer.
- Keep the athletes moving (jumping) without much delay, yet without rushing.
- Each athlete is allowed a total of two misses.