

# *WSOC track meet*

## **The big picture**

9 school meet, 7th and 8th grades, boys and girls

## **Events**

The events are

### **Track events**

- 50 m
- 60 m hurdles
- 100 m
- 200 m
- 400 m
- 4x100 m relays (also a mixed boys and girls race?)
- 1 mile

### **Field events**

- long jump
- high jump
- hammer throw
- javelin
- discus
- shot put

## **Setup**

## **The Meet**

## **Management**

Track and field are two separate venues, so it is likely we will need two sets of amplified voices, and two sets of support teams collating results.

Check on the loudspeaker situation at Estancia, but I believe they have a proper announcing system and booth. They may or may not let us use it.

## **Venue management (aka talking on the loudspeaker)**

At least two people are needed make the announcements about what races are starting, etc. Ideally, the person talking on the microphone will only do that, not worry about other stuff. The other person or people will keep track of what heats are being run and when in order to feed the announcer the necessary information.

Each event will also need a wrangler to get the kids sorted properly. The most important task here is to make sure all of the children compete, but there is also the need to make sure that each heat has a mix of competitors from different schools.

The best way to get updates back to the scoring/announcing booth is to use text messages.

## **Officiating the track events (running)**

The most important task is to get the name and school of the top three finishers in each event. These should be written down on paper, making sure that the child has verified the spelling of his or her name. If it is an event with multiple heats, each of the top three will move on to the next heat. The competitors should be told right away which heat they are in next, and where to go to wait before their race.

It is unlikely that all of the competitors will remember their next heat and/or where to go, so it is important that we announce each set of heats. For example, “The quarterfinal heats in the 50m dash are now beginning at the starting line. If you placed in the top three, please report to the start of the 50m dash event.”

Given text messaging, we could probably announce each competitors name when we get to the final heat.

## **The start**

At the starting line we will need at least two people. One person will announce “Mark.... Set.... Go!”, perhaps with a flag in hand for the visually impaired. The other will watch for false starts and will blow a whistle to call the race back if there is a false start.

The usual track rules are one false start for the field, and the second false start and beyond the false starter is disqualified. I don't think we care about disqualification that much, but we certainly should not be allowing false starts. Perhaps a stern talking to is appropriate rather than a disqualification.

Note that last year, mothers from other schools were encouraging their children to commit false starts, according to Grace.

### **The finish line**

At the finish line, we will have a physical rope or string that the runners cross. Two people will be needed to hold this, and they will have to *let go* when the runners hit the string.

An alternative is a weak paper tape that will break as the runners cross. Talk to Estancia and see what they use.

Still, we need two people to hold the tape, and three spotters to grab the top three finishers. One of the spotters will have the official clipboard to record the heat results. Each of the top three will be told the name of the next race and ideally the actual heat. "You are in the quarter finals, heat 3"

If possible, the person with the clipboard should also have the official race stopwatch. This is the only time that counts, and it only records the winning time of each heat. The timer should start when the flag drops at the starting line, and should end when the winner crosses the tape. The winning time should be written down next to the winner's name.

Knowing the winning time will help to organize the field for the races after the first round (break up the fast people into different heats).

### **Sprints (10 – 15 people)**

Each running event, except for the mile and the relays, will need to have several heats. At the end of each heat, the top three winners need to be identified and told that they made it into the next heat, and where to go to prepare for that heat.

To do that, we will need three to five officials at the finish line: two to hold the tape, and three to flag down those top three finishers. At the starting line, we will need two other judges, one to start the race, and another to watch for false starts and call the runners back.

Ideally one person will have both the clipboard with the official results, and the race stopwatch. That person can be one of the spotters (say the one who grabs the winner) or can be a separate person, depending on how many people are available to help.

Because the work is largely the same, a team can handle more than one race. That said, it will get boring after a while, so it is probably best to have at least two teams, or maybe one team per hour. The teams will handle all races that happen (50m, 100m, 200m, 60m hurdles) during their time.

### **Middle distance**

The 200m is likely to have very few heats, perhaps just one race per category (girls 7th, boys 8th, etc). However, because the start and end points are different, it will be run like one of the sprint events.

### **Hurdles**

The hurdles are a heat race, with the added complication that the track has to have hurdles on it. We will need a crew to set up the hurdles properly, get the hurdles back up after each heat, and to take down the hurdles at the end of the event. This should include as many people as possible so that it gets done quickly. Ideally at least one person per bank of hurdles.

### **Relays**

The relay races need at least two officials at each hand-off point. The officials should allow a minute to clearly explain to the competitors the rules of the hand-off. The officials should make sure that each hand-off occurs within the hand-off area, but the only hard-core rule is that the baton not hit the ground and that the competitors not interfere with other teams.

From past experience, the most difficult thing is making sure that the right team is in the right lane. Last year I ran the third hand-off, and we couldn't see the start, and could barely see the competitors at the other end of the track. Add in the fact that the racers are staggered around the track and it becomes pretty confusing.

The system that works the best is for a person to shout the lanes and the t-shirt color. "Lane one, cornflower. Lane two, goldenrod. Lane three, puce. Lane four, Dodger blue." And so on.

Each curve needs to report to a runner/messenger in the field that they are ready, and then this person runs back to the start to report that the race is ready to begin.

We also might be able to organize the lane assignments in advance for each relay, once we know the teams and who is competing.

**Long distance (3 to 6 people)**

The 400m and the mile will likely only have one race per class. The 400m has lanes, but we could probably also just use one of the staggered starting lines or even the mile starting line and tell them where to break. Only a very few runners will actually be sprinting the 400m, and those are likely to be far ahead of the pack right away anyway.

The start and end point are also at the same place, so we can handle the race with just three or four people. One person starts the race and the timer, while the others watch to make sure the runners behave themselves at the starting line. As with other races, three people are assigned to catch the top three finishers, and two people hold the finish line/tape.

For the mile, it may be nice to record the split times of the leader as well.

**Officiating the field events**

The field events will not be on the same field as the track events.