



Track and Field Q & A

What is a track meet?

A track meet is a one, two, or three-day event that takes place, rain or shine at a stadium. Meets are usually at the home venue of the club or school hosting the meet. The host will send out details about the meet to BC Athletics in advance, and will post it on their website. VOC will then send more information on to the club athletes competing in the meet.

What is a track event?

Any event that takes place on the track surface is a track event. This includes sprints, hurdles, middle distance, distance, relays, race walks and steeplechase.

What is a field event?

A field event is any event that takes place off the track but in areas surrounding the track, such as throws and jumps. Events such as javelin, discus, shot put, hammer, long jump, high jump, triple jump, and pole vault are considered field events.

What is the best advice that I can give my child who is new to Track and Field?

Emphasize individual development (personal bests), not winning or losing. The top competitors in the world are in their mid-twenties and early thirties – consider all the years an athlete needs to develop. Think of the positive aspects of training: being outdoors, having a healthy heart and lungs, positive role models, and the likelihood of new friends. Athleticism and fitness can be a lifelong skill. Celebrate the personal bests and have fun!

Can I compete in every event?

The events for which you are eligible are determined by your age group. Check with your coach.

What is a Personal Best (PB)?

A Personal Best is the time, height or distance of your very best performance. It is important to keep a record of all your performances, and especially to know what your PB is for each of your events.

How do I know my performance result?

Results will be posted at each meet. Be sure to check your result, and if you have



questions, ask your coach. As well, results can be found on the host club website within a day or two of the conclusions of the meet. Keep your best results for each event in your personal statistics. Your results will be posted also on the BC Athletics and Athletics Canada websites under Ranking.

What is a BC Athletics number?

BC Athletics is our provincial parent organization, located in Burnaby BC.

www.bcathletics.org.

Each registered member will receive a BC Athletics designated number. This number is used for identification and tracking of the member. The member carries the same number through their entire membership from 6 to 90+. You will receive your BC Athletics number from the VOC coaches.

Please save this number.

Why do I have to become a member of BC Athletics in order to join the VOC?

BC Athletics is the provincial association that oversees the organization for track and field in BC. This involves the scheduling of events, training coaches and officials, sending teams to various track meets, championships and games across Canada. Membership in BCA provides athlete accident insurance for injuries sustained while practicing for or competing in a BCA sanctioned event. BCA is a member of Athletics Canada who in turn is a member of the World Athletics. It is crucial to be associated with and support these levels of organizations, so as your athlete moves up the level of success, he/she/they will have the appropriate levels of competition and stay involved for a lifetime. Members of VOC are able to attend many events such as meets and clinics that are hosted by BC Athletics, Clubs and School Sports.

What should I think about when signing up for events at a meet?

When signing up for events at a meet, check for conflicts. Schedules will be available on the host club website. There are many events occurring at the same time, usually between a track event and a field event so athletes must be aware of the schedule. For example, if two field events begin at the same time, the athlete will not be able to do both. In some events an athlete can go back and forth during field and track competition but it is not always advisable. It's a good idea to check the schedule carefully before registering in the meet.



How do I register for a meet?

With the exception of the VOC meet (for which the VOC coaches register the athletes for their events) registration for all meets is via the trackie.com website. The club and coaches will select meets that are appropriate for competition. The coaches will have discussions with the athlete and together they will determine the events for each meet. Athletes should not over-compete at meets, and coaches work to select the correct amount of competition. Parents are not to register athletes for events not selected by the coach. When you sign up for events, be sure to state your PB for each event as that will aid the organizers in placing you in the correct order of competition. Before the meet, the parents (or the athlete) will register and pay at the Trackie.com website. The cost varies and is dependent on the price the host club has set for the meet.

Who are the BC Athletics Officials?

BC Athletics Officials are trained and experienced judges. They volunteer their knowledge, time, and effort to make sure events follow the rules and are judged fairly. They are recognizable by their uniform (white shirt) and will be wearing a BC Athletics name tag. Be sure to thank the officials and shake their hands. Always be courteous to the BCA officials. We owe them our total respect. If you have questions during the competition, please talk with one of the VOC coaches right away.

What should I do before a meet?

The night before a meet, have a well-balanced dinner. Be sure to get a good night's sleep. Eat a breakfast of simple non-fatty foods, and drink plenty of water. Do not eat a heavy meal if you will be competing within 90 minutes.

What should I take to a meet?

What you bring is dependent on the weather, which is always changeable. Your VOC uniform, spikes, running shoes, blankets, warm clothes, lawn chairs, umbrellas, layers of clothing, a healthy picnic lunch and snacks, water, sunscreen, hat, and a positive attitude!

When should I arrive at the meet?

An athlete should arrive no less than one hour before their event is scheduled to start. Remember your warm up is your responsibility and is crucial for maximum performance and to reduce the possibility of injury.



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When I get to a meet, what do I do?

Check in at the registration desk. Pick up your meet participant number (bib number) and attach it to the front of your VOC singlet. This number must be worn for all the days of that particular meet. Athletes will be given a new number for the next meet. DO NOT re-wear a number at another meet! Check in with your coach for suggestions and advice. Look over the area where the event information is set up to determine the event locations and starting times for each one. Find out where the events are being marshaled. Depending on the meet, the announcer MAY call age groups to the marshaling area. Do not depend on this reminder, but watch the schedule, the time, and the event. Events are allowed to run 30 minutes early, but sometimes run late. You will have to keep tabs on how events are being run throughout the day.

Will schedules be available at the meet?

A copy of the event schedule will be available on the meet website. It is recommended that you print the schedule at home the night before the start of the meet and bring it with you. Schedules sometimes change at the very last minute.

What should I do during the day of The meet?

Hydrate! Drink lots of water (not soft drinks) throughout the day and stay in the shade during summer dates. Keep warm on the cooler days and wear multiple layers. Be sure to eat well but not fatty heavy foods. Familiar high protein foods, veggies, fruit, and water are the best for competition. VOC will either have a tent in the park, or a place in the bleachers. When you have down time, join other club members and socialize. Also, you may enjoy socializing with members of other clubs; just because you may compete against each other, doesn't mean you won't form friendships!

What do you mean by 'being marshaled'?

This is where all the athletes competing in a specific event gather together before the event. Typically, field events marshal at the individual event area. Track events usually check in at a designated tent which can be called the Call Room. At high level meets (for example the BC High School Championships) all athletes will marshal at the Call Room for all events. It is VERY important to check in for each event by the required time or you may not be allowed to compete.

Do events run on time?

We hope so, but sometimes they do not. If there is an unexpected number of athletes, events may run behind the scheduled time. It is not unusual to have 30 or more athletes



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waiting to compete in the long jump. When you consider that each athlete gets three jumps, each jump needs to be measured, and the pit raked each time, you realize how time consuming this can be. In some instances, by the rules, events can be run up to 30 minutes ahead of time –If an event is to be moved ahead it will be announced.

In what order of age will track events be run?

Track events almost always run oldest to youngest, but you can check the meet website to be sure.

When should I arrive for my field event?

One hour before your event is scheduled. In field events, the start time listed is not the time to arrive, it is the time the event is scheduled to begin. You should have found your mark and warmed up by then.

How many attempts do athlete get in field events?

JD athletes ages 9-13 are allowed three attempts (rounds). For 14+ older athletes, everyone will receive three initial attempts and then the top 8 get three more. The exception for this is in the Vertical Jumps (High Jump and Pole Vault). Each athlete is given three attempts to clear the bar at each height. Once every athlete in the rotation has had three failed attempts or has cleared the bar, that round is over and the bar will be moved up and the remaining athletes start a new round. Starting heights are usually based on the age group. Athletes do not need to start at that height nor attempt every height if they feel it's too low for them. Once the bar has been raised, (round completed) it will not be lowered.

What happens if I have a conflicting track event and field event?

This scenario happens often but will be simplified if you and the coach carefully look at the schedule BEFORE you register for the meet and choose non-conflicting events at that time. Sometimes on meet day you need to choose which event you would prefer to compete in and “scratch” the other one. A scratch is a formal notification to the event official or organizing committee that you will not be competing. This should be done one hour before the competition begins. If you think you need to scratch an event, talk with your coach first. Officials will not generally hold up a field event for a track event and will never hold up a track event for the field. This is a track and field reality and you will just have to accept that things are not always going to run on schedule and you may not be able to compete in all the events you want to. Check in at BOTH events. In many situations, you may be able to register and get one attempt in at the field event, then run



your track event and return to the field event. At this point, you may have missed a round, but may be able to get back into the round they are currently running. However, once a round is completed (all the athletes have completed their attempts,) if you have missed that round, it may not be made up. Once the event is over, it is over, you will not be able to compete.

Are there other things I should know while at a meet?

The Infield is out of bound unless you have been directed there by an official. Do not cross the track when an event is in progress. Always look, just in case. Do not wander away from the area, make sure your parents or coach knows where you will be. Listen for announcements. Pay attention to the time and the schedule. Support the other athletes, be a good sport and show respect at all times. Remember you are representing VOC.

What if I am ill or have an injury?

VOC takes members health very seriously. If an athlete is ill and not able to train or compete, that athlete needs to notify the coach at once. If an athlete has an injury, he/she must speak with their coach immediately. The coach may have recommendations for athletes to obtain appropriate professional treatment, or suggestions for basic first aid. If an athlete is undergoing treatment, it is vital that they keep the coach "in the loop" as to their progress. If an athletes returns from an injury, they may need to provide coaches with documentation pertaining to rehabilitation.

What is the difference between Club Meets and School Meets?

In BC there are two different organizations that sanction meets, BC Athletics and BC High School Sports. Elementary meets organized by schools are very seldom sanctioned. The High School T&F season usually runs from March to the start of June. Athletes wishing to compete for their High Schools and compete in the High School meets during April/May must have a coach/advisor from the school, wear the school uniform and be enrolled with BC High School Sports through their school. If a school doesn't have a track team please talk to your VOC Coach and we will co-ordinate with your High School to make sure you get registered. Club Meets are organized by clubs like VOC and are sanctioned by BC Athletics. These T&F meets run from February till July for Track and Field and September to November for Cross Country. VOC athletes competing in club meets must wear the club uniform, and you must register under the club.



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Do I have to attend every meet?

No. Along with your coach, choose where/when you will compete, but be advised that Junior Development athletes need to compete in a championship meet (the JD Championships or JD Pentathlon Championships) and two other approved meets in order to be considered for a BC Athletics Award.

What is a BC Athletics Award? At the end of the year, BC Athletics hosts a banquet to recognize those athletes that have had outstanding performances during the season. BC Athletics keeps track of all provincial performances in the Junior Development age group and 14+, which go back many years. If an athlete achieves a provincial performance they will be considered for an award. The provincial lists can be accessed on the BC Athletics Web Page. www.bcathletics.org

What is a Making Standard and Making a Team?

Making Standard is a term in Track and Field whereby organizations who are charged with choosing teams set a certain standard in events which athletes must achieve through the year in order to be considered for a team. Making standard does not mean an athlete will be chosen to participate on the team but may apply and be considered. Other factors such as the number of athletes the organization is willing to send or a tryout may determine making a team. Organizations that use this method are BC Athletics for BC Teams and Athletic Canada for Canadian Teams.

Who pays if an athlete makes a team and what are the costs?

When an athlete makes a team there are extra costs involved. Currently there is a \$150.00 fee for an athlete to attend the BC Summer Games. There is a BC Athletics athlete fee if chosen to compete on a BC Team; the costs depend on age category. Once an athlete makes the team and pays the fees, most other costs like travel, accommodation, meals etc. will be covered by BC Athletics or the games.

How does VOC recognize outstanding performances?

The Club encourages athletes to always strive for THEIR PERSONAL BEST. At the end of the season, and every 5 years, VOC hosts a function and celebrates with all our athletes for their personal bests, outstanding results, effort and attitude. We also recognize coaches, officials and others who contribute to the Club.



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How can I learn more about track and field?

VOC highly encourages everyone to become involved. The Club needs organizers, officials and assistant coaches from the 15+ athletes groups. BC Athletics offers workshops in coaching and officiating, and VOC will pay the fees for members to attend. This is a good way to understand the sport, the rules, and also join a group of motivated and enthusiastic individuals who are giving back to our sport community.

List of Track and Field Resources

- For a full list of meets in BC, please see at: www.bcatletics.org
- For a list of Meets suggested by VOC, please see the VOC website and check with your VOC coach.
- Check with High School coaches for their meet schedule.
- For Coaching information, www.bcatletics.org, click on the Track & Field tab then, Coaches.
- For Officiating information, www.bcatletics.org, click on the Track & Field tab then, Officials.
- BC Athletics Code of Conduct
<https://www.bcatletics.org/admin/js/elfinder/files/Documents/BCA%20Policies/BC%20Athletics%20Codes%20of%20Conduct.pdf>
- Spectators Code of Conduct
<https://www.bcatletics.org/admin/js/elfinder/files/Documents/BCA%20Policies/14-04-28%20BC%20Athletics%20Spectator%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20-%20Final.pdf>