

# 2025-26 Notes for Middle School Track Coaches

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# Brief Overview

- Slides 3 through 8 list violations that can result in the disqualification of an athlete from an event or from the meet.
- Slides 9 through 13 describe the OHSAA uniform rules for track and field (and cross country) as stipulated in the OHSAA Manual for Track and Field Coaches and the OHSAA Manual for Officials.
- Slides 14-16 are 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade regulations from the OHSAA manual
- Slides 17 and 18 are additional points of emphasis and reminders
- The OHSAA Track and Field Manual for Coaches can be found here:  
<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports/Track-Field/TFManual.pdf>  
You are strongly urged to review this document in its entirety.

# Infractions

- Stepped on/over inside lane line – 3 or more consecutive steps (5-12-1)
- Interference by a competitor or non-competitor  
5-10-8: relays after the exchange  
(5-9, 5-12-1b,c, 5-13-3, 4-6-3, 4-6-5)
- Ran on/over inside track curb (3 or more consecutive steps)  
(5-12-1a, 5-13-1)
- Illegally ran outside the assigned lane or course (5-12-1)
- Stepped on/over inside lane line before break line  
(5-12-1e)
- Did not finish in assigned lane (5-12-1d)

# The Hurdler

- 5-14-2
- Did not attempt to clear each hurdle
- Deliberately knocked down a hurdle by hand or foot
- Advanced or trailed a leg or foot alongside of and/or below the hurdle
- Ran over a hurdle not in the assigned lane
- Ran around a hurdle
- Impeded another hurdler

# Unfair Act

- 4-6-5 – includes interference
- Paced by a teammate or other person **not in the race**
- Joined or grasped hands with another at any time during a race
- Used an aid during the race – medical notes on inhalers, etc.
- Communicating with competitor through use of any device
- Was coached or assisted from a restricted area
- Receives communication electronically during race or trial

# Relay teams

- 5-10, 5-11
- Violation of substitution rule
- Failure to carry the baton by hand
- **Failure to pass the baton in the exchange zone**
- Baton not handed between runners
- Threw the baton after the race has ended
- Wore gloves during competition
- Failed to be positioned within the exchange zone
- Failed to be positioned within the acceleration zone

# Uniforms

- 4-3, 4-6-6
- Illegal school uniform or other apparel – warning issued to individual (not team)
- Further discussion later – slides 9 - 13

# Unacceptable Conduct

- 4-6-2
- Failed to follow the directions of an official
- Used profanity not directed at anyone
- Engaged in action which brought discredit to the athlete or school

# Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- 4-6-1
- Conduct which is unethical or dishonorable
- Disrespectfully addressed an official
- Any flagrant behavior
- Intentional contact
- Taunted an opponent or official
- Criticized an opponent or official
- Used profanity directed at an individual
- Used tobacco *(includes coaches!)*
- ***Penalty is remainder of that meet plus next 2!***



# Uniforms

- Pages 18 - 20 in OHSAA manual
- **Shoes**

The rules require all track and field competitors to wear on both feet shoes with an upper portion and a definitely recognizable sole and heel. The shoes must be fastened securely to the foot with laces, zippers, Velcro or other closures. Slippers and socks do not meet the rule requirements.
- **Removal of Any Part of the Team Uniform**

Excluding shoes, while in the area of competition as defined by the games committee, is illegal. This shall lead to a warning and if repeated, to disqualification from the event. If the incident recurs, the contestant will be disqualified from further competition in the meet. (OHSAA ejection policy would apply in this case!)
- **Uniform Tops/One-Piece Uniforms**

Each athlete must wear a full-length uniform top or a one-piece uniform issued or approved by the school. Tops must be full-length (i.e., either tucked into the bottoms or hanging BELOW the waistband of the bottoms when the athlete is standing erect). Shirts are not required to be tucked in unless they obscure a hip number. Bare midriff tops are not allowed. The top shall not be knotted or have a knot-like protrusion. Numbers are no longer required on the back of the uniform top.

- **Uniform Bottoms/One-Piece Uniform**

Each athlete shall wear bottoms and/or a one-piece uniform issued or approved by the school. The loose fitting boxer-style shorts are permitted for boys and girls. The waistband of a competitor's bottom can be rolled but must be worn above the waist as per Rule 4-3-1b4.

- **Legal Items on School Uniforms**

School identification on the tops and/or bottoms and one-piece uniform; athlete's name on the top of the one-piece or two-piece uniform; a single manufacturer's logo/trade name, no more than 2 ¼ square inches with no dimension more than 2 ¼ inches on each item of apparel. NOTE: New in 2022, Rule 4-3-1 now permits logos larger than 2 ¼ or multiple logos on the waistband of a uniform bottom ONLY. The American flag, not exceeding 2 x 3 in permitted on EACH item of uniform; one commemorative/ memorial patch is permitted per uniform subject to the same dimensions as a manufacturer's logo.

- **Uniform Numbers**

Uniform numbers are no longer required on the back of contestants' uniforms. It is NOT a uniform violation if some members of team have numbers and some do not granted all other aspects of the uniform rule are met.

- **Visible Undergarments**

Any visible undergarment worn under the uniform top and/or bottom is now considered a foundation garment. FOUNDATION GARMENTS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO LOGO/TRADEMARK/REFERENCE OR COLOR RESTRICTIONS (Rule 4-3-1b7). Visible items worn under both the tops and the bottoms of a uniform do not have to be the same color.

- **Misc. Uniform Topics**

Headgear, headbands, socks and shoes are not part of the competitors' uniforms and therefore DO NOT need to match.

- **Additional Restrictions for Relay Races and Cross Country Competition**

Each team member shall wear the same color and design of school uniform, although the length of the top, bottom or one-piece uniform may vary. Any visible undergarment worn under the uniform top and/or bottom is now considered a foundation garment. FOUNDATION GARMENTS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO LOGO/TRADEMARK/REFERENCE OR COLOR RESTRICTIONS (Rule 4-3-1b7). Visible garments worn under the top/one-piece uniform and/or the bottom/one-piece uniform do not have to be the same color. If worn by more than one team member, that apparel does not need to be the same color nor necessarily the same length.

- NFHS Rule 4-3-2: All relay and cross country team members must wear uniforms clearly indicating, through predominant color, school logo and color combination of all outer garments worn as a uniform, that members are from the same team. The official should be able to observe that all members are from the same team. For examples of legal and illegal uniforms, please refer to the state rules interpretation meeting. Manufacturer logos do not need to match.
- **Headgear, Hair Control Devices & Headbands**

Hats, caps and headbands that are; not offensive or unsporting, not abrasive or hard, properly secured, and do not pose a danger to themselves or other competitors are allowed. The referee may ask a competitor to remove a hat, cap or headband if it is not properly secured, if it poses a danger to the competitor/other competitors, or if it could damage equipment. The referee has the authority to decide what is safe. Section 1. Competitors may wear a Navy Watch-Style knit cap. Section 2. Competitors may not wear a hat with a bill. Section 3. Competitors may wear a headband with or without ear protectors, provided the headband is properly secured to the head and does not interfere with another. The headband does not need to be worn as the manufacturer intended and may include decoration. Section 4. Pole vaulters are permitted to wear helmets and safety headgear.

Hair control devices and/or hair accessories are permitted. Bandanas, pre-wrap, or other items not intended to be used as headbands or hair control devices are legal as long as they are not offensive or unsporting, not abrasive or hard, properly secured, and do not pose a danger to themselves or another competitor.

- **Jewelry**

The prohibition of wearing jewelry has been removed from the rules for track and field and cross country competitions. The referee may ask a competitor to remove an accessory if it is not properly secured, if it poses a danger to the competitor, or if it could damage equipment.

- **Wristwatch**

A wristwatch, secured to the person, may be worn in competition. While the wearing of a GPS or Smart Watch is not prohibited; the use of use GPS and electronic communication on the watch is prohibited per NFHS Rule 4-6-5.

- **Religious Apparel**

Any athlete who presents that they need to wear headgear, skirts, pants, etc. for religious purposes should be allowed to participate without delay. No waiver is needed for the wearing of any religious items regardless of if it complies with uniform rules in NFHS Rule 4. Garments worn for religious reasons (e.g. dark skirts or pants) do not need to match the color and design of uniforms worn by other relay/cross country team members.

## **7th & 8th Grade Regulations (from the OHSAA Manual for Coaches)**

- **Participation Limitation**

In any one track and field contest, a 7th or 8th grade participant may compete in a maximum of three (3) events. The three events may be any combination of track and field events including relays, or may be three track events or three field events. **PARTICIPATION LIMITATION PENALTY:** An athlete who exceeds the participation limitation shall be disqualified. The forfeiture bylaws apply as written in Bylaw 11.

Individual competitors and squads are limited to a maximum of 12 meets per season plus one league championship meet (team and individual) plus the OHSAA-sponsored state meet.

- **Students Below Ninth Grade •**

Students below the ninth grade are not eligible to compete in athletics with high school students unless they meet an exception as outlined in Bylaw 4-2, Age Limitation.

Students below the seventh grade are not eligible to compete in athletics with students in grades 7 or 8 (or higher).

- **Order of Events** The following listed Order of Events shall be used for grade 7-8 girls and boys involving Ohio schools. This bulletin supersedes the Order of Events in the NFHS Track and Field Rules Book. The javelin and hammer are NOT approved events and are not permitted in high school competitions. Rule 2 - Scoring and Ties; exceptions to this rule are not permissible.

## **7th & 8th Grade Regulations (from the OHSAA Manual for Coaches)**

- **Running Events**

### **Girls**

- 1 – Relay – 4 x 800 meter or 4 x 880 yards
- 3 - Hurdles - 100 meters (10 Hurdles) (30")  
Hurdles) (33")
- 5 - Dash - 100 meters or 100 yards
- 7 - Relay - 4x200 meters or 4x220 yards
- 9 - Run - 1600 meters or One Mile
- 11- Relay - 4x100 meters or 4x110 yards
- 13 - Dash - 400 meters or 440 yards
- 15 - Hurdles - 200 meters (30")\*
- 17 - Run - 800 meters or 880 yards
- 19 - Dash - 200 meters or 220 yards \*\*
- yards
- 21 - Relay- 4x400 meters or 4x440 yards Relay \*\*

### **Boys**

- 2 - Relay – 4 x 800 meter or 4 x 880 yards
- 4 - Hurdles - 110 meters (10  
Hurdles)
- 6 - Dash - 100 meters or 100 yards
- 8 - Relay - 4x200 meters or 4x220 yards
- 10 - Run - 1600 meters or One Mile
- 12 - Relay - 4x100 meters or 4x110 yards
- 14 - Dash - 400 meters or 440 yards
- 16 - Hurdles - 200 meters (30")\*
- 18 - Run - 800 meters or 880 yards
- 20 - Dash - 200 meters or 220  
yards
- 22 - 4x400 meters or 4x440 yards

Note: When running simultaneous girls and boys meets, events shall be competed in the order indicated by the numerical sequence above.

\* Start - 200 M. mark, 5 hurdles, spacing of hurdles 50 m to the first hurdle, 35 m between hurdles, 10 m from 5th hurdle to the finish line.

\*\*A rest period of at least 20 minutes from the beginning of the girl's 200 M to the start of the first heat of the girls 4x400M is recommended to be given if athletes competing in the 200M are also in the 4x400 relay.

## **7th & 8th Grade Regulations (from the OHSAA Manual for Coaches)**

- Field Events (order is optional)

Girls

Discus (1K) (2 lbs., 3.27 oz.)

High Jump

Long Jump

Shot Put (2.722K) (6 lbs.)

Pole Vault

Boys

Discus (1K) (2 lbs., 3.27 oz.)

High Jump

Long Jump

Shot Put (4K) (8 lbs. 13 oz.)

Pole Vault

Throwing Sectors: The degree Sector required is 34.92 degrees for Shot Put and Discus (per 2007).

- Allowable Additional Events In addition to events outlined in the approved OHSAA Order of Events, schools in Ohio may compete in additional events as outlined in NFHS Rules 1 & 9. All changes to the standard OHSAA order of events from the previous slide must be communicated per the below section.
- Triple Jump must be competed following NFHS Rule 6, 7&9
- Javelin and hammer are PROHIBITED in Ohio.
- “Special Events” must be competed under USATF Youth Rules as outlined in NFHS Rule 9 unless the OHSAA has stated otherwise (mixed gender relays).
- The 5000M is prohibited in 7th & 8th grade. 18
- Any event not found in NFHS Rule 1 & 7, CANNOT be competed in Ohio.
- Certified Officials may not officiate non-approved events and should not allow events to take place in any manner not outlined in the rules (including safety cages).
- None of these additional events will be part of any tournament competition, only those events in the OHSAA order of events will be part of the tournament.



# Points of Emphasis

- Entry limits
  - Dual and triangular – no limit
  - Quads or greater – 4 per event
  - Games committee can lower limits, but not raise them
- Starting commands (Rule 5-7)
  - Motionless
  - Come to set position **promptly**
  - 800 m and longer – start from 3 meters back, come to line on starter's command
- Exchange zones – **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY**
  - Athletes should know where to line up
  - Athletes should know where their exchange zone begins and ends
- Athletes in multiple events
  - Communication is key
  - Understand order of events
  - Athletes and coaches are responsible for being in the right place at the right time
  - Officials will try to cooperate within the rules

# Some reminders

- No one in Ohio should be using an 8 pound shot for competition. Middle school girls throw 6 pounds, middle school boys throw 4 kilos. This was changed several years ago.
- Throwers and long jumpers should be given 4 attempts (or 3 + 3). Scratch lines may be used if there is a large number of entries. In that case, we suggest measuring everyone's first attempt if it is legal, then employ scratch lines. That way every athlete has an **opportunity** to get a mark.