

**Middle School Track & Field**

**State Championship**

2011 HANDBOOK

FOR COACHES AND PARTICIPANTS

**Section 1 – About this Handbook**

**A. Purpose**

This handbook has been created to formalize the middle school track & field championship created by and endorsed by flrunners.com. It seeks to supply a written record of all rules and guidelines to be followed by coaches and participants.

**Section 2 – General Information**

**A. History and Mission**

The flrunners.com started the Florida Middle School State Championship in 2002. Meet creator and founder of flrunners.com, Jason Byrne, saw disjointed middle school programs—both club and school affiliated—scattered around the state. He saw that school-based programs seldom if ever saw competition outside of their own city or county and that these programs were often segregated from the club-based teams. The middle school season lacked direction since there was not a culmination point and at no time did all of the state's top athletes at that level compete directly against each other.

Encouraged by the success of the cross country meet sponsored by the web site (the flrunners.com Invitational—then in just its second year), Byrne felt that it might be possible to leverage the influence and popularity of the web site to create such a culmination point to the season.

**B. Goals**

The goals of the flrunners.com middle school series are as follows:

1. Create a single meet where all of the top middle school athletes in the state compete—no matter which type of team they compete for (or even individually)--to crown a state champion.
2. Provide middle school athletes, coaches, and supporters with a goal to strive for and a culmination point for their season.
3. Become a unifying force tying together the varied and scattered middle school programs around the state by having a common state series and creating standards of rules.
4. Encourage good sportsmanship, camaraderie, and a love of friendly competition in middle school athletes.
5. Help instill a love of track & field in athletes at a young age to create lifetime fans and competitors of the sport.
6. Recognize excellence and hard work by creating an elite venue and statewide standards for comparison.
7. Have fun!

**Section 3 – State Championship Meet**

**A. Date and Location**

The meet will be held on the Saturday after the FHSAA 2A State Meet, starting at 8:30AM. The location will be in the Greater Orlando area to keep it centralized, specifics to be announced on flrunners.com.

This year 2011 the date will be May 7, 2011 and the location will be Holy Trinity Academy in Melbourne, Florida.

**B. Events Contested at State Championship Meet**

100 Meter Dash Pole Vault 4x100 Meter Relay

200 Meter Dash High Jump 4x400 Meter Relay

400 Meter Dash Long Jump 4x800 Meter Relay

800 Meter Run Triple Jump

1500 Meter Run Shot Put

3000 Meter Run Discus Throw

100 Meter Low Hurdles

200 Meter Low Hurdles

**C. Specifications for Events**

USATF age group rules will be used for the events listed above, unless otherwise noted.

In accordance with the USATF rules, the following are stated for sake of clarity and restatement.

1. **Hurdle Distances**
 100 and 200 meter races will be conducted for both boys and girls.
2. **Hurdle Heights**
 100 Meters: Girls @ 30 inches; Boys @ 33 inches.
 200 Meters: Boys and Girls @ 30 inches.
3. **Shot Put Weights**
 Girls 6 pounds; Boys 4 kilograms.
4. **Discus Weights**
 Boys and Girls 1 kilogram.

**D. Order of Events**

Events are to be run girls then boys. The events proceed in the following order:

Running: 4x400, 3000m, 100H, 100m, 1500m, 4x100, 400m, 800m, 200H, 200m, 4x800

Field: LJ, TJ, Shot, Disc, HJ, PV

**E. Check-In Procedure**

It is the responsibility of the athlete to know what they are supposed to do and listen for announcements. Three calls will be made for event check-in. Athletes who do not check-in for their event by the third call will not be allowed to participate in the event.

If an athlete is competing in a field event while the check-in is called for, they will be permitted to check-out of that event. They will be able to return after the event is complete and complete their attempts.

**F. Infield Access**

Only athletes that are currently competing in an event, meet officials, and media will be permitted access to the infield.

**G. Media**

Any official press identification from a reputable newspaper, magazine, television station, radio station, or web site will be accepted. No prior approval is necessary. Infield access will be granted. Please be respectful of athletes and fans.

Any member of the media who interferes with an ongoing event in any way will be asked to leave. Absolutely no coaching or cheering of any kind will be allowed by members of the media.

**Section 4 – Eligibility & Qualification**

The state championship is not an open meet. Athletes and relay teams must qualify by achieving an auto-qualifying standard at a designated qualifying meet. Achieving an auto-qualifying mark at any other meet does not count. In addition to hitting an auto-qualifying standard, athletes may also qualify by winning their event at a regional championship meet.

Athletes may compete in multiple qualifying meets.

Upon obtaining a qualifying the coach/parent must enter the athlete online at flrunners.com and pay a separate entry fee. Day-of entries will not be accepted.

**A. Qualifying Meets**

The following meets and groups of meets are considered qualifiers:

1. **Regional Championship Meets**
At our designated regional championship meets (South, Southwest, East, West, North, and Panhandle) athletes may qualify by either hitting a qualifying mark or by winning their event.
2. **FHSAA State Series Meets**
For athletes competing on a high school team, their high school district, regional, or state championship meets can serve as a qualifier.
3. **County Championship Meets**
Officially recognized middle school county championship meets will be accepted provided that the complete meet results are sent in to flrunners.com in Hytek or RaceTab format and any running events 400 meters and under use a fully-automatic timing system.
4. **Other Meets Sanctioned by flrunners.com as Qualifiers**
At the discretion of flrunners.com other meets may be designated as qualifiers. These qualifying meets will be listed on the middle school track & field championship web site. Any meet directors interested in being added as a qualifier should contact jason@flrunners.com, providing details about the meet and its timing and officials.

**B. Auto-Qualifying Standards**

These are the marks that must be achieved at a qualifying meet:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  **GIRLS** **BOYS**100m 13.25 12.25200m 27.50 25.25400m 64.00 58.00800m 2:40.00 2:20.001500m 5:35.00 4:55.001600m\* 6:00.00 5:15.003000m 12:10.00 11:00.003200m\* 13:00.00 11:45.00100H 19.50 18.50200H 35.00 31.50300H 53.00 46.00 |  **GIRLS** **BOYS**4x100 54.00 49.004x400 4:40.00 4:00.004x800 11:40.00 10:10.00Shot 28-0 38-0Disc 70-0 90-0LJ 14-6 17-6TJ 24-0 30-0HJ 4-4 5-0PV 6-0 7-0 |

\* = Not contested at state meet, but can be used to qualify.

**C. Accepting the State Championship Invitation**

To accept your state championship invitation, you must send payment ahead of time or a late entry fee will be assessed. The entry fee for the state championship meet is $15 with a $200 maximum per team, this is separate from any other entry fee at a qualifying meet. Entries are through flrunners.com exclusively and there is no day-of entry. Please do not attempt to enter if you did not earn an invitation as outlined above.

**D. Invitations are Not Transferable**

Invitations to compete in the state championship are non-transferable. Here are some guidelines and answers to common questions:

1. Should the athlete or relay team not be able to compete in the state championship, the invitation may not be passed to any other athlete or team.
2. Relay team members who run the state championship do not necessarily have to be the same members of that team who ran at the qualifying event. Relay teams may substitute members for the state championship.
3. Individuals may not trade qualifying spots and may not change events.

Any athlete or team caught competing under a false name will be instantly disqualified without appeal from all events they competed in—even if they competed under a real name in their other events.

**E. Athlete Eligibility**

Only athletes meeting the following requirements are eligible to compete in the middle school state championship series.

1. **Age**
Athletes must be between the ages of 10 and 15 years old and 9 months, based on the date of the state championship meet. Proof of age may be requested if there is a protest lodged.
2. **Grade**
Athletes must be currently enrolled in a state-recognized Florida public, private, or registered home school and between the grades of sixth (6th) and eighth (8th). There are no separate age/grade divisions.
3. **State Residency**
All participants must be residents of Florida.
4. **Club Membership**
USATF club membership (or any other organization) is not required.

**F. Event Eligibility**

1. **Number of Events**
Athletes may compete in up to four events of any type, including relays.
2. **Athletes Per Team**
There is no limit on the number of athletes a given team can enter. They may enter as many athletes as they choose into each event.
3. **Relay Teams**
Teams may enter as many qualifying relay teams (A, B, C, etc.) as they choose.

**G. Team Eligibility**

All teams are welcome to enter the state championship series. Teams may be school affiliated, club teams, community groups, or even unofficial “family teams”.

1. **FHSAA Concerns**
From our perspective, we have no restriction against or limitation to participation of teams representing an FHSAA school. However, we would like to make coaches aware that they need to understand the rules of this governing body and it is up to you as a coach to not risk sanctions against your school by the FHSAA.

Our recommendation is that FHSAA-affiliated teams should not compete officially representing their school. Instead, they should either compete as unattached individuals or represent a team name that is not that of the school, such as a club team. In keeping with this, we recommend that school jerseys and colors not be worn when competing in our state championship series.

We will not take any responsibility for policing this. We accept all teams.
2. **Disqualification of Teams with Delinquent Payment**
Although it is sad that this has to be made a rule, no team will be permitted to compete that owes money to flrunners.com, its vendors or partners from this or previous years. Unfortunately, we have had some bad checks written and coaches who have not made right on this. Those teams will be strictly forbidden from competing in any flrunners.com affiliated event until this debt has been paid.

A late fee of 50% of the total money owed and a minimum of $100 a year will be assessed. An additional $50 fee will be charged for bounced checks.

**Section 5 – Competition Rules**

**A. USATF Rules**

All rules from the current year's USATF Rule Book apply, unless otherwise noted herein.

**B. Uniforms**

Specific uniforms are not required for unattached individual athletes. Any attire reasonable for the event being contested is acceptable. Meet officials shall determine the definition of reasonable for given circumstances and weather conditions.

Athletes competing for a team should have team identification distinguishing their affiliation clearly on the chosen uniform. Athletes are not required to have the same exact uniform; however, the team identification on the uniform should have the same or similar logo or colors on all athletes. Athletes competing on a relay team together should all be wearing the same color shorts and tops.

Jewelry that dangles or hangs and rings on fingers are not permitted during the competition.

**C. Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

Absolutely no acts of poor sportsmanship will be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to: profanity; fighting; aggressive and intentional physical contact; being rude to any meet official, athlete, coach, or fan; and throwing of a relay baton.

Respectable celebration is perfectly acceptable. Any celebration should not last more than 30 seconds, should not interfere or impede any athlete or official, and should not even border on taunting.

The definition of what is unsportsmanlike will be solely at the discretion of meet officials. At the official's discretion athletes and teams may be disqualified from the current (or just completed) event or even ejected from the meet causing forfeit of all remaining events.

The behavior of coaches and parents shall be considered the same as that of the athlete themselves. So any unsportsmanlike behavior by these adults may require the same consequences outline above.

**Section 6 – Requirements for Qualifiers**

Meets being held between third Saturday in January and the Saturday prior to the state meet may apply to be considered a qualifying meet. There may be multiple qualifiers, giving athletes multiple changes to qualify by achieving an auto-qualifying standard at those meets.

Qualifying meets are treated as separate and independent meets. Each meets is able to charge whatever entry fee it deems appropriate (and is not required to share any sum with flrunners.com) and will be responsible for their own officials, awards, t-shirts, sanctioning, insurance, medical staff, and any other requirements to conduct a successful meet.

The following are required to be considered:

* Meet must be use fully-automatic timing for all events 800 meters and under. The meet must have sufficiently trained officials and appropriate software and equipment to pull of a true FAT meet.
* Results must be compiled and submitted to flrunners.com in Hytek or RaceTab format within 36 hours of the completion of the meet.
* Any appeals or results corrections must be handled by the meet director within 24 hours and corrected results be re-submitted to flrunners.com.
* Meet must compete according to the rules and events specified in this handbook.

**Section 7 – Questions?**

Please contact Jason Byrne of flrunners.com if you have any questions. It should be noted that meet homepage. Go to flrunners.com and click on the information link at the top of the page to the right of the site's logo.

Otherwise, contact Jason by emailing jason@flrunners.com.