

Guidelines for Starting a Track & Field Club

These are guidelines to help you with questions you might have when starting a new club in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan Athletics currently has 3 types of clubs; Clubs with Voting Privileges (100+ registered members); Clubs with Voting Privileges (99 or fewer registered members); and Clubs without Voting Privileges. The first 2 clubs qualify for a Membership Assistance Program Grant (MAP Grant) released in August of each year. Clubs without Voting Privileges do not qualify for the MAP Grant.

A typical club executive may consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. Usually a Board of Directors is formed, consisting of the above executive members plus a head coach. It is wise to hold meetings on a regular basis. Most clubs in Saskatchewan have a Constitution which outlines their philosophy and general policies.

Coaching

When starting a club it is not initially essential to have certified coaches but it is highly recommended that coaches proceed with certification in order to offer your athletes the most up-to-date coaching techniques. In many cases the personal experience of former athletes who wish to offer their services as coaches can be called upon to get a program started. At this point the Sask Athletics office can be contacted for details with regard to the proper procedure and availability of courses. Contact the Sask Athletics Program Coordinator for further information on coaching clinics and courses (programs@saskathletics.ca).

Coaches must register with Sask Athletics so that they can be kept abreast of all developments relating to coaching and be fully insured against liability. Many clubs now pay the registration fee on behalf of their coaches.

Affiliation/Registration with Sask Athletics

Following the Annual General Meeting (end of November) clubs should send a completed club affiliation form along with the payment of the appropriate fee to Sask Athletics. Affiliated clubs receive voting privileges at the Sask Athletics Annual General Meeting (provided they meet voting requirements) and are given the right to enter athletes in competitions under the club name. Additional privileges include grants to offset travel expenses of athletes attending National Championships and grants for coaches' training.

Membership in Sask Athletics automatically includes membership with Athletics Canada. Persons wishing to compete only on a non-championships basis in road races may purchase a Recreational Runner membership.

Membership in Sask Athletics is based on the calendar year January 1 – December 31. All applicable forms are posted at the beginning of September and emailed to existing club registrars. Forms must be signed by both the athlete and the club registrar and must be accompanied by the appropriate fee.

Sask Athletics Drug use and Doping Control Policy

Sask Athletics is unequivocally opposed to the use by athletes of any banned substances or methods in contravention of the rules of the Provincial, National (Athletics Canada) and/or International Sports Federations (IAAF), the International Olympic Committee, and other recognized Sport Organizations (Sask Sport and CIS).

Sask Athletics is unequivocally opposed to an encouragement of the use of such substances and/or methods by individual in positions of leadership in the sport (i.e. coaches, officials, athletic staff, medical practitioners, sport scientists, administrators, etc.) or by athletes themselves. The providing of, or administration of banned substances and/or methods to athletes is also forbidden.

Club Membership Fee

A membership fee structure should be established, keeping in mind projected travel costs, club administration expenses and the Sask Athletics membership fees. A number of clubs are paying their coaches honoraria for their services and have increased membership fees to subsidize this expense.

Media/Public Relations

If a club is to become well supported by the community, the local media can be provided on a regular basis with a write-up of the club's activities. Through exposure in the media, people in the community will read or hear about club activities and take interest.

Facilities & Equipment

Areas to look at for a club are an outdoor location and a school gymnasium for indoor (winter) use. If available, your club may have access to an indoor track.

Competition Programme

Sask Athletics, through its clubs, offers a wide range of competitions in various age groups. Without the clubs' support there would be no provincial competition programme.

Sask Athletics has funds allocated to support high-level U20 and Senior athletes in their travel to National Championships staged outside the province. Details concerning selection criteria are provided on the Sask Athletics website (www.saskathletics.ca).

Every club should appoint a well-organized person to act as an entries secretary. This person has the extremely important function of liaising with club coaches and athletes concerning entries for upcoming competitions. A great deal of club money can be wasted on late entry fees – or worse yet, an athlete may be denied entry into a competition – if this job is mishandled.

Publications/A.V. Material

Sask Athletics carries a supply of track and field books of a general nature or specific to coaching. A library of audio-visual materials is also available. To obtain books or audio visual materials please contact the office.

Structure of Saskatchewan Athletics

The Sask Athletics President, Vice President and several others representing various facets of the sport sit on the Provincial Board of Directors. Clubs may be represented at the Annual General Meeting and may vote if they have the required number of members. A copy of the By-laws of Sask Athletics is available on request along with the Association Policy and Procedures Handbook and can be viewed on the Sask Athletics website.

Age Classifications

Age Class:

- U12 – 11 years old or younger as of December 31st in the year of competition
- U14 – 12-13 years old as of December 31st in the year of competition
- U16 – 14-15 years old as of December 31st in the year of competition
- U18 – 16-17 years old as of December 31st in the year of competition
- U20 – 18-19 years old as of December 31st in the year of competition
- Senior – 20 years old or over as of December 31st in the year of competition
- Master – 35 years old or over

A word of caution! School age classes are different than those given above.

Privileges of Membership:

- Access to certified coaching and officiating (excluding Recreational Runners)
- The right to compete on Provincial and National Teams (excluding Recreational Runners)
- The right to compete in Provincial, National and International Championships
- Recreational Runners may compete in Provincial Road and Cross Country Championships
- The right to officiate in Provincial, National and International Competitions
- Sport accident and liability insurance coverage
- Access to Sport Medicine and Science services
- The opportunity to receive travel grants (excluding Recreational Runners)
- The opportunity to receive athletic and academic funding support (excluding Recreational Runners)
- The ability to access and order equipment
- Access to clinics and upgrading opportunities (excluding Recreational Runners)
- Ranking and record privileges (excluding Recreational Runners)
- Regular communication through website and social media