

2022 Notes for Middle School Track Coaches

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- 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 17 describe the OHSAA uniform rules for track and field (and cross country) as stipulated in the OHSAA Manual for Track and Field Coaches and Officials.

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 - 17

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!**
- **Must fill out form on-line at OHSAA.ORG**

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.

- **Uniform Tops/One-Piece Uniforms**

Each athlete must wear a full-length track uniform top or a one-piece uniform issued or approved by the school. Track 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). 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 track 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 shall be worn above the hips. Waistbands **ARE** permitted to be rolled.

- **Items that are Legal 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.

- **Required Numbers on Uniform**

Effective in 2020, uniform numbers are no longer required on the back of contestants' uniforms. As the transition takes place it will be common for teams to have some uniforms with numbers and some without. It is **NOT** a uniform violation if some members of a relay 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.

- **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 bottom or one-piece uniform may vary. If worn by more than one team member, the apparel must be the same color but not necessarily the same length. 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.

(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.

- **Religious Headgear**

In the event a head coach represents to the referee in advance of the start of the competition that a competitor wishes NOT to expose his/her uncovered head, the referee shall approve a covering or wrap which shall not:

- 1) Fundamentally alter the sport
- 2) Be abrasive, hard or dangerous to any other participant
- 3) Be attached in such a way that it is likely to come off during competition, and
- 4) Be deemed to be unsporting/offensive

For other exceptions not addressed above, school administrators and/or head coaches shall contact the OHSAA sport administrator (TBD, TBD@ohsaa.org) in advance of the competition date to discuss if a waiver is available, and, if so, the details of the waiver process.

Note: If there are any concerns about the head decorations or head gear well in advance of the start of the competition on that day, contest officials shall approach the head coach (or assistant coach, if the head coach is not available) to address the issue.

- **Additional Headgear Information**

Inappropriate hats and caps AS DETERMINED BY THE REFEREE are prohibited.

EXCEPTIONS – 1) While the referee has the authority to decide what is appropriate, track and field competitors may wear the Navy Watch-Style knit cap. The cap shall not have a bill, but may have a knit ball on top or a tassel or tail provided the tassel or tail is no longer than 1/2 the depth or length of the cap. With referee approval, competitors may also wear a headband with or without ear protectors provided the headband is designed for the purpose of protecting the head and ears. If in question, the referee will have the final decision regarding whether or not to allow certain types of headgear. 2) Pole vaulters are permitted to wear helmets (safety head gear).

****Headgear worn for medical reasons is NOT considered a medical device and DOES require a waiver from the OHSAA office.**

- **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!)

- **Wearing Of Skirts**

Rule 4-3-4b states, "Any outer garment that is school-issued or school-approved becomes the official uniform when worn." Based on this rule, the wearing of a skirt for **individual competition** is legal and does not require a waiver when worn for religious purposes.

However, when a skirt [being worn for religious purposes] is worn by one competitor on a relay or cross country team, it is very likely, the skirt's design will not match the design of the teammates' uniform bottoms. These non-matching bottoms would violate rule 4-3-2a regarding relay and cross country team uniforms, making it illegal. The coach of all athletes needing to wear a skirt for religious purposes, who will compete on a relay or cross country team, **MUST OBTAIN** a waiver when the skirt does not match the bottoms of their teammates. To avoid any issues with non-compliant relay or cross country team uniforms **it is recommended you obtain a waiver for every athlete needing to wear a skirt for religious purposes.**

Failure to obtain a waiver would prevent the athlete from competition in a relay or on a cross country team if the skirt does not match the uniform bottoms of their teammates.

- **Jewelry**

The prohibition of wearing jewelry has been removed from the rules for track and field and cross country competition. 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.

Coaches retain the ultimate responsibility to not allow competitors to wear items dangerous to themselves or to equipment, such as the landing pit in the high jump or pole vault. Coaches are expected to preserve the integrity of the sport by communicating expectations that jewelry, if worn, should not be dangerous and must be secure when worn.

- **Hair Control Devices**

Hair control devices and/or hair accessories are permitted. Pre-wrap is legal if used to control hair, but not as a headband.

- **Wristwatch**

A wristwatch, secured to the person, may be worn in competition. EXCEPTION: GPS watches are considered an aid and, therefore, illegal. Due to the extreme difficulty in identifying and determining the legality and illegality of electronic devices, officials must be completely certain that, in fact, the electronic device is being used as an aid. Hearsay (or the opinion of a third party) is NOT an acceptable manner of determining whether or not the device is used as an aid.

- **Medical Alert or Medical/Religious Medals**

Rules now permit the wearing of both medical and religious medals. These medals no longer need to be taped to the body of the competitor and may be of a soft or hard substance.

- **Penalty**

The penalty for an illegal uniform is as follows: when a violation is observed and noted by the meet official, the competitor shall be required to make the uniform legal before becoming eligible for further competition, and shall be issued a warning that a subsequent violation shall result in disqualification from the event. The referee shall be notified of the violation by the observing official and the referee shall then notify the coach of the offending school of the competitor's violation and warning (Rule 4-3-2).

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 what the acceleration zone is and how to use it
- Athletes in multiple events
 - Communication is key
 - Understand order of events
 - Athletes and coaches are responsible
 - 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 (8.8 pounds). 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.