

## FAIR LAWN ALL SPORTS JUNIOR TRACK & FIELD

### “HARD WORK BEATS TALENT WHEN TALENT DOESN'T WORK HARD”

Welcome to the Fair Lawn All Sports Junior Track and Field. Our Mission is to nurture and develop running, race-walking, jumping & throwing skills in a competitive environment and to promote team spirit and respect of others on the track and off. We will be competing within the New Jersey Striders Track & Field Club (NJS), which consists of well over 14 Teams. Our meets are contested in April, May & June, and are developmental in nature.

This information packet may seem long, however, we feel it covers almost every question you may have about the program. PLEASE print out and keep as a reference guide. If there are still unanswered questions or comments you may contact your director, Jo Sacchinelli jomarie7@optonline.net.

**All correspondence** involving our program will be through **EMAIL ONLY**. If you have changed your e-mail address, please provide Jo Sacchinelli via email jomarie7@optonline.net with the new one. This is the responsibility of the parent and is very important.

**PRACTICES: 2012 Track Season Practice begins on Tuesday March 27, 2012 (See Calendar for practice dates which are subject to change due to scheduling / weather).**

All Practices are held at the Fair Lawn High School track (**Sasso Field**) and will consist of all age groups in the 2012 season. A tentative practice schedule will be distributed during registration and can be found on the FLAS Track & Field website. Please keep in mind we share the field with the High School so when they need to change their schedule we will need to set a different date. Changes to the original schedule are due to weather or other schedule conflicts and are beyond our control. **ALWAYS BE SURE TO CHECK YOUR EMAIL** before heading out to the field for practice. (No news means schedule remains the same).

Warm up at 6:00 pm-6:15 pm (report to assigned coach). Running & field events will be split in ½ hour sessions: 6:15-6:45 pm & 6:45 pm-7:15 pm, warm down 7:15pm-7:30 pm (report to assigned coach). The team will be separated into groups and will rotate between running and field events. This will only be possible with at least twelve coaches at practice per day; otherwise we may need to modify the practice unless we can recruit some parents to help.

During the first two weeks of practice you will have your child report to the head coach on the field name will follow in future email. After this time period they will be broken into smaller groups and assigned to an assistant coach. Please remind your child to remember which assistant coach has been assigned to them, as this will be the coach they are to report to on the third week of practice.

**Athletes will be picked up from the center of the track by parents. They are not to leave the field unattended.**

It can be windy and cold at the track during the beginning of the season, so have your athlete dress in layers. Running shorts and a t-shirt with sweats on top (**LACE UP SNEAKERS ONLY and NO JEANS or JEWELRY**). Bring gloves and a hat in the beginning of the season. Bring a bottle of water or Gatorade for your child to have at practice. Be sure to **label all personal items, including water bottles and please be sure they take all personal items & discard of their garbage at the end of practice we are responsible for keeping Sasso Field clean of litter!** An important reminder to parents: **Please do not drop children off at practice and leave.** We are not responsible for your children after practice is over. Practice can end unexpectedly, especially in the event of sudden inclement weather. We have no place to go if it rains, or if there is the threat of lightning.

**!!PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CHILDREN!!**

**Practice Facility:** Is the property of Fair Lawn School district (Sasso Field). Please take home everything you came in with, including garbage. We do not have a lost and found. Please try to keep your athlete off the pole vault mats. They are very entertaining for the children, but should not be jumped on risking injury or damage to the mats. Remind your children that horseplay may result in their dismissal from practice or if it is habitual, removal from the team as it could cause injury to the other athletes. It is mandatory we have a way to contact a parent or guardian at all times and responsibility of the parent to update if any contact information originally provided during registration has changed.

**CERTIFIED COACHES AND ATHLETES ARE ONLY PERMITTED ON THE TRACK & FIELD DURING PRACTICES. PARENTS AND PUBLIC WHO ARE NOT CERTIFIED COACHES ARE NOT PERMITTED TO USE THE TRACK.**

**We are requesting for ALL parents to donate time to the program this year to assist us for a successful season**

**Be a Coach:** Ideal coach someone who has competed in the sport at some time in their life, however, there are many other coaching roles in which we need to fill each year.

**Be a Volunteer:** Uniform hand out & collection, fundraising, practice set up & break down, photography and annual dinner are all ways to assist.

**Be a Meet Volunteer:** Our track meets need volunteers to help set up, organize the children and break down after the event.

**Volunteer sign-up sheets are will be available at sign up or contact jomarie7@optonline.**

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**If your child has any orthopedic problems – high or low arch, joint pain, etc., or any allergy/asthma problems or other medical conditions, please let the coaches know.**

**FOOTWEAR:** Shoes must fit correctly, soles that bend and are light. There are many types of running shoe, throwing shoe, jumping shoe. If it is your child's first year go for a middle distance running shoe. You may go on line to [www.eastbay.com](http://www.eastbay.com) or [www.zappos.com](http://www.zappos.com) for a large selection but be sure you have the size prior to ordering. Brands are: Nike, New Balance, Adidas, Asics, Nike, Saucony, etc. and you should be able to purchase a pair for \$25 to \$60. **DON'T LISTEN TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT STYLE & COLORS, WHICH IS WHAT CAUSES INJURIES!** Fit and make of the shoe is the most important factor. **DO NOT BUY ANY SHOE WITH SPIKE.** Spikes are not permitted in the first four developmental meets.

**UNIFORMS** will be handed at time of registration. Additional pieces, including the hoodies and bibs, will be handed out prior to the first meet (see calendar for dates), to parents only, and parents must sign for them. We cannot exchange for sizes. The **tank top** and **shorts MUST be returned** at the end of the season no later than **June 15, 2012** or you will be charged for the cost of **\$30**. The hoodies and bib #'s are for your child to keep so please make sure you write your child's name inside as soon as they receive. We will also be selling matching sweat pants at a cost of \$20, warm up suits, jackets and other items which will have the FLAS logo (there will be order forms distributed in the course of the season).

**COMPETITION BIBS:** Your athlete will be given **one** bib with a number on it per season, along with four safety pins. These bibs are **ONLY** to be worn at the meets. They will need to be fastened to the **FRONT** of the TANK (racing top) **ONLY** and pinned in **ALL FOUR CORNERS**. This bib# is your child's ID# while competing and the only way the judges and refs can identify your child. They will wear these bib#'s for all 5 regular season meets and for the USATF Prelim Qualifier if they choose to go into the USATF JO circuit. **Do not throw it away and do not wash it.** There is a color-coded dot on the bib that tells the officials on the field what age group your athlete is competing in. Please check the color-coded dot on your athlete's bib if they lose the sticker, bring it to a coaches' attention so it can be fixed before the start of the meet.

**Lost/Destroyed Competition Bib#'s:** You must inform Jo Sacchinelli prior to 1230PM on meet day, in order to receive a replacement number. The new bib# will **REPLACE** the old in the computer so if old number is found you **MUST DESTROY** the old bib or your child's times / distances will not be recorded. The cost of replacement is a mandatory **\$10** and is paid at time of replacement at your expense. noon.

**MEETS:** Meets are held on Sundays in Northern Bergen County. **MEETS ARE MANDATORY.** They are why we practice all week. If you do not plan on attending the meets, do not sign up for track & field. We understand there are times in which a child cannot attend a meet due to illness or family obligation and will allow exception two times during the season. However, please keep in mind the **MEETS ARE OUR GAMES.**

Meet Schedule

April 15- Saddle Brook

April 22- Mahwah

April 29- Paramus

May 6- Fair Lawn

USATF-NJ Prelim is May 22- Rutherford **\*\*(information provided below for USATF Membership)**

NJ Strider Invitational June 5- Westwood

**Competition sites:** Parents be aware some of the sites parking lots will fill up by 12:15pm. Plan to arrive early. The team will warm-up as a group at 12:30 pm on the field with the coaches. **Please, absolutely no parents or unassigned coaches on the field of play during the meet, we can be disqualified as a team if this policy is not followed.** While Track and Field is an individual sport it is also a team sport. It is mandatory the entire FLAS Track and Field Team to be located in one area. The team has a red tent with a Fair Lawn banner which will be set up. You must report to this tent for the meets. Remember to bring lawn chairs to sit on and dress appropriately. Bring umbrellas to protect both from the sun and rain. The meets run from 1 to 5 pm. When your child is done competing, he/ she may leave after checking in with one of the coaches. Athletes **MUST** attend the meet in uniform and with their bib safety pinned to the front of their racing top with four safety pins. There is no entry fee for a meet so you are welcome to bring family and friends to route. Meet day is a great day to spend outdoors while enjoying the sport of Track & Field. Children are **NEVER** to play under the stands. Bring a book or game boy, etc. for them to keep busy. Be sure your child's shoelaces are tight & double knotted. They cannot be touching the ground. Don't forget your sunscreen! Information on meets is located at [njstriders.com](http://njstriders.com)

**Press Box:** Directors are the only individuals permitted to approach the press box with meet questions, result inquiries etc. If there is an issue, please see Jo Sacchinelli or a coach.

**Nourishment:** Athletes should have plenty of water or Gatorade with them. Try not to let them eat anything too fatty or heavy before their race. Low-fat, low-sugar snacks like whole-grain food bars and nuts are recommended. They provide a good source of energy. Fruit, or raw vegetables, are also a good alternative to sugary snacks, and can help replace lost minerals and help balance electrolytes. Better nutrition. better performance! Limit or eliminate the junk! Please also be aware of garbage and respect the hosting teams' facility by discarding of any litter.

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**Weather:** If practice is cancelled because of weather you will be notified via **email**. You may also reach out to your coach if you have any questions. If it rains the day of a meet you will be notified by 11 am race day if it is cancelled. **(MEETS ARE ONLY CANCELLED UNDER SEVERE CONDITIONS.)**

**Relay Teams:** are by try out and selected by the running coach. You **MUST** agree if your child wishes to compete on a relay team because they will need to be present at the meet and remain till the very end of the meet, which at times may be around 4-5PM. Only a certain number of relay teams are permitted so not every child will be able to run the relay

**Awards:** are given out on following day of practice at the **END** of practice. Every child who competes in a meet receives a ribbon regardless of placement. If your athlete does not attend the practice after the meet, the awards will be held by their head coach. The age group your athlete competes in is based on his/her **year** of birth. If he/she is 6 years old today, but turns 7 prior to December 31, 2012, he/she will compete as a 7-8 yr old (sub-bantam) age group, turns 9 prior to December 31, 2012, he/she will compete as a 9-10 yr old (bantam) age group, turns 11 prior to December 31, 2012, he/she will compete as an 11-12 yr old (midget) age group, turns 13 prior to December 31, 2012 he/she will compete as a 13-14 yr old (youth) age group and turns 15 prior to December 31, 2012, he/she will compete as a 15 yr old (intermediate) age group. This is regulated under USATF guidelines with no exception. When athletes compete in the first 6 meets the membership dues covers their entry fee. At the Junior Olympic Association meets (USATF), parents start to pay a minimal fee. The coaches will assist your child on deciding on what events an athlete will compete in. If you cannot attend a meet, please tell the coaches the Monday before the scheduled event. The coaches will be planning workouts for your athlete based on which events they will be competing in that week, and possibly recruiting them as a relay member.

**MEMORIAL DAY PARADE:** We will march as a team in the Memorial Day Parade so if you are in town, we are requesting that your child march with us, this is not mandatory, but a great way for your child to show they are part of a team.

**ANNUAL DINNER/AWARD BANQUET:** We also hold an annual dinner in June. Children will receive awards for team. Currently we are looking at Friday June 15<sup>th</sup> 2012 for the date, but this is subject to change due to availability. Awards for attendance, meet participation and special achievement awards to those who excelled over and beyond will be given out. Only children who attend the dinner will be given awards. The exact date and fee will be confirmed later in the season.

**THE NEW JERSEY STRIDERS TRACK CLUB, INC.** The New Jersey Striders Track Club, Inc. has been in existence since 1978. It is considered to be one of the largest clubs in New Jersey. They have organized many regional & state events over the years, and have been organizing the youth spring track program since 1980. When athletes sign up for their National membership card, which is included in their Fair Lawn All Sports Track and Field membership dues, they will be signing up as a member of the New Jersey Striders Track Club, Inc., but will run in developmental meets in the FLAS uniform.

**NJ Striders team members:** Saddle Brook, Paramus, Rutherford, East Rutherford, Mahwah, Wayne, Fair Lawn, Hackensack, Englewood, Wood Ridge, Westwood, Haworth, Hasbrouck Heights, Montville, Cedar Grove, Monroe-Woodbury, Ridgely and various other club/rec teams.

**JUNIOR OLYMPIC TRACK & FIELD PROGRAM** With roots tracing back to ancient Greece, track & field is the centerpiece of the Olympic Games. From the 100 meter dash to the discus throw, athletes set new standards for excellence in sport. USATF's Junior Olympic Track & field program is a wellspring of this excellence. America's next generation of track & field stars compete throughout the summer – and over 6,000 of these athletes will qualify for the USATF National Junior Olympic Track & Field Championships held during the last week of July. Entry for the National Championship is based on athlete performances at preliminary, association, and regional levels.

**In order for your child to participate in the National Junior Olympic Track & Field Program, which is contested on May 23rd in Rutherford, June & July, they must first become a member of the USATF.** To understand more about the National organization or the Junior Olympic program visit USATF online at [www.usatf.org](http://www.usatf.org). In order for an athlete to qualify for the USATF National Junior Olympic Track & Field

Championships they must become a member. They must pay the annual membership dues and fill out the application. This can be done via the USATF website <https://www.usatf.org/membership/application/>. They will then receive a membership number and card. Those who have already registered your child **MUST** renew membership for 2012. We highly recommend membership as it is a great experience for the athletes.

### **TERMINOLOGY YOU MAY NEED TO KNOW:**

Track: a surface made of rubber and is usually 400 meters long.

Track lanes: boundaries marked with white lines that range from 36" wide, to 48" wide, depending on the facility.

The following races are run in lanes for our developmental series, and the athlete must stay in their lane at all times. If they take three steps in a row outside of their lane, they can be disqualified.

100M (meters): a sprint down a straightaway of the track

200M: ½ of a lap

400M: one lap

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The following races are run from the starting line and the athlete must cut into lane 1 once they have a 1 stride lead if they take three steps in a row inside of lane 1 they can be disqualified.

**800M:** two laps

**1500M:** 3.75 laps, and is known as the metric mile. A mile is actually 1609 meters, or four full laps. (1600M)

**3000M:** 7 ½ laps

**Racewalk:** a fast walking race where the athlete must keep one foot on the ground at all times and also straighten their leg upon impact to the ground each time. (This race is judged and timed)

**Relays:** four athletes run a percentage of the race and hand a 1-foot long aluminum tube(baton) to each other.

**Starting blocks:** metal foot pedals used by sprinters at the start of a race to assist in the push off.

**Who wins a race:** torso first! Arms or feet do not count.

**Starting commands in races of 400M or less:** On your marks, set, slight pause, then gun sound

**Starting commands in races of 800M or longer:** On your marks, slight pause, then gun sound

The following are used for throwing events and recorded by measure.

**Shot put:** a round steel ball that weighs 2 lbs for 7-8 yr olds, 6 lbs for 9-12 yr olds & 13-14 yr old girls The 13-14 yr old boys use a 4kg (8.8lbs)

**Discus:** like a weighted Frisbee (contested Midget, Youth, Intermediate)

**Turbo javelin:** a developmental level spear training tool plastic modified (for safety) that is made especially for young competitors (300g sub bantam, bantam, midget, 600g youth & Intermediate)

**Javelin:** a long piece of wood with a sharp point (thrown by youth & intermediate only in USATF JO competitions only)

The following are jumping events and recorded by measure

**High jump:** a parallel crossbar that is jumped over from one foot, landing on three foam mats placed behind the stance.

**Long Jump:** a sprint down a straightaway jumping off a white board into a sandpit.

**Triple Jump:** a sprint down a straightaway jumping off a white board on one foot landing onto opposite foot onto board and leaping into the sandpit. (this event is contested by older age groups Youth, Intermediate due to difficulty level)

### UNDERSTANDING OUR MISSION:

The commitment can be very demanding for the athletes. Practice requires hard work, and a desire to improve; NJS meets are team events. Here are some ways to help the athletes achieve those goals:

1. Get to know the coaches. Feel free to discuss any problems, or suggestions.
2. Understand that competition can be a thrilling and enjoyable. It does not always mean winning. Improving on skills, times and attitudes are equally important goals.
3. Understand the courage required when an athlete competes. When they are competing they are taking a risk. Competition and risk taking require courage and develops strength and character.
4. It helps to remember the competition is for the athlete.

### ARE YOU A WINNING TRACK & FIELD PARENT?

*If You Learn And Practice The Following Seven Keys To Becoming A Successful Track & Field Parent, Your Child Should Have A Successful And Rewarding Relationship With Track & Field.*

Do You really want your children to have a rewarding and enjoyable experience with their athletics (track & field) ? Would you like your son or daughter to feel good about himself/herself and perform like champion? Do you know what it takes to be a winning athletics (track & field) parent?

Whether you know it or not, much of your child's success at the track rest squarely in your lap. That's Right! You are the most influential and important member of the coach-athlete-parent team. You have the power and ability to shape your child's relationship with this sport so that it brings him/her lasting joy, enduring self- confidence and self esteem-building success. In fact if you play your role on the team the right way, then you can help ensure that your child will go into the world feeling well adjusted, confident and happy long after he/she has hung up his/her competitive running shoes.

It's an unfortunate fact of this sport that well-meaning parents all too often say and do the wrong things with their child-athlete under the guise of trying to be "helpful." Attempting to motivate their children to go faster these parents instead inadvertently set them up for failure and unhappiness. They do this by unknowingly breaking all the rules of peak performance and, as a result, stresses their child, distract him/her from the task at hand and ensure that their son or daughter always runs far slower than his/her abilities. If you truly want your child to have a successful and rewarding relationship with Athletics (Track & Field), then it's up to you to do your part. Learn and practice the following seven keys to becoming a winning Athletics (track & Field), parent.

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**1. DON'T COACH** Trying to “coach” your children behind the scenes when the team already has a professional staff will ultimately hurt your kids far more than it will help. As parent, it is not your job to coach either at practice or meets. This means that you don't want to push your children to train harder or do extra workouts so that they can be better, quicker. You don't want to discuss form technique or race strategy with them before or after practice, on the way to the meet or right before the races. You don't want to subject them to last minute motivational talks. You should never offer helpful hints and criticism after their races even if you think you know exactly what went wrong. This is the coach's job, not yours! Your “helpful” hints in these are never helpful and will ultimately backfire! Coaching is the very last thing your children need from you when it comes to their Athletics (Track & Field). Winning Athletics (Track & Field) parents don't coach. Instead, they leave the coaching to the coaches.

**2. BE UNCONDITIONALLY LOVING AND SUPPORTIVE** Your primary role on the “team” is to be your children's “best fan.” You want to support their efforts and love them unconditionally regardless of how fast they run or in what place they finish. Whether they win or lose, run slow or fast, your love and respect for your children should never change. What you can do in your support role is to arrange for extra lessons for them if they ask, endlessly drive them to practices, cheer for them at their meets, make sure that they have nourishing, healthy food to eat and do everything else that loving, supportive parents are suppose to do. And you should do every bit of this without ever expecting or demanding any “return,” performance-wise, on your “investment” of all this time, money and energy.

**3. DON'T PRESSURE YOUR CHILD TO FOCUS ON OUTCOME** Perhaps one of the more destructive things that you can do as a parent is to get your children worrying about how fast they run or the times that they need to achieve. When you do this, you will guarantee that they feel to pressured and distracted before their races to run to their potential. Going fast, achieving cuts and winning are always a paradox in running – that is, these goals can only happen if the swimmer focuses more on himself/herself and the process of the race, one stride at a time, and less on the races outcome or their times Pressuring your kids to go fast is a great way to get them consistently to go slower!

**4. HELP YOUR CHILDREN FOCUS ON THEMSELVES** Parents who continually emphasize to their children the importance of beating certain teammates or opponents inadvertently add to their children's stress and actually contribute to their children underachieving. Runners can only go fast when they focus on what they are doing and not on what everyone else is doing. Comparing your children with others on the team or in the league is a great strategy if you'd like them to fail. Instead encourage you runner to stay in their own lane focusing on their stride, form and race strategy and what they are doing.

**5. KEEP THE SPORT IN PERSPECTIVE** Help your children understand that running is just a sport and is not larger than life. Teach them that the main purposes of their sport are to master new skills, feel good about themselves and *have fun*. Help them understand that if they have a bad race or meet, this does not mean that they are a bad person or a failure. Help them view their losses and setbacks as a normal and healthy part of the learning process and a necessary prerequisite to ultimate success. Remember, your children can only learn these lessons if you, as the adult, keep their running in the proper perspective.

**6. DON'T BRIBE YOUR CHILDREN TO RUN, JUMP, THROW** Running should be something your children do because *they* want to do it. It's not your job to try and motivate them to go harder and reach for certain goals. The goals and dreams that your children have at the track should be *their* goals and dreams *not yours!* Bribing your children to run with money and incentive gifts gives them the wrong message about the purpose of their sport, and ultimately serves as a de-motivator for them. Instead, encourage your children to take ownership of the sport and to run, jump, throw for themselves- because they like it, because it makes them feel good and because they have goals that they'd like to achieve.

**7. BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL FOR YOUR CHILD** Keep in mind that how you conduct yourself in relation to your children's running provides them with very compelling and powerful on-going life lessons. This education starts with the comments that you make to them about their coach. It includes your treatment of their teammates and opponents before and after the races. It's strongly shaped by how you behave at meets, how you handle their setbacks and failures, and whether you're a good sport or not. Remember, your actions always speak louder than your words, and your children are constantly listening to every “word” that you say. Do you know exactly what life lessons you are modeling for your children? Remember, winning track & field Parents understand what's really at stake whenever their children get up to the starting line to race. It's not the race's outcome, trophy or medal or ribbon or track records that are important. It's not the qualifying times or a chance for a college scholarship that matters. What's really at stake here is your son or daughter's long-term happiness and psychological well being, not to mention the health of your parent-child relationship. A winning track & field parent always keeps this in mind.