

TRACK EVENTS

PACKET # 17

INSTRUCTIONS

This Learning Packet has two parts: (1) text to read and (2) questions to answer.

The text describes a particular sport or physical activity, and relates its history, rules, playing techniques, scoring, notes and news.

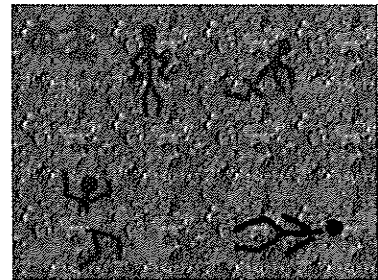
The Response Forms (questions and puzzles) check your understanding and appreciation of the sport or physical activity.

INTRODUCTION

Track events are closely related to field events. This packet will deal with five traditional track events: the dash, the steeplechase, the hurdle, the relay race and the distance race. Running as a sport did not become popular in America until 1871, when the first track meet was held in New York City. Eventually, track and field events became so popular that the Intercollegiate Association of Amateur Athletics in America (ICAAAA) and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) were organized to govern/oversee these events and the rules that control them.

HISTORY OF TRACK SPORTS

Early human beings were forced by their environment to run. They both ran after animals when hunting for food, and ran from other animals who were themselves hungry. This running consisted of jumping over bushes, fallen trees, ditches and other obstacles. Hunting and gathering techniques were taken into battle as skirmishes between tribes made survival important.



In between hunting parties and wars, running and jumping became leisure-time activities that people chose to do as athletic events. Sometimes the object was to compete against others; at other times, the athlete simply wanted to test himself or herself. Running events were recorded in Greece as early as 776 B.C. They were also part of athletic competition throughout the Middle Ages and on through the Renaissance and into modern times.

Over 2,000 years after the earliest Greek track events, in 1912, the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) was founded to function as the governing body for track and field sports all over the world.

Today, as many as 25 events may be included in a track and field meet. The track events at the championship level include the 100, 200, 400, 800, 1500, 5000 and 10,000-meter runs, the 3000-meter steeplechase, the 110- and 400-meter hurdles and the 400 and 1500-meter relays.

HOW DIFFERENT TRACK EVENTS ARE DONE

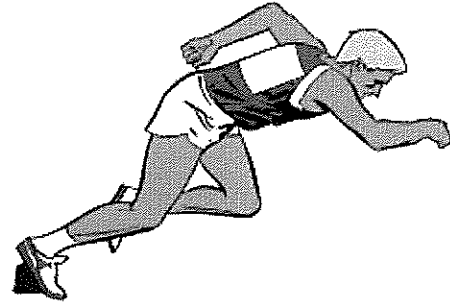
THE DASH

Dashes, or short runs, are also called sprints. The athlete must attain maximum speed in minimum time in order to compete successfully in these races. Like many field events, dashes are deceptively simple. Almost everyone has run fast at some point in his or her life. But competition-level runners in the dash must develop superior stamina, flexibility and muscular strength. The dash is NOT as simple as it looks! Here's how it's done:

1. Getting off to a good start in short races is crucial. Many races are lost at the starting line! The rules require that you start in a “crouch” position—with both feet and both hands placed on the track with the heels placed against the starting block. These starting blocks are anchored to the ground and are adjustable to runners of every size and height. The block gives you a solid base from which to push off.
2. At the command, “On your mark,” place your feet on the starting block.
3. At the second command, “Set,” lift your body until your back is almost parallel to the ground, with the hips slightly above the level of the shoulders. This is called the “ready position.”
4. As the starting gun is fired, push off from the starting block with explosive force, keeping the body forward and the head low at the beginning of the run.



Both psychological and physical considerations enter into running the dash. Being aware of the competition's strengths and weaknesses is as critical as being a skilled and aggressive runner. Patience and determination are also essential attributes for the competitive runner in this event.



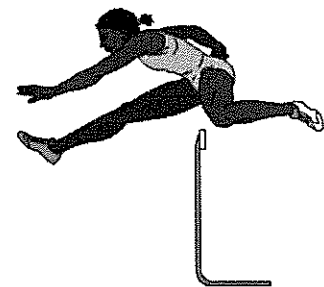
THE HURDLE

Hurdle competition is not running and leaping, but making running leaps over the hurdles. You do not jump over the hurdle. Instead, as you reach the hurdle, you lift your legs and tuck them up so that they barely clear the top of the crosspiece.

Traditionally, there are two types of hurdle races—the 120-yard (110 meter) high hurdle and the 440-yard (403 meter) intermediate hurdle. The hurdles are 42 inches (1.06 meters) high in the 120-yard event and 36 inches (.91 meters) high in the 440-yard event. The distance from the starting line to the first hurdle is 49 1/4 yards (45.03 meters). The ten hurdles are placed at 38 1/4-yard (34.9 meter) intervals across the running lanes. Here's how to do the hurdles:



1. As you cross a hurdle, your body will be leaning forward. The arm opposite the lead leg crosses the hurdle first. If the left leg leads, the right arm crosses the hurdle first.
2. As you cross the hurdle, tuck your legs up so that they barely clear the top of the hurdle.
3. After you have crossed the hurdle, land so that the body's weight will still be forward, in front of the lead leg. Landing with the weight so far forward can throw a careless runner off balance. Thus, it is often recommended that the left leg become the lead leg in order to help the runner maintain a better balance upon landing, especially around curves in the track.
4. Continue running with no interruption of your rhythm to the next hurdle. If



you do this maneuver correctly, your upper body will barely move vertically as you cross the hurdle.

RELAY RACING

Relay racing (or teamwork racing) uses a four-person team of sprinters, each of whom runs approximately the same distance. The first person to run is the **leadoff**, and the last to run, usually the best runner on the team, is called the **anchor**.

Even a team with four fast runners isn't assured of victory. Relay racing demands not only speed but teamwork. The crux of relay racing is the act of passing a baton or stick to the next team member without dropping it and without losing speed during the pass. If the baton is dropped, the runner who dropped it is disqualified and his/her team finishes last. If speed is lost in the passing of the baton, positions can be lost.



The Visual Pass and the Blind Pass are two types of passes used in relay racing. Here's how these two passes are done:

The Visual Pass

1. The receiver of the baton starts running so that his/her speed will match that of the oncoming runner.
2. As the two runners approach each other, the receiver looks over his/her shoulder and extends the receiving arm back toward the oncoming runner. The receiver has his or her palm up as the pass takes place.
3. The oncoming runner passes the baton to the receiver, who then moves ahead and continues the race.
4. The oncoming runner quickly slows down and leaves the track.

The Blind Pass

1. The receiver starts running as the oncoming runner approaches.
2. As they draw near to each other, the receiver waits for the baton holder to run about seven inches from him/her and then begins to move forward.
3. The receiver, meanwhile, moves with the receiving arm extended back toward the passer. As the pass is made, the receiver pulls the baton from the passer's hand and runs faster as the passer slows down.

LONG DISTANCE RUNNING

Distance running refers to races over 800 meters and longer. Middle distance races are generally designated as those between 800 and 2,000 meters. Long-distance races are those of 3,000 meters or more. Regardless of the actual number of meters involved, however, distance running requires endurance, stamina, tremendous concentration and self-pacing to prevent exhaustion.

A runner in a middle-distance race must learn to relax while using a controlled leg movement. He or she must also master optimum hip rotation and learn to adjust the stride—a shorter stride if the race is slow, a longer one for a faster race.

Each mile in a race can be divided into four segments. The first segment is a brisk run. The second segment is taken at a comfortable stride. The third segment is run at a stride that allows the runner to conserve energy, while the fourth segment starts slowly but ends with a burst of speed. The third segment is often considered the most critical part of the mile because it is the point where many runners are tiring, both physically and mentally.



Long-distance runners need good judgment and a keen eye for assessing the abilities of other runners on the track. They also need to develop a game plan for winning each race.

STEEPLECHASE

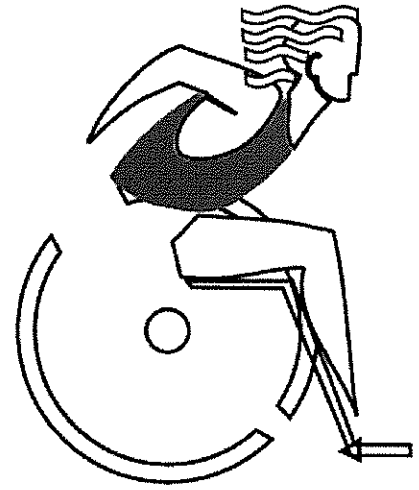
This event requires that the athlete combine the skills of a hurdler and the endurance of a long-distance runner. The steeplechase is comprised of running and jumping over

28 hurdles and 7 water jumps. In the Olympic Games, this race is approximately 3,280 yards long.

Originally, the name “steeplechase” referred to a country horse race over obstacles. Eventually, English students began to attempt the race on foot and in 1889, the event was introduced into the United States.

EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING

Track clothing is traditionally light in weight and allows complete freedom of movement. This usually means tank tops or sleeveless shirts. The bottom hem of track shorts is well above the knee, and sometimes the shorts have slits up the sides. Shoes are especially important, since different events require different shoe designs. The soles of the shoes are cleated.



TRACK EVENTS NOTES AND NEWS (Information taken from a variety of sources including ESPN, NCAA, Wikipedia and newspapers)

Below you will see a list of many Gold Medal winners of Track events in the 2012 Olympics in London.

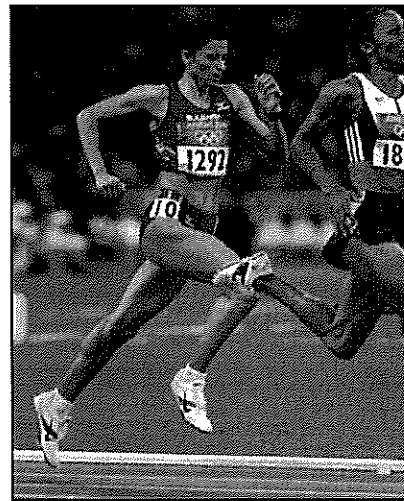
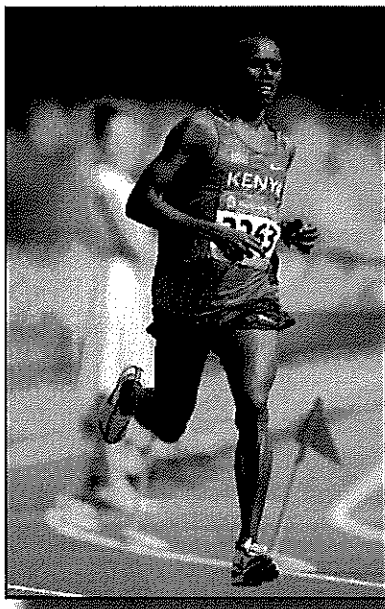


Men's Events

Event	Contestant	Country
MEN 100 METERS	Usain Bolt	Jamaica
MEN 200 METERS	Usain Bolt	Jamaica
MEN 400 METERS	Kirani James	Grenada
MEN 800 METERS	David Rudisha	Kenya
MEN 1500 METERS	Taoufik Makhloufi	Algeria
MEN 10,000 METERS	Mo Farah	Great Britain
MEN 110 METER HURDLES	Aries Merritt	United States
MEN 400 METER HURDLES	Félix Sánchez	Dominican Republic
MEN 3000 STEEPLECHASE	Ezekiel Kemboi	Kenya
MEN 400 METER RELAY		Jamaica
MEN 1600 METER RELAY		Bahamas
MEN 20 KM WALK	Chen Ding	China
MEN MARATHON	Stephen Kiprotich	Uganda

Women's Events

Event	Contestant	Country
WOMEN 100 METERS	Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce	Jamaica
WOMEN 200 METERS	Allyson Felix	United States
WOMEN 400 METERS	Sanya Richards-Ross	United States
WOMEN 800 METERS	Mariya Savinova	Russia
WOMEN 1500 METERS	Aslı Çakır Alptekin	Turkey
WOMEN 5,000 METERS	Meseret Defar	Ethiopia
WOMEN 10,000 METERS	Tirunesh Dibaba	Ethiopia
WOMEN 100 METER HURDLES	Sally Pearson	Australia
WOMEN 400 METER HURDLES	Natalya Antyukh	Russia
WOMEN 400 METER RELAY		United States
WOMEN 1600 METER RELAY		United States
MARATHON	Tiki Gelana	Ethiopia
WOMEN 20KM WALK	Elena Lashmanova	Russia



For more information on the 2012 Olympics
visit this website:

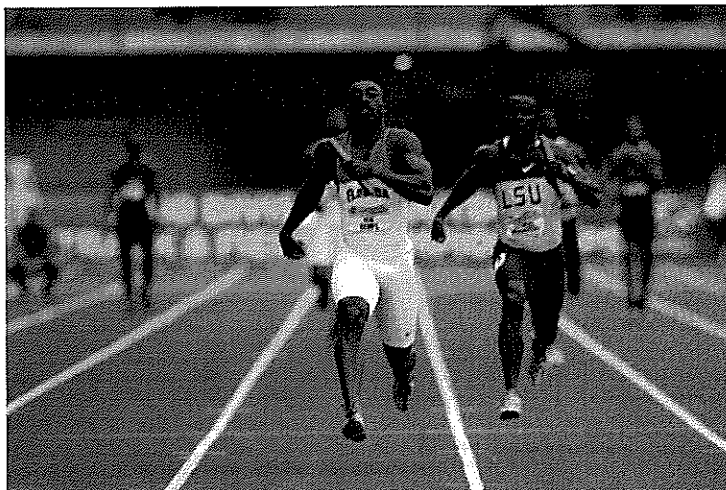
<http://www.london2012.com/>

NCAA Championships

Florida took home its first outdoor-national championship at the 2012 NCAA track and field meet.

The win snapped a three-year title run by the women and men of Texas A&M.

The title came down to the final race, the 1,600 relay, between Florida, LSU and Texas A&M. Anchor Tony McQuay gave the Gators the lead on the backstretch and the win in 3 minutes, 0.02 seconds.



Florida finished with 50 points, followed by the Tigers (48) and Texas A&M (40).

The Gators, who'd won the last three indoor titles without matching it in outdoors, started the bell lap for the 1,600 in second behind Southern California and with LSU right behind them. If that would have held the Gators and Tigers would have split the national title, but McQuay put on a burst to move past USC's Bryshon Nellum while Tigers anchor Riker Hylton stayed in third.

What made Florida's title run all the more remarkable was that the Gators did it without star sprinter Jeff Demps, who skipped the NCAA meet to rest an injured hamstring.



Florida State's Maurice Mitchell gave the Seminoles their sixth national champion in the 200 meters in seven years and a brief lead. But that was Florida State's last shot, and the Seminoles finished fourth with 38 points.

The 1,500 meters didn't have any impact on the team race, but it might have been the best race of the meet.

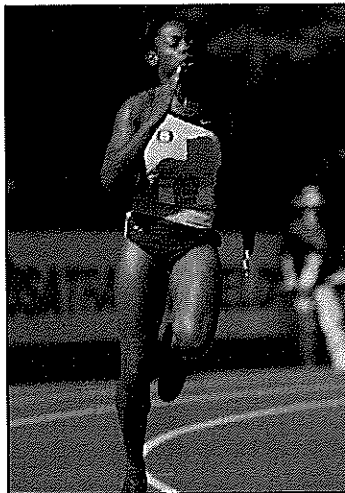
Indiana's Andrew Bayer closed on BYU's Miles Batty down the backstretch, but Batty appeared to hold the slightest of leads as both approached the finish line. Bayer and Batty

leaned hard and tumbled harder, and Bayer leapt up and turned to the scoreboard to learn that his 3:43.82 had bested the still-fallen Batty by 1/100th of a second.

"I was set up with 200 meters to go and I was like 'I'm not going to let this go, I'm going to fight to the end,'" Bayer said.

Illinois star Andrew Riley became the first to sweep the men's 100 meters and 110-meter high hurdles, winning the 110 on Saturday in 13.53.

The NCAA updates winners at their website: <http://www.ncaa.org>



STUDENT RESPONSE PACKET

TRACK EVENTS

NAME _____

DATE _____

WHAT TO DO

The following questions will help you to have a greater appreciation and understanding of track events. Write your answers in the spaces below the questions. If there is not enough room, write on the backs of these sheets. Be neat, spell correctly, and write in complete sentences.

1. In your opinion, what physical benefits can be gained from participating in track as a sport?
2. What are the five traditional track events?
3. Describe why the starting position is so crucial to the dash or short run.
4. It is often said that both psychological and physical considerations enter into a successful dash. What are these factors and why are they so important?

5. What is the hurdle competition and what are the two types of hurdle races?

6. Why is it sometimes recommended that the left leg be used as the lead leg in hurdles?

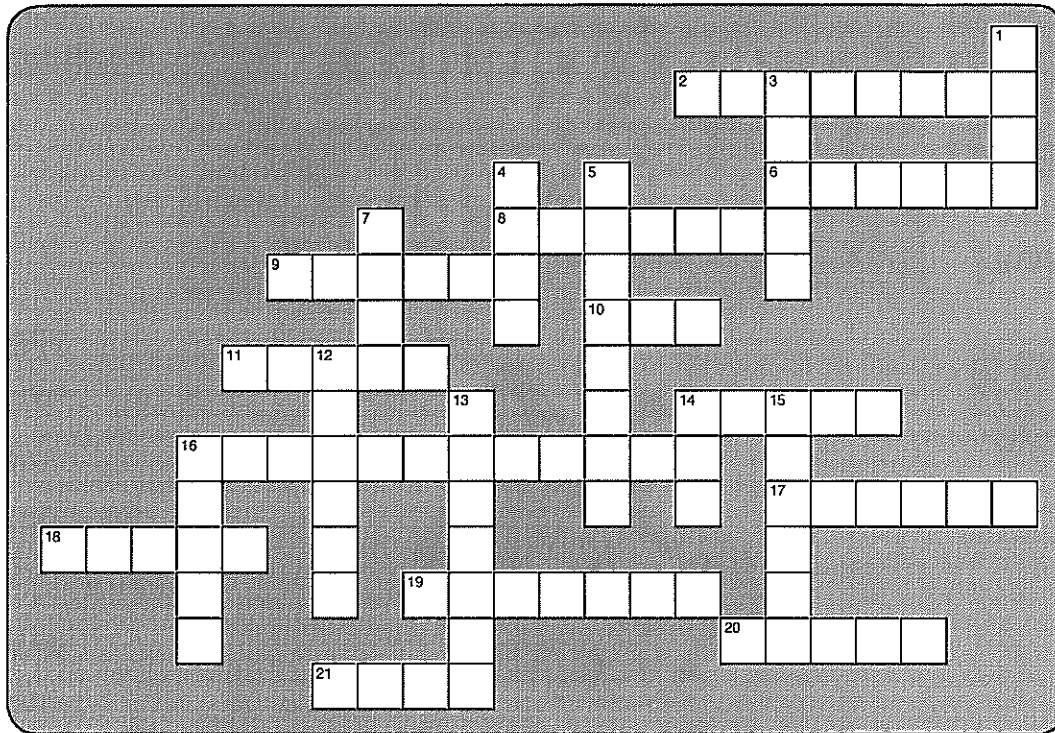
7. Why does relay racing depend as much on teamwork as on the speed of the individual runners?

8. What is a “visual pass?”

9. What is a “blind pass?”

10. Describe how the receiver should be positioned to receive the baton in the visual pass.

Name: _____ Date: _____



Across:

2. Height in inches of hurdles in 120 yard event
6. The last runner in a relay race
8. The soles of track shoes are this
9. One of the associations that control track events
10. Traditional number of hurdle types
11. Track clothing is usually this
14. Number of water jumps in a steeplechase
16. This race involves water jumps and hurdles
17. Another name for the dash
18. This is passed in a relay race
19. Direction of body weight after crossing hurdle
20. The sprinter puts his or her feet here at the start of the race
21. Federation that controls track all over the world

Down:

1. Number of sprinters on a team for a relay race
3. Position with hips slightly above shoulder level
4. An association of colleges that oversees track events
5. Direction of minimum movement in crossing hurdle
7. One of the five track events covered in this packet
12. Track events held here in 776 BC
13. Name of first sprinter in a relay race
14. Second command when starting the dash
15. Type of relay pass
16. These are an especially important part of the attire of track participants

Name: _____ Date: _____



Find these words in the above puzzle. Circle the words.

- | | | |
|---------|--------------|-----------|
| Track | Set | Dashes |
| ICAAAA | Hurdle | Relay |
| Bushes | Blind | Sprinters |
| IAAF | Pass | Baton |
| Sprints | Steeplechase | Runners |
| Mark | Shorts | Receiver |
| | Shoes | |