

DC SPEED TRACK & FIELD PROGRAM PARENT/COACH MEETING



INTRODUCTION

DC SPEED Program first began Spring of 2008 started by Cleophus Atkins. We had approximately 70 athletes, where 32 athletes made it to Regionals and 6 athletes to Nationals. Last year we were able to qualify 40 athletes for Regionals out of one of the toughest Associations in the nation. This year we are hoping to not only to improve that number, but also continue the success and create a “Standard of Excellence” for the future. Our success is going to be primarily determined by all who are apart of this program; parents supporting all of our athletes and coaches, coaches maintaining high standards of excellence in providing the correct fundamentals and disciplines for each of the athletes, and finally determined by athletes work ethic, discipline, teamwork, and respect to maintain a great program.

MISSION STATEMENT:

Our mission in 2010 is to recognize, develop, and strengthen the talented youth that reside in the DC Metropolitan Area and provide a program that will give these youth a chance to improve their discipline, their running abilities, and most importantly a lifetime of great health and fitness.

COACHING STAFF

Our coaches come from many backgrounds and successes, of which over half are certified track & field coaches. Our staff includes the following coaches (Some more may be added later):

Coach Ulysses Manley (7-10 yr old Boys Sprinters)
Coach Kenny Statom (Mid-Distance & Distance Runners)
Coach Jeffrey Young (13-15yr old Sprinters)
Coach Charles Young (Hurdles & Sprints)
Coach Dominique Foster (7-10 yr old Girl Sprinters)
Coach Erica Day (11-14 yr old Girl Sprinters)
Coach Donn Miller
Coach Ashley Hawkins (Administrator)
Coach Nathaniel Metts (15-18 yr old Girl Sprinters)
Coach Kevin Bembridge (H.S. Sprinters, All Jumpers)
Coach Kurt Bembridge (Throwers)
Coach/Parent Liaison Rob Sabbakhan
Coach Raymond Gayle (Mid-Distance & Distance Runners)

JUNIOR OLYMPIC PROCESS

Our club is a registered member of Potomac Valley Association (PVA) of USA Track and Field (USATF), and Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) which obliges the club and its individual members to respect and enforce the Rules and Regulations of USATF and the AAU. This year we will venture to go through the AAU Junior Olympics Games process for 2010.

The AAU founded in 1888, established a Junior Olympic program is a youth program where youth athletes compete each year in the Track & Field and Cross Country championships. Many of America's Olympians began as youth athletes within this program. Competition within this program is based on one-year age group windows, defined by the athlete's age on December 31 of the current year. There are six age groups defined as follows: primary (8 & under), sub-bantam (9 years old and younger), bantam (10), sub-midget (11), midget (12), sub-youth (13), youth (14), intermediate (16 & under), and young men or women (18 & under).

The structure of the AAU with respect of the Club is as follows:

- The Club.
- Potomac Valley District (District Qualifiers) – Clubs from Maryland, District of Columbia and Northern Virginia
- AAU National

What Meets are included in the JO Process?

For USATF:

Local Qualifier Meet (TBD):	JUNE 6, 2009 (Top 6 qualify for PVA)
PVA Association Championships (PG S&LC):	JUNE 18-21, 2009 (Top 5 qualify for Region 3)
Region 3 Championships (PG S&LC):	JULY 9-12, 2009 (Top 3 qualify for Nationals)
JO National Championships (NC A&T):	JULY 28- AUGUST 2, 2009

For AAU:

District Qualifier Meets
National Qualifier Meets (i.e. Club Championships, other TBD National Qualifier Meets)
National Junior Olympic Games

What do us as Coaches expect from the JO's process given that our team has grown?

What will happen to those that do not make it in any individual events?

- Athletes should continue to come to practice if possible.
- Hershey Track Meet/Hershey Games in PA
- Relay Teams for Association/Regional/National

RELAY TEAMS FOR JO'S

1. I will let you know upfront, not everyone will be placed on a relay team.
2. Being placed on a relay is a privilege and will be treated as such
3. ALL Relays teams and athletes being placed on Relay teams WILL BE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE COACHING STAFF and COACHING STAFF ONLY.
4. Categories that go into the selection for a relay team:
 - a. Ability to Gel and Mesh well with teammates
 - b. Attitude on and off the track toward Coaches, Teammates, and Parents

- c. Attendance to practices and meets
- d. Performance on the track
- e. Progression or Improvement throughout the season

PRACTICES/MEETS

Practice with the club is a required part of the DC Speed Track and Field program. Failure to participate in a reasonable amount of scheduled practices could result in the loss of opportunity to run at an upcoming track meet during the given week. Meets are a significant tool in the development of all DC Speed athletes, but they are not to be construed to equate to a practice.

Our coaches feel that it most important to improve the overall fitness of our athletes and will place a lot of emphasis on, flexibility, strength, and on all aspects of coordination; along with a warm up jog, one third to half of practice time is dedicated to these activities. It is thereby important to arrive at practice on time whenever practical

Our goal as a coaching staff is to train each athlete to the extent of their ability. This will be accomplished:

1. By breaking down into age groups.
2. By subdividing age groups by skill level, when ever practical. Possibly moving some athletes up to the next age group and into a subdivision within that age group that matches the athlete's ability. This is will only be done for some workouts.
3. By subdividing athletes within the age groups by gender, when ever practical (especially in the adolescent years). Mostly because of social differences starting in the preadolescent years; but, also because there is a vast difference in body composition that becomes relevant in the adolescent years.
4. By caring for the athletes first as people, then as athletes, and
5. By making training sessions as much fun as possible.

Note: Athletes may change groups from time to time because over time we may see that another event or a different time of training may suit them better. So don't be concerned or worried if your child moves from one group to another, because it is for their personal improvement and progression.

Also, remember that we do have high school athletes that will be joining our team after their perspective high school track teams end their season. Parents it is important that we welcome them with open arms and treat them just as we would our own children. These athletes tend to not have the same parental support as the younger ones do, so they will need the encouragement just as much as the young athletes. Same goes with our high school coaches that will be joining our staff late in the season as well. They deserve just as much respect as the coaches that have been coaching since the start of the season.

COACHES EXPECTATIONS OF THE PARENTS:

1. Please encourage your child by:
 - a. Coming to the practices and meets
 - b. Arriving for practices on-time and meets early, it is hard to get a good complete workout in when the child is arriving late, and it wastes money when an athlete misses their race
 - c. Dress your child properly in accordance with the weather; make sure you don't forget their spikes or uniforms for the meets, etc
 - d. Make sure you child is eating properly, stay away from a lot of greasy foods, drinking plenty of water, etc. (especially before, during, and after a meet)

- e. Encourage your child by cheering them on at the meet and practice, DON'T ASK THEM WHY THEY ARE IN THE BACK, OR WHY THEY AREN'T WITH THE OTHER ATHLETES
 - f. Ensure that your child goes to practice and meets with enough water to last the duration
2. Be respectful of the coaches, other parents on the team; meet officials, and other teams (parents and athletes).
 3. Uphold all USATF rules and regulations especially with respect to drugs and alcohol
 4. Become an active member of the Booster Club
 - a. Helping out where needed at the track meets
 - b. Providing assistance with bringing food and water to the meet.
 - c. Seek out sponsorships or donations and/or help with fundraising for team
 - d. Put forth as much effort and dedication as you can, and we will go far
 5. Seek out Educating yourself on track and field
 - a. Track & Field is not for everyone, however if possible learn as much as you can about the sport your child is participating in
 - b. If you are really interested in the sport, look to take the Level 1 Certification for USATF Coaches. It is one weekend (Friday night- Sunday Morning) of classes and then you get online and take a test (ex. Coach Miller)
 6. Don't Take your Athlete to a meet that is not on our Schedule
 - a. It will disrupt our training schedule for your child
 - b. Most athletes are young, and overuse injuries can become a problem without proper tracking
 - c. Trust & Believe: Coaches Know what's best for your child as a track & field athlete

COACHES EXPECTATIONS OF THE ATHLETES:

1. Treat the Coaching Staff with Respect
 - a. No talking back to the coaches when asked to do something.
 - b. NO foul language tolerated!
 - c. Listen to the coaches; we're here to help the athletes.
2. Treat your Teammates with Respect:
 - a. No pushing or fighting amongst teammates or other teams.
 - b. Keep all comments about teammates and other athletes positive
 - c. Encourage and cheer your teammates on when their competing.
3. Treat ALL the Parents with Respect
 - a. Even if someone isn't their parent and they ask them to do something that will benefit them or the team, than listen to them.
 - b. No athletes should be talking back to any parent for any reason.

TRAINING METHODOLOGY

Sports-training for a child is often used to achieve the same goals that sports-training for an adult achieves. That is, to improve speed, strength and stamina for the purpose of either fitness for a sport or fitness in life. However, there has to be a difference in the approach taken, because children are distinctly psychologically and physiologically different than adults.

The first four paragraphs go a long way towards explaining the position of each of the DC Speed coaches. The first two are common myths, the third and fourth are a summary of everything before and after.

Myth 1 - You can train hard every day

Workouts and meets are only a part of a training cycle. It is the time between intense workouts, the recovery, where athletes make their improvements. Generally it takes 36-48 hours to recover from high intensity training. If athletes are doing too much, too often they become over-trained or over-strained and one can expect to see an increase in: injuries, complaints of soreness, decreased performances, and higher levels of fatigue. It's always better to under train an athlete than over-train. A good coach knows that it is better to err on the side of caution.

Myth 2 - The harder the workout, the better the result

Some athletes, coaches, and parents have the mentality that if a workout that doesn't completely exhaust the athlete isn't an effective workout. This mentality will cause a lot of injuries and frustrating performances. The purpose of a workout is to stimulate an adaptive response by the body. If the body is forced to do too much work in a given time period, it will break down. The skill in coaching is to stimulate the adaptation in the body, without reaching a point of diminishing returns.

Adaptation to training is accelerated when fatigued systems are restored to normal operational levels as quickly as possible. That usually is between 8 to 72 hours depending on the level of stress and the systems affected. It's important to understand that the adaptive process takes place during periods of rest. The rest can be the natural cycle of sleep, or scheduled time away from the activity. Thoughtful coaches will plan workouts around days of intense running, long runs and recovery sessions to work the major energy systems while still allowing for adequate recovery and to allow the adaptive process to take place.

Enthusiastic coaches and parents that stress quick results, usually fall short of their goals for two reasons. First, too many of the athletes become frustrated and quit that type of program because those programs are structured to take advantage of specific abilities that are evident in only those with a certain athletic maturation. The second reason is that quick results do not fuse into the type of adaptations that are needed to build upon, thus providing a soft foundation that will collapse quicker and easier.

Parents often confront coaches with what they believe their child can do. Some parents are on target, but too often parents are not. This is not to say that in most cases a child cannot ever do what the parent believes they can; the reality is that even if the child could do what the parent believes they can, the child is often not ready at that point in time to do it. In another instance some parents may see their child outrun their peers at school or in street races in the neighborhood and think that their kids are "sprinters". The parent will be quick to point out to a coach that, "he/she is a sprinter, why do you have

them running distances in practice or running long races?” In reality what is usually the case is the particular child is physically stronger or has more co-ordination than kids in their age group. This “advantage” usually passes and over time things will tend to even out.

Parents are too often unrealistic or lack objectivity, which is why most coaches will not coach their children. In most situations the coach has more understanding of what is needed to improve your child and how to do it than the parent does. That is not to say that all coaches are good for your child, in fact a great many are not and when you add those coaches to the just adequate coaches, you have the majority of coaches that are not quality coaches.

What is a coach?

A coach is a teacher, adviser, a friend, and a disciplinarian. A coach is the one that implements the science behind physiology and training principles into a workable solution for the athletes they coach.

A good coach has the interest of their athletes in mind at all times and a good coach will act on those interests. A good coach is constantly learning and will evolve when needed. A good coach plans for the future and sets in practice an implementation to achieve appropriate goals.

DC Speed Coaches

The first aim of DC Speed Coaches is to take into account the athletes long term benefit. The coaches are aware of the training age and chronological age of our athletes. Use that information to narrow the perspective of training. The following are things our coaches are particular about:

1. Accounting for proper adaptation to training – this could cause a negative effect that will be cumulative if not accounted for.
2. Do not overtrain, overstrain, or set in performance barriers. It is difficult to account for all of these components unless the coaches have control over training. This why coaches limit the amount of competition and control what is done at competitions.
3. We are aware that an improvement in any sport are strengthened and made easier, if improvements are made across the athletic spectrum. Improving flexibility, strength, coordination, and mobility must underpin the actual physiological improvements that are being attempted.

Our athletes

Children at 10 years old and under can be characterized as having a short attention span; their cardio-respiratory system is developing thus their aerobic capability is just adequate for training purposes and is more advanced than their anaerobic capacity, which is limited at this age. In addition they have low tolerance to the negative effects encountered during lactic acid accumulation. Consequently the training should be wide-ranging and imaginative with emphasizes directed at participation and fun over winning. An athlete (especially the younger the athlete) must enjoy what they are doing to achieve, because their lack of motivation could prevent them from it and their days in the sport may be numbered.

Children between 11 and 14 have better attention spans, increased aerobic capacity and their anaerobic capacity is generally more accepting of the training stress placed on them. They are also better at tolerating the negative effects during lactic acid accumulation

Physical immaturity of bones, tendons, muscles and change in body structure affect the methods of training in pre-puberty as well as pre-adolescent children. These changes in bones, muscles, organs and nervous system will change not only at the current stage but will vary at a different stage of

development. The following are stages of training: initial preparation, basic preparation, the specialization stages (initial and elite) and the stabilization phase. The breakout as follows:

- Initial or developmental – prepubescent
 - The goal of this stage is to stimulate healthy development and all round development. At this time movement skills are practiced. Development of speed, agility, coordination, and general aerobic endurance are the main training goals. The most important goal is developing coordination and introducing techniques of various exercises that can be used in a broad variety of sports and it includes those exercises specific to the sport being trained for. The sport specific exercises at this stage of training make up between 5-10% of training volume. Most of the training is generated with fun type activity. The number of training days is generally three days per week.
- Basic or directed – prepubescent and pubescent (middle – early high school)
 - The goals are general physical development achieved using general and directed exercises and learning techniques of many exercises relevant the sport being trained for. The sport specific exercises at this stage of training make up between 15-25% of training volume for cyclic sports like track and field. At this age volume of exercise increases more than the intensity. Increases in intensity should be carefully managed.
- Specialization (initial) – post pubescent (late high school –college)
- Specialization (elite) – Adulthood (post collegiate) not necessarily age specific
- Stabilization – Post competition (age varies depending on individual and sport)

DC Speed athletes at this point in time range from approximately 6 years old to 14 years old, with the majority of current athletes being between 11 years old or younger. We have a number of new coaches trying to gauge the strengths and weakness of these athletes. A number of observations have been made in respect to running events.

1. Most of our athletes have poor sprint and running form.
2. Most of our athletes have a weak core (center of all movement) essentially all training is core training. The core is a linkage to all parts of the body
3. Coordination, and mobility work is needed.
4. The athletes have to learn to run their race.
5. The athletes have work on starts.
6. The athletes have to learn to work the middle of the race.

The good news is that all of the above are weaknesses of the vast majority of teams. Some teams are stronger than others for at least two reasons:

1. About four teams maybe one or two other teams have indoor facilities they can work in.
2. Teams with heritage have older athletes that have come through their programs. By the time they are 9 years old they begin in some cases to show that legacy. By 11/12 you can see a big difference between teams that don't have the heritage and those that do. Even more differences are seen in teams with the heritage and good coaching and further still those teams with heritage, good coaching and an indoor facility to run in.

More good news is that, DC Speed will get there. Some things take years, some will happen before the end of the summer. Others changes will happen before the end of the indoor season. The youthful age of most of our athletes sets the team up for the legacy mentioned above.

Meets

Which meets are attended is discussed and determined by the coaches prior to the season. The determination takes into account a number of factors, including: How many meets, location of the meets, cost of the meet, importance of the meet, and how the meet contours or influences what we plan to do. How we handle the meet once it is on the schedule is subject to what is happening at the time. Meets are for the following purposes: set a new standard for the athlete (not possible most of the time), practice the technical model under stress, help improve the technical model, or as an extension to practice.

Meets for the coaches are at times a necessity and at other times viewed as inconvenient. A necessity comes into play when the meet augments training, helps with the learning process, or helps the athlete better themselves. Meets are inconvenient when they interfere with what a coach is trying to do.

Too many meets makes planning for season ending peaks more unpredictable, because the direction of training has to compensate for the stresses of a meet. Too many meets or events in meets by definition is too stressful and may cause injury, performance down turns or staleness, all of which is avoidable. Too few meets can also be a problem; but, if a choice could only be made between too many and too few the coach will choose the latter. Fortunately there is a medium.

Coaches Rationale for events assigned

Coaches will move athletes around at meets for the following reasons. In the early season: to determine what events that athlete is good at, to help the athlete determine what they might be good at, to strengthen the athlete for their core events; In the middle of the season: to help the athlete determine what they might be good at, to strengthen the athlete for their core events.

Our coaches take the philosophical approach that before the mid teens it is better for a young athlete to be involved across the spectrum of track and field events, especially if track and field is that athlete's lone sport. Running should range from sprints to mid distance, and they can also jump or throw. It is too early at this stage to say what event the athlete will be best suited to, so it is good idea to keep the options open. Specialization should not begin before the mid-teens, if that athlete has a specific area of interest. Also our coaches are aware that an athlete may choose to be a middle distances runner on the basis of less than satisfying results in the sprints or vice versa. For instance an athlete or parent might choose 800m on the basis of less than satisfying 1500m performances, but these performances might be due to insufficient aerobic development. Similarly, an athlete could decide on 1500m, because of less than satisfying 800m performances, which maybe due to insufficient speed development. Coaches are constantly evaluating such things.

Because of the nature of competitive youth sports we as coaches are at some point in a season or year, forced to help an athlete choose often between sprints or middle distance and as such we must determine what type of athlete we have or what event they are best suited for. Coaches sometimes recommend a specialty based on other sports that athlete participates in or wants to in the future participate in; or what the athlete is good at.

Whenever the athlete does make a choice in favor of an event, let's say a running event our as coaches will often enter them in events on either side of that event. He or she is a less than complete runner unless he or she becomes comfortable at events either side of his/her chosen event.

Developing a culture

DC Speed is a new club, as with all new organizations, a culture has to develop. For track and field this means several things:

- Athletes that have been with the program several years
- These athletes learn while in the program
- They develop motor skills
- They begin to understand the instructions given
- Some of them will begin to understand the whys behind the actions taken
- The parents will develop an understanding of the program
- Coaches that develop a process and help to maintain it through teaching coaches that follow. Any changes made during the years to follow will not be drastic helping in the long run the athletes the program is designed for.
- Parents that trust the coaches to do their job
- Parents that understand what it takes to achieve the goals of the organization
- Parents that help the organization grow
- A team that becomes known to the community

DC Speed

Child Code of Ethics & Behavior Agreement

I, _____, as a valued member for the DC Speed, and having been given the privilege by my parent(s)/guardian(s) to participate in the DC Speed Track & Field program, hereby pledge to the following:

I will provide positive support, care and encouragement for my teammates, coaches, and other participating in track & field.

I will demonstrate good sportsmanship by having a positive attitude toward all of my teammates, coaches, officials and other youth at every meets, practice, or other youth sports events and applaud good play by both teams.

I will respect my teammates, coaches and officials.

I demand a sports environment for myself and my teammates that is free from drugs, tobacco and alcohol and I will refrain from their use throughout the season.

I will treat my teammates, coaches, booster clubs members and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.

I will take responsible care of all equipment issued to me and will return such in good condition.

VIOLATIONS

If I violate the code of ethics & behavior, I risk being excluded from further participation in the program. The procedure is as follows:

Any child that violate the code of becomes a nuisance, including but not limited to being disrespectful to the coaches and starting fights with teammates will be asked to leave by the head coach or DC Speed Track & Field Booster Executive Member and can be suspended from all team activities, including practices.

If the child refuses to leave the field upon request, the DC Speed organization may suspend the child from further participation in team activities.

The Head Coach along with the DC Speed Track & Field Booster Executive Members will decide on the duration of the suspension or if the child will be dropped from the program.

Child's Signature

Date

DC Speed Parents Code of Ethics & Behavior Agreement

I, _____ parent of _____ hereby pledge to provide positive support, care and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports by following the Parents' Code of Ethics:

I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches and officials at every meet, practice, or other event and applaud good play by both teams.

I will place the emotional and physical well being for my child ahead of my personal desire to win. I will do my very best to make track & field fun for my child.

I will not criticize officials, direct abuse or profane language toward them, or otherwise subvert their authority, undermine, in work or deed, the authority of the coaches or booster club executive members. I will not intrude onto the field, stand on the sideline, or yell from the bleachers at the coaches and/or officials.

I will refrain for using drugs, tobacco, and alcohol at all DC Speed events.

I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, parents and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.

I will help my child enjoy the youth sports experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectful fan, providing encouragement, or providing transportation.

VIOLATIONS

Any DC Speed event, practice or competition, any adult who: 1) verbally abuses; 2) attempts to intimidate; 3) is flagrantly rude, or 4) cannot control their language or actions with a parent, coach, or booster club member will be asked to leave the event by the head coach or an booster club executive member. If adult fails to leave upon request, the Head Coach and the Booster Club President may suspend the child from further participation in team activities. That adult will receive a written warning regarding their behavior.

Any adult that commits a second similar offense will be suspended from all team activities, including practices. The coaches along with the booster club executive members will decide on the duration of the suspension or if child will be excluded from DC Speed for the remainder of the season. DC Speed will not refund registration money if the adult is found liable of the offense which resulted in child (ren) being excluded.

Any adult who physically assaults any coach, parent or DC Speed booster club member will be banned from all DC Speed events and their child will be removed from the program for one year from the date of the offense.

The term physical assault includes: but is not limited to: hitting, slapping, pushing, spitting, kicking, or striking in any way with any part of the body or any physical implement.

I acknowledge that any violation of these rules is subject to disciplinary action that would subject me and/or my child to verbal warning, reprimand, or a suspension that will be determined by the coaches and booster club executive members. My signature confirms that I understand and accept the above as conditions to my child's participation with DC Speed Track & Field program.

Parent Signature

Date