



***Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union***  
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***Iowa High School Athletic Association***  
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We know it's hard to believe that with the heavy snow, wind and cold temperatures that the 2024 Track and Field season is quickly approaching. As we prepare to start the season, we want to share some information with you as athletic administrators and coaches.

**START DATE** – Both offices have received several emails regarding when the season officially starts. Practice officially begins on Monday, February 19. The first competition date is Monday, March 4.

**ONLINE RULES MEETING** - The online track and field rules meeting will be available for viewing on Monday, February 19. The rules meeting will be available until March 22. Please remember that all head coaches are required to view the online rules meeting. Failure to do so will result in the head coach not being able to coach in the state qualifying and state meet.

**CONCUSSION EDUCATION REQUIREMENT** – All coaches, grades 7-12, are required to receive concussion education before the first day of practice. If any coaches were recently hired or will be hired and they have not viewed the concussion course, it is imperative that you get this taken care of prior to the first date of practice.

**RULE BOOKS** – The IHSAA and IGHSAU will not be sending rule books this spring. Schools were asked to keep these books through the 2024 cross country season. 2024 rule changes can be found here: <https://nfhs.org/sports-resource-content/track-and-field-rules-changes-2024/> and will be covered in the online rules meeting.

**CLASSIFICATIONS AND COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS POLICY** - Preliminary classifications are now posted on both the IHSAA and IGHSAU web site under their respective Track and Field pages. Please review your school's information to make sure it is correct. In track and field, member schools that are placed in different classes due to cooperative agreement decisions made by other member schools, shall remain in the same class. The member school will be placed in the lower of the two split classifications. Member schools placed in different classes, based on the member school's decision to have different cooperative programs for each gender or cooperative programs with different schools, for example sharing only one gender with another school, will remain in different classifications and be assigned to state qualifying events as classified. Member schools will not be allowed the choice to participate in a higher classification. No new cooperative program will be accepted, nor will any existing cooperative program be allowed to dissolve after 5:00 pm Friday, March 15.

**STATE QUALIFYING MEETS & STATE MEET** – The State Qualifying Meets are scheduled for Thursday, May 9. State Qualifying Meet sites will be posted once finalized. The State Meet is scheduled for Thursday-Saturday, May 16-18. The state meet schedule can be found here: <https://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/24StateTrackSchedule1.10.24.pdf> We do flip the schedule this year and Class 2A and Class 3A will compete in the morning and Class 1A and Class 4A will compete in the afternoon. The only change in the schedule this year is the 1500-meter run will precede the 1600-meter run now on Saturday. Please note that for relay events, athletes will only be able to use tape or other flat objects to mark their steps on the track for these two meets. For regular season meets, the local games committee can still allow tennis balls for athletes to use.

**BOUND** – We've been told the track and field portion of Bound is open for member schools. When entering your schedules, schools are only required to enter the meets they host; however, they will need to enter the other schools participating in the meet, so the meet will appear on the visiting teams' pages. For indoor and out of state meets, you can either create a separate host facility (Wartburg College) or enter a note in the event name of the meet's location.

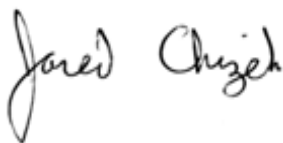
**COACH-ATHLETE CONTACT** – We've received several questions regarding coach-athlete contact prior to the season. Schools are allowed to have open facility time where students may come into the facility and workout, practice, etc. During this time, coaches may only supervise the students in the facility. These coaches cannot diagnose, prescribe, evaluate or direct student learning outside of the season. What exactly does that mean in terms of track and field? During the offseason, coaches should not be working directly with their athletes on the techniques of the sport. Field event drills, hurdle drills and start drills are just some of the examples of activities that coaches cannot be conducting during the off-season. When these open facility workouts occur, the coach can simply just supervise activities.

The coach-athlete contact rule is gender specific. If your school has two different sprint coaches where one works only with the boys program during the season and the other with the girls program during the season, that boys sprint coach can work with the girls in the offseason and the girls sprint coach with the boys. If there is any possibility of that girls coach helping the boys sprinters during the regular season, the girls coach should not be coaching members of the boys team in the offseason. However, your boys throws coach cannot work with your boys sprinters as they are affiliated with the same program.

Both organizations interpret the coach-athlete contact rule to allow coaches to work directly with their students on non-sport specific strength and conditioning programs throughout the school. Examples of conditioning drills that are allowed include speed ladders, cone drills and plyometrics.

**NON-SCHOOL INDOOR MEETS** – A number of coaches have reached out about students participating in non-school indoor meets before and during the early part of the season. Students still must abide by the Scholarship Rule in these events and cannot compete against collegiate athletes representing their college/university or professional athletes. Also, the Awards Rule that prohibits students from accepting a cash prize. After the February 19 start date, the student is supposed to have permission from his/her local district on whether or not the district allows non-school participation during the in-sport season. Please, do not hesitate to reach out if you have a question on one of these meets, and we can offer guidance on the situation.

There will be more information provided to you as we get closer to the start of the track and field season and as the season progresses. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns.



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