

Howells-Dodge Jaguars

Track & Field Team Handbook 2017

Being a participant on the Howells-Dodge Jaguars' Track and Field is a privilege and with this privilege comes certain responsibilities and the understanding that you accept these responsibilities.

Student first, Athlete Second –

You have made a commitment to your teammates and coaches that you can handle the responsibility of participating in athletics and maintaining grades.

We will miss school on a number of occasions. It is your responsibility to make up all your work before we go to the meets. Don't rely on teachers to get work to you, you ask them what you will miss. If you need to stay in school instead of going to a meet let coach VanLengen or Coach Polacek know so that you are not entered in the meet.

BE RESPECTFUL:

Treat every teammate, opposing team member, coach, fan, parent, and meet administrator, **with respect** at track meets, and here at H-D. At track meets, you will have a lot of time when you are not competing and not supervised. This is different from other sports where if you are not competing you are on the bench by the coach. You need to act as if one of the coaches is watching you all of the time. Also, if someone asks you to do something to help out at a meet, do it!

Your CHARACTER is who you are when nobody is watching.

As a representative of H-D Track and Field you need to show maturity and good judgment, not only on road trips, but in school and in the community also. I don't like it when a community member comes to me and says "I saw one of your track team members doing something bad." None of you like to be embarrassed in front of your friends or peers. Coaches don't like to be embarrassed either. If another coach tells me that the "Howells-Dodge kids" are doing something bad, it is embarrassing to me, and our team.

EXPECTATIONS:

Give 100% effort 100% of the time.

You are making a commitment by being a member of this team. You need to try your hardest and give your best effort at both practices and meets. You will not always get to do the events at a meet that you would like to do. It is very important that you give a maximum effort no matter what event you are doing.

We will run in adverse weather conditions this season in practice and at meets. Be mentally strong and use the bad weather to our advantage.

Each athlete has a job in practice and during meets. You will accept that responsibility and will accept, positively and with humility, any success or failure that comes with it. There will be no blame & **NO EXCUSES**.

Practice Rules

1. Practice will begin at 4:00 each day and we will all warm up and form run together.
2. You are expected to be at all practices unless prior arrangements have been made with one of the coaches or you were absent from school.
3. Anyone missing practice, unless cleared with a coach, will not be allowed to participate in the next track meet.
4. Shirts must be worn at practice at all times.

While Traveling:

1. If we are not already in school, arrive at least 10 minutes before the bus is scheduled to leave. **WE WILL NOT WAIT IF YOU ARE LATE.** If we are leaving from school, get your gear and get loaded up as quickly as possible.
2. Obey all normal bus rules. Act like mature high school athletes.
3. We will be respectful of opposing schools' facilities and we will clean up after ourselves. Our goal is always to leave our area looking better than when we arrived.
4. Bring money or food to all meets, we will be gone for several hours and you need to eat to compete. For meets on school days, the cooks will make a sack lunch for us. You are charged for sack lunches, so make sure you take only one sack.

5. Double check your equipment, it is a good idea to pack the night before so you are not rushed. Throwers bring a shot and discus, coaches will bring tape measures and batons for relays. They will be in the black bag, and you are responsible to get them to take to your race or event.
6. Everyone needs to ride the bus to and from the. Any exceptions need to be cleared with me, and your parents must sign the check out sheet.
7. When we return to Howells or Dodge, no athlete will leave until the bus is clean.

At Meets:

1. ***Know what events you are entered in and when they will be run.*** Field event competitors, know where you will compete. If you don't know where to go, ASK!! Most meets will run ahead of schedule if they can so watch what events are going on, not what time they are scheduled. All times on the event sheets that I give you are estimations after the initial starting time.
2. Stay at the meet site at all times.
3. Form a team camp so the coaches and other team members know where you are. While you are not competing, warming up, or ***cheering on teammates***, you should be there so we can find you. You should not be on the bus unless the weather is bad and coaches give you permission. You need to all help carry the tent and help set it up when we first arrive at the meet don't just make the Freshman do it, you all sit in it, that means you all need to help set it up. This is where you should be when not competing. The tent is new, so we need to take great care of it!
4. You should begin warming up 15-30 minutes before you are to compete. You should jog, and do our team form running drills to get ready. Pay attention to the meet so you can warm-up properly. Try to do the same things we do in practice to get ready to compete. Anything else that you like to do is fine with me, but don't "over do it" so you are tired when your event starts.
5. Watch the track and all runways before crossing, the quickest way to get disqualified from a meet (and look really bad) is to step in front of competitors.
6. When you are not competing or warming up, stay off your feet, keep warm on cold days, and cool on hot days. If you are scheduled to compete late in the day, stay out of the sun until you are finished. Always help out by **CHEERING ON YOUR TEAMMATES**.

Discipline Chart

OFFENSE	fIRST TIME	rEPEAT
Tardies (Detentions)	Run 1 Mile	Add 1 Mile each time
Unexcused Absences	Miss One Meet	Miss Next Meet
Other Conduct Problems	To be decided on an individual basis	Individual Basis, Major Infractions could lead to dismissal from team
Tobacco, Alcohol, or Drug Use	As outlined in student handbook	

** By being on this team, you agree to these rules & we as coaches expect you to honor that commitment. To be a successful athlete you need to be self-disciplined and committed to the team. If you can't be, you probably should not be on the team. We will not deal with discipline problems, if you can't act in an appropriate way, you will not attend meets.

Lettering

You can earn a varsity letter by scoring 10 points at varsity meets (relay points are divided four ways) or by placing at the District or Conference meet in an individual event. You can also earn a varsity letter if you PR 5 times in the same event throughout the season (PR is explained on the next page). For freshman or people entering new events, the first time an event is run at a varsity meet you will set your PR, and you need to improve on it 5 times after that.

Participation at Meets

We will do our best as coaches to get you in the events that you would like to run, but we have a large team. Everyone will be entered in at least 3 events per meet, (unless all events are full, or at the coach's discretion) that means there may be times you will be entered in an event that you may not want to run. This is part of Track & Field and this may be done to help the team score points. We also don't want people just sitting around at meets if we have openings in events. You will be expected to run all events that you are entered in. If you scratch out of an event because you don't want to run, you will miss the next meet.

Setting Records & Goals

Personal Records

In Track and Field we compete against other teams at every meet, but we are really competing against ourselves. Knowing what you have done in the past and striving to beat your best time or distance is the spirit of Track and Field.

The Letters P.R. to a track and field athlete stand for PERSONAL RECORD. A personal record is your best individual performance ever during a track meet. PR's also serve as goals, something to lock onto and focus all your energies towards. Goals are not limits, they are meant to be achieved. When you reach a goal, set a new one, the harder you push yourself, the higher the goals you can reach.

Another interesting thing about PR's is that they are everlasting. Former *track athletes* remember their very best performance. They could probably also tell you when and where they did it and who they competed against. If you don't believe this, ask a former *track athlete*. By knowing your PR and comparing it to others in your event, you can better prepare for the meets.

PR's are an integral part of Track & Field. They give you something to improve on and when you get a new PR, you are a winner and it doesn't matter how you placed!! You've done better than you ever have before, and you are ready to go back to work on another PR.

Season's Best

SB stands for seasons best. As you have established a personal record (PR) from previous years, it becomes important to keep track of your improvement during a given season. A PR usually follows a full season of training and is difficult to break early on in the next season. A lot of hard work in the off season could enable you to PR early, but a season's best gives you that intermediate step before achieving a new PR. Comparing what you ran in the 2nd meet last year to the 2nd meet this year also gives some perspective as to how much you have improved in the last year.

Goal Setting

Each athlete will be required to set goals for each meet. A sheet will be hung on the wall in the gym, and each person will put their goals for the meet on the page.

Knowing the Sport of Track & Field

The reason we concentrate on PR's and SB's is so that we know how we are progressing individually. It is also important to know how you stack up against the competition we run against. For example, if you are a girl's 800 M runner you need to know the difference between a 2:35 and a 2:55. If you normally run a 2:55, and you PR at 2:50, you should not be upset if you did not earn a medal, you should be happy that you PR'ed. Also, if you normally run a 2:35, you need to look at the other runners in your race and make a goal of what place you are shooting for. If it is a really tough meet, you may be trying to get a 5th or 6th and not be upset if you don't win. If it is a smaller meet or a weaker field you should look to push yourself and go for the win.

As stated earlier, we will give 100% effort 100% of the time. If you are running an event you don't want to run, you still need to "give it your all." If it were another sport, you wouldn't slack off if you weren't playing the position that you wanted to play. Track Meets can be a lot of fun, but there is a HUGE difference between having fun and "screwing around." Not competing your hardest, making fun of others, or disrespecting anyone or any competition will not be tolerated. Take pride in Howells-Dodge Athletics and respect the sport by representing our team and community in the best possible way. Support each other and cheer each other on no matter what place we are in.

Remember that there are 3 coaches and over 30 athletes. That means that you may not get that much individual attention. Nobody on this team is more important or less important than anyone else. If a coach is not able to help you individually, work on it on your own and learn as much as you can about your event from outside sources. Many of you have relatives or friends that have competed, if you can get help from the, do it. The Internet has numerous sites on every event, learn as much as you can about your event, watch YouTube, or just Google your event, you would be surprised what you can learn. One of the best places to learn is at a meet. Watch the top competitors and try to do the things that they are doing.

You can go to the school website to find our schedule, bus departure times, schedule of events, school records and other documents.

GOOD LUCK, LET'S HAVE A GREAT SEASON