

# SPL By Laws

Unless otherwise noted, the provisions hereinafter set forth apply to all track and field meets sponsored or sanctioned by the SPL.

## A. ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY.

1. Any boy or girl in regular attendance at a SPL member school, including home schooled students, is eligible to compete in SPL sponsored or sanctioned track & field meets, unless he or she is:
  - a. Disqualified for specific events or meets as a penalty for rules violations described elsewhere in SPL Bylaws; or
  - b. Declared ineligible by his/her own school's ruling--- e.g., academic or behavior suspension.

## B. TRACK MEETS.

1. SPL-sponsored Track Meets:
  - a. The following three SPL-funded and sponsored meets are administered under these "General Program" provisions AND by procedures developed by the Events Committee.
    - i. SPL Co-Ed Relay
    - ii. SPL Divisional Championship
    - iii. SPL Championship Meet
  - b. Co-Ed Relay(s) are traditionally scheduled to occur on Week 3 before Divisional (Week 4) and Championship (Week 5), as long as the Illinois Science Fair does not fall on Divisional Meet weekend. If the Science Fair is held on Divisional weekend, the Co-Ed and Divisional Meet dates will be switched (Co-Ed meet will be held on Week 4 and Divisional Meet on Week 3.)
2. SPL Non-Sponsored Track Meets:
  - a. Other track meets may be approved for inclusion in official SPL season schedule.
  - b. Expense of those meets generally is funded from outside sources; e.g., K of C, school athletic associations. The SPL will pay track rental fees for all SPL sanctioned and sponsored meets.
  - c. These SPL-sanctioned meets are expected to follow all provisions of SPL Bylaws "General Program," but have latitude in choice & sequence of events, individual & team awards and quantity of entries.

**C. ATHLETE COMPETITION.**

1. Competition is by INDIVIDUAL athletes, except in running “relays” (which involve competition by TEAMS consisting of four individuals).
2. Track and Field competition is conducted within the following groups:

| <b>Morning</b>   | <b>Afternoon</b> |
|------------------|------------------|
| a. Grade 5 boys  | Grade 7 boys     |
| b. Grade 6 boys  | Grade 8 boys     |
| c. Grade 5 girls | Grade 7 girls    |
| d. Grade 6 girls | Grade 8 girls    |

**D. INDIVIDUAL ATHLETE PARTICIPATION LIMITS.**

1. An athlete may compete in a higher grade-level event, but may not compete in a lower grade-level event.
2. An individual athlete is NOT allowed to compete in more than 4 events at any SPL sponsored or sanctioned track meet (track meet is the entire day/all groups). In Co-Ed Relays a maximum of 5 events is recommended. There is no event limitation for the 4 by 4 relay in the Finals Meet, which is non-scoring.
3. Participation during track events
  - a. All events are OPEN unless specified as closed. NO ONE may participate in the SAME INDIVIDUAL EVENT at two (2) different levels. An athlete may participate in DIFFERENT events at different levels. An individual athlete may participate in both the 400 Major and 400 Minor relays at the same level.
  - b. The SPL Divisional Finals Meet, Meet Administration document specifies the maximum number of entrants from any one team in a specific event. These limits are:

| Level       | Event                   | Maximum Entries/ Team | Sequence |
|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------|
| Jr. Varsity | Field: High Jump        | 2                     | 5,6      |
| Jr. Varsity | Field: Long Jump        | 4                     | 5,6      |
| Jr. Varsity | Field: Triple Jump      | 4                     | 6,5      |
| Jr. Varsity | Field: Javelin          | 4                     | 5,6      |
| Jr. Varsity | Field: Shot Put         | 4                     | 6,5      |
| Jr. Varsity | Track: 75m Dash Prelim  | 2                     | 5,6      |
| Jr. Varsity | Track: 600m Run         | 2                     | 5,6      |
| Jr. Varsity | Track: 100m Dash Prelim | 2                     | 5,6      |
| Jr. Varsity | Track: 400m Dash        | 2                     | 5,6      |
| Jr. Varsity | Track: 200m Dash        | 2                     | 5,6      |
| Jr. Varsity | Track: 800m Run         | 4                     | 5,6      |

|             |                           |               |     |
|-------------|---------------------------|---------------|-----|
| Jr. Varsity | Track: 800m Relay         | 1 team/school | 5,6 |
| Jr. Varsity | Track: 800m Medley Relay  | 1 team/school | 5,6 |
| Jr. Varsity | Track: 400m Relay - Major | 1 team/school | 5,6 |
| Jr. Varsity | Track: 400m Relay - Minor | 1 team/school | 5,6 |

| Level   | Event                     | Maximum Entries /Team | Sequence |
|---------|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------|
| Varsity | Field: High Jump          | 2                     | 7,8      |
| Varsity | Field: Long Jump          | 4                     | 7,8      |
| Varsity | Field: Triple Jump        | 4                     | 8,7      |
| Varsity | Field: Discus             | 4                     | 7,8      |
| Varsity | Field: Shot Put (8 lbs)   | 4                     | 8,7      |
|         |                           |                       |          |
| Varsity | Track: 75m Hurdles Prelim | 2                     | 7,8      |
| Varsity | Track: 200m Prelim        | 2                     | 7,8      |
| Varsity | Track: 75m Dash Prelim    | 2                     | 7,8      |
| Varsity | Track: 800m Run           | 2                     | 7,8      |
| Varsity | Track: 100m Dash Prelim   | 2                     | 7,8      |
| Varsity | Track: 400m Dash          | 2                     | 7,8      |
| Varsity | Track: 1600m Run          | Unlimited             | 7,8*     |
| Varsity | Track: 800m Relay         | 1 team/school         | 7,8      |
| Varsity | Track: 400m Relay – Major | 1 team/school         | 7,8      |
| Varsity | Track: 400m Relay – Minor | 1 team/school         | 7,8      |

\* Meet officials may combine the 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade races if safety concerns are not impacted.

4. PENALTIES and DISQUALIFICATION for exceeding limits or illegal participation

- a) If an athlete exceeds the 4-event participation limit referenced in 3.a above, all finish- places, award ribbons and team points earned by that individual(s) will be forfeited. If the individual participated in a relay event, the finish place, award ribbons and team points earned by the relay team shall be forfeited. If the violation occurs during the qualifying meet, he or she will be denied participation in the championship meet.
- b) If an athlete or athletes exceed the maximum entries for a specific event referenced in 3.b above, all finish places, award ribbons and team points earned by the individual or individuals will be forfeited. If the violation occurs during the qualifying meet, he, she or they will be denied participation in the championship meet for that specific event. Disqualification for exceeding the maximum number of entrants for a specific event will NOT disqualify the individual or individuals from competing in other events for which they have qualified, to include relay teams.

5. Note: Any athlete running illegally in a relay at the qualifying meet automatically disqualifies his team for the relay. While the offending athlete may not participate in the championship meet, including all open events, the remaining relay team members may participate in all other events in which they have qualified, as a substitution in relays or in the extra races. The remaining team members may also be a substitute for an ill or injured qualifier.

## E. MEET EVENT AND ATHLETES' CONFLICT RULES.

1. Event rules and meet administration will conform to standards published in Track and Field Rule Book as published by the National Federation of State High School Associations, except where specified differently within these By-Laws. The Equipment Subcommittee will purchase 3 new NHSF Track and Field Rule books every year and place in the equipment boxes.
2. NO starting blocks or assistance of any kind shall be permitted at the starting line.
3. FALSE-START disqualifications occur upon the SECOND false start attributed to a particular runner.
4. ACCELERATION ZONES will not be allowed for relays; "out-going" runners must start within exchange zones, i.e., with back foot positioned within exchange zone.
5. Field event participants may not be changed or added after first competitor begins event "official" tries.
6. Field event tries by an athlete competing in two or more events being run at the same general time can be worked in any time during that event's competition, provided this request is made of event official when reporting-to/ signing -up for the event. A conflict occurs when an athlete is competing in two field events within the track meet. Religious related activities are an acceptable conflict. A conflict does not occur as a result of an athlete's participation in any event outside of the actual track meet.
  - a. Competitor does not have to personally sign-in for event: a coach or teammate may arrange the sign-in.
  - b. Once the high jump bar is raised in competition, it may not be lowered for missing or late jumpers.
  - c. **No athlete is allowed to compete in an event after all other competition is finished, unless he or she is physically present when last competitor finishes.**
  - d. Athletes for running events will be allowed to compete in the event if they are present at the starting line when the starter or assistant starter has confirmed lane assignments and is explaining the race.
  - e. Coaches may stand in for instructions at the starting line for athletes competing in back-to-back running events.
7. No event will be re-run.

8. The Meet Director is directed to ensure that Running Events do not begin until involved tracksters have completed their Field Events; and, vice-versa. The Head Coach of each team at the track meet must approve exceptions. Competition for High Jump will start immediately after hurdles are completed (practice jumps occur prior to hurdles).
9. Allow traffic to travel across the track at all times through all gates except during races. Keep the gates closed until the last runner has passed.
10. For individual races of 800 meters or more, two (2) grade levels will be combined if the total number of runners is 12 or less.
11. A runner will be disqualified if running outside his or her assigned lane for 2 or more steps while gaining an advantage or impeding another runner.
12. All HEAD coaches and SPL and Meet officials must be allowed access to ALL areas of the track and field event facilities at ALL times during the entire day, excepting the staging area. Coaches are not allowed in the staging area. Coaches may go anywhere except the staging area provided they do not interfere with the orderly operation of the meet.

#### **F. EVENT DISQUALIFICATIONS.**

1. Event "DQ" is initially called by witnessing meet official; e.g., Lane Judge, Relay Judge, Starter, Asst. Starter, Head Finish Line Judge, Head Field Event Judge.
2. Before the "DQ" is officially administered, the ruling official immediately proceeds to fully explain reasons for "DQ" to offending team's coach. The coach has a right to appeal the ruling to the "Games Committee" which will ratify or deny the "DQ". Intent is to ensure consistent, fair and reasonable "DQ" decisions.
3. "False Start" disqualifications are final decisions, when called by the starter and/or asst. starter.

## **G. SPORTSMANSHIP, BEHAVIOR AND MEET DISQUALIFICATIONS.**

1. Athletes and coaches are expected to compete fairly, to display good sportsmanship and to respectfully cooperate with meet officials.
2. "Games Committee" has the authority to disqualify athletes, coaches, or spectators from further participation at meet, when the offending action and/or language discredits SPL standards; e.g., - Profanity, criticism or disrespect to opponent or official, willful failure to follow important directions of meet official, etc.
3. Coaches best serve interest of SPL and athletes by being a positive role model of good sportsmanship.
  - a. Coaches should avoid displays of anger, and should not visibly or audibly protest decisions.
  - b. Coaches should not risk injury or health of a physically unfit athlete.

## **H. UNIFORMS AND AUTHORIZED EQUIPMENT.**

1. Shoes – No rubber, plastic or metal spikes, nibs and/ or cleats are allowed, to include shoes with spikes/cleats removed.  
A prohibited shoe is:
  - (a) one designed with spikes / cleats intended to penetrate the surface of the track or field event surface; and
  - (b) contains rubber or plastic nibs commonly referred to as "spikeless" shoes.

Permissible shoes are commonly referred to as "traditional" running shoes or flats, to include "racing flats".

All disputes regarding a permissible shoe are to be decided initially by the Meet Director, with concurrence by the Games Committee.

The intent of the Rule is:

- (a) to prevent an athlete from obtaining an undue advantage in competition; and
- (b) to avoid potential injury to which athletes of the age group that compete in SPL sanctioned and sponsored track & field meets are susceptible.

2. Teams Uniform - All runners must wear a team shirt or jersey that identifies their school. All team members should wear the same uniform. In cold weather, sweats can be worn but the shirt must be worn on the outside for easy identification. The games committee will rule on uniform variations, when necessary.
3. SHOTPUT and DISCUS equipment are specifically described in Event Procedures, provided annually by the Events Committee.

## I. MEET EVENT ADMINISTRATION.

1. Procedures for administering and judging events will be IDENTICAL for all SPL sponsored or sanctioned meets, as outlined by the Events Committee.
  - a. "Event Procedures" - provided by the Events Committee
  - b. Hurdles
    - Distance = 75 meters
    - Height = 30 inches
    - From 75-Meter start line to first hurdle = 13.5 meters.
    - 6 Hurdles in total.
    - Between hurdles = 8.5 meters.
    - **Note:** High School Girls markings should be used, which are 8.5 meters between hurdles. The markings are normally color coded yellow on a black track - first yellow dashes in the lanes in the direction of the race.
    - Last hurdle to finish line = 19.0 meters.
    - A 10-minute wait period shall be observed after the completion of the last semifinal to the start of the first final race.
2. Allowable variations among different Track Meets. The following matters may be varied for any meet except for the Qualifying meet, Championship meet, and Co-Ed Relays.
  - a. Which events, and sequence, to be competed.
  - b. Quantity of allowed entries per event.
  - c. Scoring (finish places, individual and team awards).
3. Insurance

It shall be the responsibility of member schools to ascertain that each student from their school is covered by appropriate accident insurance to insure, that in event of an accident, each student has access to appropriate medical facilities. Presently, school-time insurance covers students participating in track and field. SPL will not separately insure students, as this would increase cost of staging track events.
4. Severe Weather Policy & Meet Cancellation

When thunder is heard, or a cloud-to-ground lightning bolt is seen, the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Take shelter immediately.

Lightning is one of the most consistent and underrated causes of weather-related deaths or injury in the United States. Nearly all lightning-related injuries occur between the months of May and September and between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Therefore, the greatest concern for injuries in an outdoor contest appears to be during that time, though it can happen any time of year.

It is essential that host schools, competing schools, and contest officials establish dialogue in advance of the contest or event to ensure that all involved are aware of what the plan will be in determining whether or when to suspend play. Host schools are encouraged to share their plan with competing schools and officials prior to the start of the tournament.

### **Advance Planning**

Local Managers should have a documented plan in place, designated people who are responsible for monitoring the weather and a qualified person (typically a trained manager and/or officials) to make the decision to suspend play. In state series competitions, the host school administrator or official(s), if assigned, can make the decision to suspend play.

### **Monitoring Weather**

Local Managers during the contest should be aware of any potential thunderstorms that may form during the competition; if an evacuation is needed, managers should also know how long it would take teams to get to their safest location. Monitoring the weather with a weather alert radio, or with lightning detection systems, or any other available means, is recommended.

If competing schools have portable devices they will be bringing to a contest and have specific policy or directions from their administration that they must follow, the school must communicate those policies with the host school. Host schools must know the policies of each school assigned to their tournament prior to its start.

### **Lightning Awareness**

Generally speaking, it is felt that anytime a cloud-to-ground strike of lightning can be seen, or thunder heard, risk is already present. It is time to seek shelter.

### **Criteria for Suspending Play**

If the local management does not have commercial weather warning equipment at the site or an efficient method of making an accurate, timely decision on location, listening for thunder is the best way to mitigate the danger. If thunder is heard, or lightning is seen hitting the ground, the thunderstorm is close enough to strike in your location. According to the National Weather Service, lightning can strike 10 miles away from the parent thunderstorm. When thunder roars, go indoors! It is important that local manager monitor not only how far away the lightning is but also how fast it is approaching. Thunderstorms can form and move quickly and danger can arrive quickly.

Either host school administration or assigned contest officials have the authority to suspend or cancel interscholastic contests. It is recommended that those groups work together in making such determination and use any and all available information in doing so. Participating schools with concerns at particular events should direct those to the host school management or assigned contest official.

The following guidelines should be followed in determining when to suspend an event:

Anytime a cloud-to-ground strike of lightning can be seen, or thunder heard, risk is present, and a contest should be suspended. At that point, the **30-minute rule** for resumption should go into effect.

**Note:** Due to the layout of some outdoor facilities, contest officials or tournament managers may not be able to see lightning actually "strike the ground." However, whenever lightning is seen moving out of clouds towards the ground, it can be assumed that the lightning is striking the ground somewhere, and as a result, the contest should be suspended.

If lightning or thunder is not present but the weather is starting to become ominous, tournament management and/or contest officials should use all available information to determine if and when a contest should be suspended.. Care for both participants and spectators should be taken into account at this point. If in doubt, contest officials or tournament managers are encouraged to exercise caution and suspend play. Tournament officials should be ready to implement their emergency plans.



However, competing schools who pull their teams or athletes off the field of competition prior to a contest or event suspension do so at the risk of forfeiture or disqualification from the game or event.

Suspended contest or events should be resumed at a time when the weather and/or field conditions allow for resumption.

### **Evacuation Plan**

**Safe Areas:** All personnel, athletes and spectators should be clearly informed of available safe structures or shelters in the event a thunderstorm approaches. A safe structure is any fully enclosed building frequently used by people. In absence of that - athletes and spectators should go to any vehicle with a hard metal roof. Roll up the windows and do not touch the sides of the vehicle. If no safe structure or vehicle is available, find a thick grove of small trees surrounded by taller trees or a dry ditch. Assume a crouched position on the ground with only the balls of your feet touching the ground. Wrap your arms around your knees and lower your head. Minimize contact to the ground since lightning often travels through the ground.

**Avoid:** Tall trees or objects like light poles or flagpoles, individual trees, standing pools of water and open fields. Also avoid being the highest object on the field. Do not take shelter under trees. Avoid bathrooms if another building is available, and do not use a land-line telephone. A cellular phone or portable phone is a safe alternative if in a secure shelter or vehicle.

### **Resuming Activity**

The NSSL (National Severe Storms Laboratory) recommends that everyone should wait at least 30 minutes after the last flash of lightning or sound of thunder before returning to the field or activity.

### **Meet Suspension / Cancellation**

a. Meets cannot be declared "cancelled" before 8:00 a.m. on the day of the meet. In cancelling a meet, the health and well being of the athletes, coaches and spectators will be taken into consideration, as well as, the likelihood of the severe weather conditions continuing.

b. A majority vote of head coaches will determine whether a meet should be canceled or suspended or specific events that are directly affected by the weather make them unsafe for the competitor.

c. If a meet (or specific events / session) are suspended the meet will continue the next day. If a qualifying or the championship meet cannot continue the next day because of adverse weather conditions, the meet will be run on the next two days without adverse weather conditions, with the junior varsity events being held on the first day and the varsity events on the second day.

The Scheduling Committee will find available dates and times for weekdays prior to the scheduled meet and preferably prior to the season. Upon unanimous agreement of the schools participating in a qualifying meet, other arrangements can be made, providing the qualifying meet is completed on or before the Thursday before the championship meet.

5. Records. League records may be made in all events at the qualifying meet and the championship meet provided the event is an officially timed event. All League records will be recorded to the tenth of a second.
6. Dogs and Pets. Dogs and Pets are prohibited at all league meets.

7.

Each school shall send a roster of its school's athletes to the Schedule Chairman on or before April 15 of each year in an electronic spreadsheet (MS Excel or its equivalent) format specified by the Schedule Committee. Rosters received after this date will result in a \$50.00 surcharge on next year's dues.

8.

In order to facilitate scheduling of the Qualifying Meet, each participating school shall inform the Staging Coordinator of the meet on or before the Thursday before the Qualifying Meet of any relay event in which it will NOT enter a team. Any changes shall be reported before 8:00 am on the day of the meet, or 12:00 noon in the case of the Varsity meet.

9. Universal School Abbreviations:

|                              |       |
|------------------------------|-------|
| All Saints Catholic Academy  | ASCA  |
| St. Cletus                   | CLET  |
| Immaculate Conception        | IC    |
| St. Irene                    | IRENE |
| St. James                    | JAMES |
| St. Joan of Arc              | ARC   |
| St. John of the Cross        | SJC   |
| St. Joseph                   | JOES  |
| St. Luke                     | SL    |
| St. Mary of Gostyn           | SMG   |
| St. Michael                  | MIKES |
| Holy Trinity, Notre Dame     | HT/ND |
| Our Lady of Peace            | OLP   |
| St. Petronille               | PETS  |
| St. Pius                     | PIUS  |
| Ss. Peter and Paul           | SSPP  |
| St. Raphael                  | RAPH  |
| Sacred Heart                 | SH    |
| St. Scholastica, St. Dominic | SS/SD |
| Visitation                   | VIS   |
| St. Isaac Jogues             | ISAAC |
| St. Francis Xavier           | SFX   |

**J. Concussion Education Requirements for Member Schools**

The League fully support full compliance with SB-07 (Public Act 99-245), the Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act requiring all youth sport coaches in the State of Illinois to complete a 2-hour concussion education program and receive a passing score on the exam of 80%. This course must be taken every 2 years, beginning in 2016. The League acknowledges that the initial training, successful test completion and certification of all SPL coaches is to be completed two weeks prior to the start of the season.

The League further acknowledges that the selection of education program and testing methodology is in compliance with the Act. Compliance of the Act is the sole responsibility of each member school.

## Change Brief

- 2018-03-05 Updated School Abbreviations (new section I.9) to St. Luke and St. Mary of Gostyn (new to SPL).  
Changed in Section 2 – SPL “Non-sanctioned” to “Non-Sponsored.”  
Added in Section 2.b “The SPL will pay track rental fees for all SPL sanctioned and sponsored meets.”  
Updated Section I.4 to reflect IHSA Lightning Policy.  
Lightning Policy noted originally Section 9 was deleted as it was duplicate of new Section I.4.
- 2017-05-12 Added Section J – Concussion Education Requirements.
- 2017-05-01 Revised Section D.3 and D.4 to further clarify event participation, disqualification, and penalties.
- 2016-03-01 1 – Updated Article I.1.b for hurdle distancing as commonly used on tracks.  
Also added the 10-minute wait period between semifinals and finals.  
2 – Update Article I.10 and replaced St. Alexander (ALEX) with Holy Ghost School (HG).
- 2015-04-08 Bylaw E.1 – included meet administration. Also included the purchase of 3 NFHS Track and Field rulebooks for equipment boxes each year.
- 2014-02-12 Rule H.1 - Re-worded and added spikeless shoes as a prohibited shoe.
- 2013-04-11 Rule H.2 - Adopted language to be identical to the cross country uniform rule.  
Rule I-10 - Added All Saints Academy and changed Sacred Heart abbreviation to SH from SH/CKS
- 2012-06-13 Struck B.2.d where host schools in the first two non-sanctioned meets were reimbursed \$350.00.
- 2009-02-11 Added “including all open events” to Rule D Article 5 (Individual Athlete Participant Limits)
- 2007-02-11 Added Last Line to I.5  
Changed I.7 from May 1 to April 15.