Comox Valley Cougars Track & Field Club Handbook

Updated 2025-10-28

Welcome to the Comox Valley Cougars Track & Field Club!

We are a 100% volunteer run organization, which serves athletes from developmental through elite by providing coaching, facility & equipment, and competition opportunities year-round.

We are proud to be part of Athletics Canada and BC Athletics, and to participate in the Vancouver Island Athletics Association, a group of island clubs working together to make track & field happen on the island.

The mission of our club is to help all interested kids & adults develop an understanding of the skills and techniques of track & field so as to enable them to enjoy a lifetime involvement with the sport.
We are also motivated to train and work with athletes who display exceptional talents to reach and extend their competitive goals. Above all, we wish to promote the notion of friendly competition.

The club has assisted hundreds of athletes over the years in achieving provincial, national, & international competition levels. Many athletes have obtained educational scholarships at Canadian and US universities & colleges as a result of the training the Cougars provide.

This handbook includes information for athletes, parents, club coaches, officials and sport leaders. Please read through it and reach out to the club if you have any questions. registercvcougars@gmail.com

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Club Programs & Membership

All athletes registered with the Comox Valley Cougars Track & Field Club must hold a current fully issued membership with BC Athletics.
BC Athletics membership fees can be found on the BC Athletics website, www.bcathletics.org
BCA fees must be paid in full at time of registration, which can be done as part of the club registration.

Club programs,including season dates, training and competition opportunities, and associated fees, for athletes will be confirmed at our annual general meeting and noted in our Annual Program Guide.

The Annual Program Guide will be posted to our club's website, www.comoxcougars.org, following the annual general meeting
The Annual Program Guide will be available for download in PDF format from our website, www.comoxcougars.org.

All club fees must be paid in full at time of registration.

Registration for club programs, including purchasing the applicable BC Athletics membership, will be done through our club's online portal.
Links to our registration portal will be listed in our Annual Program Guide, and also posted to our club's website, www.comoxcougars.org, and our Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/comoxvalleycougars.
No paper registrations will be accepted, all members must complete their registration online.

Practices & Communication

TeamSnap will be used to communicate all practice information. The athlete email address used when registering online will be used for TeamSnap communication. An invite will be sent to that email address after you have completed your registration.

Prior to completing your registration it is highly recommended to review the members attached to your account and verify the contact information is up to date, including the email address and phone number.

For families with multiple athletes registered with the club, it is highly recommended that each athlete have their own unique email address. This will ensure each athlete will receive TeamSnap notifications, and can set their individual availability.
If multiple athletes use the same email address, that email address will receive multiple notifications for the same event, one per athlete. Each athlete will **not** be able to set their own unique availability for each event, as it is based on the email address used to create the account. (e.g. if Joe and Sarah both use parentname@email.com, for their TeamSnap email address, when that email address is used to login to TeamSnap to set the athlete's availability, that availability will be set for both Joe and Sarah, it cannot be set individually for each athlete).

If an athlete has their own email address, and the parent/guardian would also like to be added to TeamSnap, the parent/guardian must email the club registrar, registercvcougars@gmail.com, requesting to be added to TeamSnap as a non-player.

Practices & Communication Cont.

Track & field is an outdoor sport and the club trains rain or shine, except in absolutely terrible weather.
We will do our best to notify members of practice-cancellations as quickly as possible.
Cancellations will be updated via TeamSnap. There are no refunds or credits for cancelled practices.
General practices typically run for one and half hours (90 minutes).

These 90-minute sessions are divided into the following sections:

- Warm-up
- General conditioning set
- Technical 1
- Technical 2
- Cool-down

Event specific training sessions for athletes 14+ may differ slightly from the general practices noted above as coaches may be working with athletes on specific skills or aspects for that particular event.

Specific training days will be confirmed in late winter/early spring and are based on the availability of our volunteer coaches.
The events offered at each session will differ depending on coach availability and weather.

Limited fall and winter training is available for members 14+. Please reach out to the coach linked with your event(s) of interest to find out more about fall and winter training.

Competitions

There are many different competition opportunities available for members of the Comox Valley Cougars Track & Field club.

The VIAA Island Series is a total of six (6) meets, all of which are hosted on Vancouver island between April - June. The Island Series meets are open to all athletes ages 9+. These meets are a lot of fun and a great way to introduce yourself to competition without the nerves of a championship meet.

- Ice Breaker - Comox Valley (April) ***Home Meet***
- Bob Dailey - Port Alberni (April)
- Dogwood - Victoria (May)
- Elwood Wylie - Nanaimo (May)
- Garriock - Duncan (June)
- Solstice/Island JD championships - Comox Valley (June) ***Home Meet***

Meet information, including technical packages, schedules, links to register, entry fees, and registration deadlines can be found on the BC Athletics website under calendar/results, www.bcathletics.org.
It is the responsibility of the athlete to ensure they are aware of registration deadlines. Late and same-day registrations are **not** accepted at any of the Island Series meets. Meet entry fees must be paid online and in full at time of registration. Meet entry fees for our home meets will be included in our Annual Program Guide. Meet entry fees for the away Island Series meets will be available in the technical package for that meet.

Competitions Cont.

In addition to the VIAA Island Series meets, there are also regional, provincial and national championships available to club athletes.

The regional, provincial and national championships are offered to athletes based on the athletes age during that competition season. Select championships have entry standards which athletes must achieve to be able to compete at that meet, while other championships are open to all athletes in specific age groups. Selected regional, provincial and national championships may also be open to athletes that have been selected for a regional or provincial team. Selected meets may be open only to athletes selected to a regional or provincial team.

Regional, provincial and national championship information can be found on the BC Athletics website, www.bcathletics.org, and also on the Athletics Canada website, www.athletics.ca.

Continuing reading to find more information on the regional, provincial and national championships available.

Competitions Cont.

Regional, Provincial and National Championships

- **BC Athletics Junior Development Pentathlon Championships (U10, U12, U14)**
  This meet is open to all junior development athletes in the U10, U12, and U14 age categories (also known as JD9, JD10, JD11, JD12 and JD13 age groups).
  This meet is a multi-event championship, offering junior development athletes the opportunity to compete in the pentathlon multi-event. A series of five (5) events over the course of a single day, where athletes earn points for their performance in each event and compete for the highest number of total points over all five events.
  There are no entry standards to participate in this meet, however all athletes must pre-register online by the posted deadline to be able to participate in this meet.

- **BC Athletics Junior Development Track & Field Championships (U10, U12,U14)**
  This meet is open to all junior development athletes in the U10, U12, and U14 age categories (also known as JD9, JD10, JD11, JD12 and JD13 age groups).
  This meet offers all standard track & field events available to athletes in the junior development age groups.
  There are no meet entry standards to attend this meet, however all athletes must pre-register online by the posted deadline to be able to participate in this meet.

Competitions Cont.

- **BC Athletics Outdoor Track & Field Championships (U16, U18, U20, Senior)**
  This meet is open to all athletes in the U16, U18, U20 and Senior age groups (athletes 14+).
  This meet offers all standard track & field events available to athletes in the U16, U18, U20, and Senior age groups.
  There are no meet entry standards to attend this meet, however all athletes must pre-register online by the posted deadline to be able to participate in this meet.
  This meet is often the qualification meet for other regional, provincial and national championships. Athletes must show competition readiness and/or reach a specified event standard to qualify to compete in other regional, provincial or national championships.
  This meet is also often the qualification meet for selection to regional/zone or provincial teams. Athletes must meet an event standard and other selection criteria to be selected to the applicable regional/zone or provincial team.
  More information on the team selection and applicable criteria will be posted to the BC Athletics website, www.bcathletics.org.

Competitions Cont.

- **BC Summer Games - Track & Field (U16)**
  This meet is offered every two (2) years, and is open to select athletes in the U16 age group only.
  Athletes wanting to participate in the BC Summer Games must attend the qualification meet for their respective zone and meet the applicable selection criteria.
  The qualification meet and applicable selection criteria will be posted to the BC Athletics website, www.bcathletics.org.
  Athletes that are not selected to a zone team are **not** permitted to compete in this meet.

- **Western Team Challenge (U24)**
  This meet is open to athletes in the U24 age category. This age category includes athletes in the U18, U20 and U23 age groups, as well as athletes that are 23 in the competition year.
  Athletes must be selected to the U24 Western Team Challenge BC Team to compete at this meet.
  Selection criteria for the BC Team will be posted to the BC Athletics website, www.bcathletics.org.
  Athletes that are not selected to the BC Team are **not** permitted to compete in this meet.

Competitions Cont.

- **BC Athletics Masters Outdoor Track & Field Championships (Masters)**
  This meet is open to athletes in the Masters age category (35+ years as of the first day of competition)
  Athletes must hold either a Masters or Senior/Masters membership with BC Athletics to attend this meet. Athletes that hold a Senior/Masters membership must register in the meet as a Master.
  There are no meet entry standards to attend this meet, however all athletes must pre-register online by the posted deadline to be able to participate in this meet.

- **Canadian Track & Field Championships (U20, Senior, Para)**
  This meet is open to athletes in the U20 and Senior age groups, as well as Para athletes.
  Athletes may attend this meet as part of Team BC, providing they have met all applicable selection criteria, as outlined by BC Athletics, including, but not limited to, achieving the posted event standard.
  Please note, meeting the selection criteria does not guarantee a spot on Team BC. A preliminary roster will be posted after the qualification meet, and then after a period of time set by BC Athletics to allow protests, a final roster will be posted.
  Athletes may also attend this meet as part of the Cougars club, not part of a provincial team.
  Please note, this meet may require athletes to achieve a meet entry standard. More information about this will be posted on the Athletics Canada website, www.athletics.ca, as well as posted in the technical package for the meet.

Competitions Cont.

- **Canadian Legion Youth Track & Field Championships (U16, U18)**
  This meet is open to athletes in the U16 and U18 age groups.
  Athletes may attend this meet as part of the 15 year old or U18 BC Team, provided they have met all applicable selection criteria, as outlined by BC Athletics, including but not limited to, achieving the posted team standard for their event(s).
  Please note, meeting the selection criteria does not guarantee a spot on Team BC. A preliminary roster will be posted after the qualification meet, and then after a period of time set by BC Athletics to allow protests, a final roster will be posted.
  Please note, 14 year old athletes in the U16 age group are not eligible to try out for Team BC.
  Athletes may also attend this meet as part of the Cougars, including 14 year old U16 athletes, providing they have achieved the meet entry standard for this meet. More information on the event standards will be available in the technical manual for this event, posted to the Legion website, and also on the BC Athletics website, www.bcathletics.ca.

Competitions Cont.

- **Canada Summer Games - Athletics (U24)**
  This meet is open is offered every four (4) years, and is open to athletes in the U24 age group (ages 16-23)
  Athletes may attend this meet as part of Team BC, provided they have met all applicable selection criteria, as outlined by BC Athletics, including, but not limited to, achieving the posted team standard for their event(s).
  Please note, meeting the selection criteria does not guarantee a spot on Team BC. A preliminary roster will be posted after the qualification meet, and then after a period of time set by BC Athletics to allow protests, a final roster will be posted.
  Athletes that are not selected to the BC Team are **not** permitted to compete in this meet.

It is highly recommended that athletes discuss the possibility of attending championship meets with their coach(es). Our coaches will be able to work with the athlete to determine which championships they should be focusing on and the work needed to achieve the athlete's goals at those meets.

Attending a Competition

Here is everything you need to know about attending a competition.

- **<u>Meet Registration</u>**

    - **Create a Trackie account**, www.trackie.com, at the beginning of the season to streamline the registration process later.

    - **Confirm the meet registration deadline**
        - The deadline may be posted on:
            - The BC Athletics calendar / results page, www.bcathletics.org.
            - The meet registration page, typically via Trackie, www.trackie.com > find an event (search by event name, or filter by date and location)
        - Late or same day registrations will **<u>not</u>** be accepted at any meet so make sure to complete your registration before the deadline
          It is not the responsibility of the host club to make exceptions for late registrations. It is best to register early to avoid technical issues with last minute registrations, which may result in missed deadlines and the athlete not being able to participate in that meet.

Attending a Competition Cont.

- **Review the meet information / technical package**, which may be available on:
  - The BC Athletics calendar / results page, www.bcathletics.org.
  - The meet registration page, typically via Trackie, www.trackie.com > find an event (search by event name, or filter by date and location)
  - The host club's website, usually posted to the BC Athletics calendar / results page
  - ***Please note, the meet information / technical package is a very important document that must be carefully reviewed for each meet. This document will include the meet dates, location, host club, event contacts, rules and guidelines for the event (e.g. call room and event check-in times, equipment usage, scratch rules etc.). It is the responsibility of the athlete to ensure they familiarize themselves with this document.***

- **Review the meet schedule**, which may be available on:
  - The BC Athletics calendar / results page, www.bcathletics.org.
  - The meet registration page, typically via Trackie, www.trackie.com > find an event (search by event name, or filter by date and location)
  - The host club's website, usually posted to the BC Athletics calendar / results page
  - ***Please note, the schedule is always tentative until after registration has closed and a final schedule has been posted. It is the responsibility of the athlete to ensure they have confirmed their event start times after the final schedule is posted***.

Attending a Competition Cont.

- **Sign-up for your volunteer spots**
  - A volunteer sign-up will be sent out prior to the meet
    - This may be communicated via email, or via a link posted to the Trackie registration page, BC Athletics calendar / results page, the host club's website, or the Comox Valley Cougars club website
  - Volunteer hours are mandatory at all VIAA Island Series meets. Four (4) hours per family at each of the home meets and two (2) hours at each of the away meets the athlete attends
  - Sign-up early to get the spots that work best for you.

- **<u>What to bring to the competition</u>**
  - Running shoes
  - Spike/Competition shoes
  - Competition clothes (e.g. competition singlet, compression shorts, athletic tape etc.)
  - Sunglasses
  - Hat
  - Water
  - Healthy lunch/snacks
  - Warm-up clothes
  - Change of clothes
  - Waterproof layers
    - Yes, we do get all four (4) seasons in one day at some of these meets
  - Blanket

Attending a Competition Cont.

- **<u>Arriving at the venue</u>**

    - **Plan to arrive at the venue no later than 90 minutes** (1.5 hours) prior to your first event start time
      Please note, World Athletics Technical Rules, which all meets follow, states events may be moved up to 30 minutes early on the day of the competition.

    - **Pick up your competition number** from the registration / information tent

    - **Stake out an area as your home base**, preferably a shaded / covered area
        - For Island Series meets, the Cougars will have a ‘home base’ noted by our Cougars banner

        - Athletes attending competitions as part of a regional, provincial or national team will receive information about picking up their competition number, and other information about the meet directly from Team BC members

Attending a Competition Cont.

- **<u>Preparing for your event(s)</u>**
    - **Complete your full warm-up** before you need to check-in for your event
        - Check with your coach before the meet if you have any questions about your warm-up routine for the competition
            - Make sure you complete your warm-up in your running shoes (not your spikes!)
    - **Check-in for your event**
        - Event check-in may be in a designated call room, or at the event area. This will be noted in the meet information / technical package
        - Event check-in times will vary depending on the meet, and the event
            - Check-in times usually range between 15 minutes to 60+ minutes prior to the scheduled event start time. Vertical jumps (high jump and pole vault) will often have a unique check-in time.
              This will be noted in the meet information / technical package

Attending a Competition Cont.

- **Call Room Notes:**
  - If a designated call room is used at the meet, athletes will be required to remain in the call room until they are marshaled to their event area.

    - Make sure to bring your spikes and water bottle to the call room and competition area.

    - No electronics are permitted in the designated call room, or competition area.

    - If there is no designated call room, and athletes are to check-in at the event area, there will be a set time in which athletes must have checked-in for the event.

    - If an athlete has not checked-in by the designated time, either to the call room, or the event area as outlined in the meet information / technical package, the athlete will not be permitted to compete in that event. Depending on the competition, the athlete may then be scratched for all other events in which they are competing in that meet, including events in which they are simultaneously competing.

- **Greet your fellow athletes** in the call room, or at the competition area with a positive attitude.

Attending a Competition Cont.

- **After your event(s)**
    - **Congratulate** your fellow competitors
    - **Thank** the officials and volunteers and shake their hands
    - **Complete your cool-down**
        - Including dynamic and static cool downs
        - Contact your event coach(es) if you have any questions about your cool-down process

- **<u>Awards</u>**
    - Each meet is different and the host club / association will decide if they will offer awards at that meet.
    - If awards are being offered, they will either be available for pick up at the meet (a minimum of 30 minutes after the official results have been posted) or will be sent to the next meet in that series to be picked up by each club, or the individual athlete.
    - Clubs will not mail or ship unclaimed awards.
    - Remember that while awards are fun, personal bests are the goal!