

Mt. Pleasant Track Club



Track & Field and Cross Country

2024

Parent Manual

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TOP THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE MPTC

1. **State Meet:** The most important date on our calendar every season is the USATF Junior Olympic SC State Meet. Please check the date on our website and put it on your calendar. We are a competitive team and train for the Junior Olympics: State, Region, and Nationals. Everyone is eligible to run in the State Meet. Let us know if you are NOT participating in State.
2. **Practice Meets:** We will have multiple practice meets throughout the season (including one that we host). These are not mandatory, but they help prepare you for the State Meet.
3. **Practices:** We practice Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Track and Field practices are from 6:00-7:30 pm; Cross Country practices from 6:00- 7:00pm. You are not required to be at every practice, but again, the more you practice, the better you will be! We also have a Sunday afternoon run for distance runners (which is of course everybody for cross country). Sunday runs are typically 4:00 – 5:00pm at Laurel Hill Park.
4. **We Practice Rain or Shine:** If in doubt, come on! We will only cancel for lightning.
5. **Age Groups:** The age groups are 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16 and 17-18. The age is determined by the age they are on December 31, 2023. (Example: Your child is 10 but turning 11 in November 2023. They would run in the 11-12 age group this season.)
6. **Booster Fee:** There are two fees **required** to participate with MPTC: The Mount Pleasant Recreation fee is paid to the town for the use of the facility (we do not see any of these funds). The MPTC Booster fee is paid to the club, and covers the athlete's annual USATF membership, meet entry fees, and equipment needs. Please visit our website at <http://www.mptrackclub.com/booster-fees/> for more information about the booster fee and a link to pay online.
6. **Uniforms:** All athletes are required to purchase a uniform. The uniform should be worn at all meets, and may also be worn at practices. See the website for information about purchasing a uniform.
7. **Meet Entries:** The club will register (and pay entry fees) for athletes participating in each meet. Therefore, you must indicate whether or not your athlete is participating in each meet. We will communicate the deadlines for the meet registration, and we cannot extend deadlines. See page 5 in the Parent Handbook for details on how to indicate participation in each meet.
8. **Communication:** We communicate through our website, Facebook group (Mt. Pleasant Track Club), and emails. **Everything you need to know is on our website.** In the unlikely event you have a question not answered in this manual or on our website, please email us at mptrackclub@gmail.com.
9. **Birth Certificates:** If you have never run for MPTC before, we need a copy of your birth certificate for USATF age verification. You only have to do this once for as long as you run with Mt. Pleasant. Please see the link on the website at <http://www.mptrackclub.com/age-verification/> to submit.

General MPTC Information

Welcome to the Mt. Pleasant Track Club! Our goal is to foster a love of running and lifelong good health in student-athletes ages 7 through 18.

Mt. Pleasant Track Club competes in the Junior Olympic division of USA Track and Field. We are part of the USATF South Carolina Association and part of USATF Region 4 with Georgia and Florida.

Our seasons run:

Track & Field: April through July

Practice Days/Times/Locations – Rain or Shine!

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 6:00-7:30 pm at Park West Track Complex

Sunday 5:00-6:00 pm (**distance runners only**) at Laurel Hill Park (meet at Park West Track).

Cross Country: September through December

Practice Days/Times/Locations – Rain or Shine!

Mondays and Thursdays 6:00-7:00 pm at Park West Track Complex

Wednesday 6:00-7:00 pm at IOP Beach (3 weeks), Ravenel Bridge (3 weeks), Park West Track Complex (remaining weeks) – details will be available on team website during the season

Sunday 5:00-6:00pm at the Park West track until daylight savings time end and we move it up to 4:00-5:00pm.

We hold pre-season Sunday runs prior to both seasons. The dates and locations of these runs will be posted on the website and our Facebook page.

Team Contact Information:

Contact Email (general information) – mptrackclub@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/372622845852/>

Discipline Policy

MPTC athletes set the standard for responsible behavior and good sportsmanship in South Carolina. However, on occasion a discipline issue comes up that needs to be addressed. In the event that happens, the process will look like this:

- Step 1: Talk between the athlete and Head Coach
- Step 2: Phone call by Head Coach to the athlete's parents
- Step 3: Athlete's parents must attend practice
- Step 4: Athlete will be asked to leave the team.

Volunteering Requirements

Throughout the season MPTC has the need for volunteers during our fundraiser events and during team hosted meets. **All of the MPTC coaches and board members are volunteers and therefore need the support and assistance of every family on the team to make the season successful.** We can't do it without you!

During each season, we will ask each family to donate food items for our concession stand sales (track & field) or for our athletes (cross country). We will also ask that you volunteer your time at a team hosted track or cross country meet or the run-a-thon (cross country). You will receive more information about signing up for your required volunteer commitments as the season progresses. We use Sign Up Genius to organize these efforts.

Families who would prefer not to donate food and work an event may instead pay an opt-out fee of \$100 per family to MPTC. This fee may be paid using the Paypal link under "Parent Resources" on our website. Any athlete's parents who choose not to opt-out must volunteer to work at one of the specified events.

Meet No-Show Policy

Every season we have a number of athletes that sign up for meets but then do not show up. We understand emergencies occur; however, we believe it is important that if you sign up for a meet you are there. It is difficult on coaches wondering where athletes are, and even more significantly, the money the club paid for the athlete's entry fee goes wasted. Therefore, starting with the 2022 Cross Country season, we have implemented a \$20 no show fee if you sign up for a meet and do not attend.

Our meet entry process works like this: We establish a deadline by which you must sign up for a meet on the website. Once that deadline passes, we submit the names on the website to the meet director and pay the applicable entry fees. Any entry fees paid are non-refundable, therefore, if you do not remove your name from the sign up list (or at least email us) by the deadline, the no-show fee will apply.

The club will invoice you the \$20 fee via Paypal, and you will not be allowed to register for future meets until the fee is paid.

Youth Competition Age Divisions

Youth competitions take place in two-year age divisions. These age divisions are based on your child's birth year, not actual age. Your child will compete in the age group assigned by their birth year regardless of their actual age. Athletes compete in whatever age they will be on December 31st of the current year. The age divisions are as follows:

8 & Under*

9 - 10

11 - 12

13 - 14

15 - 16

17 – 18**

* Per USATF Rule 300.1 (c) "Athletes must be at least seven (7) years of age on December 31 of the current year to compete at the Youth Athletics or Junior Olympic National Championships." However, they are more than welcome to participate with the club and compete in State and Regionals.

** Athletes who are still 18 through the final day of the USATF National Junior Olympic Track & Field Championships are eligible to compete in the 17-18 age division through that meet. This extended eligibility does not apply to cross country events.

Eligibility Requirements

Athletes must provide a birth certificate in order for us to purchase them a USATF card. You need to provide your child's birth certificate to the team, as the Mount Pleasant Recreation Department does not share it. You only need to do this once for as long as you participate on the team. You will receive an email at the start of the season on how to provide a copy to us.

Uniforms

All athletes are required to purchase a uniform. Athletes should wear their MPTC uniform for all meets. Some athletes prefer to wear compression shorts as part of the uniform and will choose red or black compression shorts. If your athlete is part of a relay team, the bottoms, and tops of each relay member must match.

Uniforms are available for online purchase through our website. To ensure adequate time for printing and delivery prior to the first meet, there is a deadline to order uniforms, so please check the "Uniforms" link under the "Parent Resources" tab on the website for more information

Registering Your Athlete

Registering your athlete with Mt Pleasant Track Club is a two-step process.

Step 1: Register with Mount Pleasant Recreation Department

www.mtpleasantrec.com

Check the MPTC website for updates on registration deadlines. The Mount Pleasant Recreation Department fee covers the use of the town track facilities and a team shirt for each athlete.

Step 2: Register with Mt Pleasant Track Club

Once the registration period with the Mount Pleasant Recreation Department is closed, you will receive a welcome email from the team with instructions to complete the second step of the registration.

First, you must pay the booster fee. There is a link on our home page where you will easily be able to pay booster fees. We use Payal to process the payment, but you are not required to have a Paypal account. To be able to sign up for meets, you must also register on our website (mptrackclub.com). Even if you have had an account on our website previously, you must re-register for each season. It is a very simple process, however.

Step 3: Sign up for Meets

Once you have activated your account with MPTC, you will be able to sign up for meets. There is a "Sign up for Meets" link at the top of the home page. You will see each meet listed. Click on a specific meet, and type your athlete's name(s) into the blank spaces (just like using Signup Genius). You must do this for each athlete and each meet you are planning to attend. If you do not sign up through the website, you will not be registered for the meet, and will not be able to participate. Please monitor the website for sign-up deadlines for each meet. Once that deadline has past, no additional sign-ups are allowed.

If you are having any issues with either paying the fees or creating an account, please email us at mptrackclub@gmail.com so we can help!

Track and Field

Track and Field is a sport dating back to the earliest Olympics. Athletes age 7 through 18 have a large selection of running and field events for sprinters and distance athletes, jumpers and throwers.

Events and Event Selection:

The chart below provides a list of the available events for each age group. MPTC coaches will work with your athlete to choose the best events for their abilities. With rare exceptions, athletes are expected to select a mixture of track and field events. Athletes 12 and under may compete in 3 events (including relays). Athletes 13 and older may compete in 4 events. Combined Events are not included in the event count. All athletes must compete in his/her age division only. There will be no "moving up" in any events, including relays.

Event / Age Group	7-8	9-10	11-12	13-14	15-16	17-18
100m Dash	X	X	X	X	X	X
200m Dash	X	X	X	X	X	X
400m Dash	X	X	X	X	X	X
800m Run	X	X	X	X	X	X
1500m Run	X	X	X	X	X	X
3000m Run			X	X	X	X
80/100/110m Hurdles			X	X	X	X
200/400m Hurdles				X	X	X
2000m Steeplechase					X	X
4x100m Relay	X	X	X	X	X	X
4x400m Relay	X	X	X	X	X	X
4x800m Relay			X	X	X	X
Long Jump	X	X	X	X	X	X
Triple Jump				X	X	X
High Jump		X	X	X	X	X
Pole Vault				X	X	X
Shot Put	X	X	X	X	X	X
Discus Throw			X	X	X	X
Hammer Throw					X	X
Javelin Throw	X	X	X	X	X	X
Triathlon		X				
Pentathlon			X	X		
Heptathlon (girls)					X	X
Decathlon (boys)					X	X

Shoes and Spikes

See the **Footwear** section on Page 14.

General Track & Field Meet Procedures

Track and Field meets last all day long. Many families bring tents, chairs, and coolers of food and drink for the day. The meet information will provide a general start time for your child's events; however, most meets work on a rolling schedule meaning that one event will follow another regardless of the scheduled time.

Plan to arrive at the meet location at least one hour before your first event to have time to get your bib number and warm-up. Athletes are generally on their own to warm up at the track or adjacent fields. MPTC coaches will teach them a warm-up routine during practice that they can use at the meets.

Track & Field Meet Tips

1. Typically these meets do not run on time. (Except our own Home Meet!)
2. Each athlete must pick up their number at the beginning of the meet from the MPTC tent. Usually, their events will be written on their number.
3. Running events are usually held in age group order with the youngest first. The order of field events may vary.
4. Parents/athletes are responsible for keeping track of the events in the meet. Coaches are on the field and are unable to ensure that every athlete gets to their event on time.
5. Parents are responsible for getting their athlete to the check-in tent before each event. There are announcements made before events to let athletes know what event is next and the check in time.
6. Please know where your athlete is at all times in case of changes. Sometimes if the meet is behind schedule they will run age groups together to catch up.
7. If your athlete is doing a track and a field event, they must register with each event on time. Athletes will be allowed to go from their field event to compete in the track event and return and catch up in the field event.
8. We encourage all athletes to support their teammates with shouting, clapping and cheering!
9. We encourage good sportsmanship towards other clubs. At the end of an event it is nice to recognize your fellow athletes before leaving the facility.
10. Please bring food, drink and snack items for your athletes. There is usually a concession stand at events. The MPTC will have plenty of water for athletes.
11. If you leave the area to go eat between events ensure that someone has your number to call if there are any changes.
12. If you wish to bring your own tent please do so. It is advisable to bring chairs for each member of your family as it can be a long day. You can set your tent up beside the MPTC tent to keep all athletes together. Please tidy up when you are leaving and bring trash and all items with you.
13. Finally – HAVE FUN!

Track & Field Practice Meets

A calendar for all the meets is provided under the “Calendar” tab of the MPTC website. If you click on the meet, the website will take you to additional pages with information on the meet location and schedule. Typically, we will not know the exact start time of each event until a week or so before the meet.

You are not required to attend practice meets; however, it is highly encouraged that your athlete participates in at least one practice meet in order to obtain a time/distance in each event. The coaches need a time/distance for each event in order to properly seed your athlete in the State Meet.

Track & Field State Meet – The most important meet of the season!

Every athlete is eligible and encouraged to compete in the State Meet. This is the meet we train for during the season. The State Meet is the qualifier meet for Regionals. The Regional meet is the qualifier meet for Nationals.

If you do not compete in the State Meet, you are not eligible for Regionals or Nationals. Your season is over.

Please make every effort possible to attend the State Meet!

Qualifying for Regional and National Track & Field Meets

You **MUST** compete in the STATE MEET to advance to the Regionals and Nationals. The Top 8 in each event from the State Meet advance to the Regional Meet. The Top 5 athletes in each event at Regional Meet advance to the National Meet.

Additional Track & Field Information from USATF

USATF Competition Rule Book download:

<http://www.usatf.org/About/Competition-Rules.aspx>

Cross Country

Cross Country running involves a single race distance over dirt, grass, trails, and pavement. Race distances for each age group are:

7-8-year-olds: 2K (1.24 miles)

9-10 and 11-12-year-olds: 3K (1.86 miles)

13-14-year-olds: 4K (2.49 miles)

15-16 and 17-18-year-olds: 5K (3.1 miles)

Shoes and Spikes

Good, supportive running shoes are a must for any cross country athlete. Some athletes may choose to wear distance spikes during competition. See the **Footwear** section on Page 14.

Cross Country Team Scoring

In cross country, each age group has a set of MPTC “teams.” Each team is comprised of eight (8) runners. Runners not on a team will compete as an individual. For each team, the top five (5) finishers among the declared runners will score. In cross country, the lowest score wins.

Following is an example of cross country scoring:

***** 8-U Boys 2K RESULTS *****

Place	Name	S	Team	Time	Pts
1	Jackson Muller	M	Mt. Pleasant Track A	8:47.81	1
2	Gabriel Hislop	M	Mt. Pleasant Track A	8:53.71	2
3	Burket Yaun	M	Mt. Pleasant Track A	9:06.27	3
4	Tyndle Antley	M	Unattached	9:10.58	
5	Joed Rentas	M	Summerville Catholic School	9:26.16	
6	Jack Willcox	M	Midlands Surge A	9:30.31	
7	Harris Milling	M	Midlands Surge A	9:35.10	
8	Zachary Teachman	M	Mt. Pleasant Track A	9:41.80	4
9	Evan Perugini	M	Florence Track A	9:42.23	5
10	Hidde Verkoeijen	M	Florence Track A	9:49.94	6
11	Quinn Oliver-Porter	M	Mt. Pleasant Track A	10:03.83	7
12	Hayes De Arellano	M	Mt. Pleasant Track B	10:21.49	8
13	Gramling Belcher	M	Mt. Pleasant Track A	10:22.86	9
14	Oliver Dietrich	M	Mt. Pleasant Track A	10:29.32	10
15	Delcambre St Germain	M	City Of Charleston Swamp F	10:36.16	
16	Parker Pinson	M	Mt. Pleasant Track A	10:38.16	11

17	Lawson Lindler	M	The Storm Track Club A	10:47.30	
18	Myles Jordan	M	Florence Track A	10:49.23	12
19	Connor Hendrix	M	Florence Track A	10:58.19	13
20	Joel Lewis	M	Mt. Pleasant Track B	10:58.39	14
21	Matthew Bailey	M	Florence Track A	11:01.41	15
22	Elijah Hitch	M	Florence Track A	11:06.27	16
23	Ricardo Colon-Laborde	M	Palmetto Track & Field A	11:11.26	
24	Kody Meyer	M	Summerville Catholic Schoo	11:12.15	
25	Paxton Dewitt	M	City Of Charleston Swamp F	11:18.05	
26	Brooks Gardner	M	Mt. Pleasant Track B	11:24.86	17
27	Ryder Kotz	M	Mt. Pleasant Track B	11:27.04	18
28	Jayden Lee	M	Mt. Pleasant Track B	11:28.34	19
29	Lane Dillion	M	Mt. Pleasant Track C	11:45.19	
30	Jacob Johnson	M	Mt. Pleasant Track B	12:15.08	20
31	Shallan Patel	M	Florence Track A	12:34.90	21
32	Gabe Cook	M	Summerville Catholic Schoo	13:32.44	
33	Finnly Bauer	M	Myrtle Beach Track & Field	13:37.92	

8 and Under Boys Team Results

1.	17	Mt. Pleasant Track A		(9:18.68	46:33.42	1:16.02)
=====						
1	1	Jackson Muller	M	8:47.81		
2	2	Gabriel Hislop	M	8:53.71		
3	3	Burket Yaun	M	9:06.27		
4	4	Zachary Teachman	M	9:41.80		
5	7	Quinn Oliver-Porter	M	10:03.83		
6	(9)	Gramling Belcher	M	10:22.86		
7	(10)	Oliver Dietrich	M	10:29.32		
8	(11)	Parker Pinson	M	10:38.16		
2.	51	Florence Track A		(10:28.20	52:21.00	1:19.18)
=====						
1	5	Evan Perugini	M	1449:06.37		
2	6	Hidde Verkoeijen	M	1449:14.08		
3	12	Myles Jordan	M	1450:13.37		
4	13	Connor Hendrix	M	1450:22.33		
5	15	Matthew Bailey	M	1450:25.55		
6	(16)	Elijah Hitch	M	1450:30.41		
7	(21)	Shallan Patel	M	1451:59.04		
3.	76	Mt. Pleasant Track B		(11:08.02	55:40.12	1:06.85)
=====						
1	8	Hayes De Arellano	M	1449:45.63		
2	14	Joel Lewis	M	1450:22.53		
3	17	Brooks Gardner	M	1450:49.00		
4	18	Ryder Kotz	M	1450:51.18		
5	19	Jayden Lee	M	1450:52.48		
6	(20)	Jacob Johnson	M	1451:39.22		

As you can see by this example, Mt. Pleasant Track A team scored 17 points (1st place), Florence Track A scored 51 points (2nd place) and Mt. Pleasant Track B scored 76 points (3rd place). In the overall results, the runners who did not score points (far right column) were not part of an age group team.

General Cross Country Meet Procedures

Cross country meets are generally short. You and your athlete will likely need to be at the meet for less than four hours. Most meets offer a course walk-through before the first race. The meet information sheet will list a time for the walk-through. If you choose to take part in the walk-through, please arrive at least 10 to 15 minutes before the scheduled walk-through time to give yourself time to park and find the coaches. You are not required to attend the walk-through, but it can be helpful if your athlete has never run the course before.

The meet schedule will list the race time for each age group. Sometimes, the meet directors will allow the races to run 15 to 30 minutes early. Please plan to arrive 1 hour before your race time to warm-up and stretch with your age group.

Some meets will require the athletes to check-in with race officials at the start line before the race begins. If check-in is required, information regarding check-in procedures will be provided by the coaches and/or meet information sheet. Check-in is typically required at the State, Regional and National meet.

Cross Country Practice Meets

A calendar for all the meets is provided under the “Calendar” tab of the MPTC website. If you click on the meet, the website will take you to additional pages with information on the meet location, course maps, and schedule.

You are not required to attend practice meets; however, it is highly encouraged that your athlete participates in at least one practice meet in order to obtain a time. The coaches need a time for each athlete in order to prepare the age group teams for the state meet.

Cross Country State Meet – The most important meet of the season!

Every athlete is eligible and encouraged to compete in the State Meet. This is the meet we train for during the season. The State Meet is the qualifier meet for Regionals. The Regional meet is the qualifier meet for Nationals.

If you do not compete in the State Meet, you are not eligible for Regionals or Nationals. Your season is over.

Please make every effort possible to attend the State Meet!

Qualifying for Regional and National Cross Country Meets

At the State Meet, the top thirty (30) individuals and top five (5) teams in each age division will advance to the Regional Championship. Your athlete may qualify as an individual, on a team or both.

At the Regional Meet, the top thirty (30) individuals and top five (5) teams in each age division will advance to the National Championship. Your athlete may qualify as an individual, on a team or both.

Pacing

USATF forbids parents and/or teammates from running beside athletes at any point during any race. Pacing at any time during a race is grounds for immediate disqualification. Even if you are not truly "pacing" your child, USATF officials will not discriminate between enthusiastic parents and those pacing athletes.

General Guidelines on Footwear

For both track and field and cross country, the most important thing to buy is a good, supportive pair of running shoes. For runners, you should buy a new pair of shoes at the beginning of **every** season. When we say a "good" pair of shoes, we do not suggest going to Dick's and buying whatever they have that your child thinks "look cool". A lot of kid's shoes don't have the support of real running shoes. The most well-known brands of running shoes (that I personally wear) are Asics, Saucony, Brooks, Hoka, Nike, Mizuno, and New Balance (this is not an exhaustive list, just my favorites). Your athlete should be professionally fitted for shoes based on their gait, running style, etc. In Mount Pleasant, Fleet Feet, The Foot Store, and Blue Sky Endurance are the best shoe stores. However, for kids with a foot size less than an adult size 6, Fleet Feet is really your only local option. If you already know the shoes and size you need, online is of course an option. I personally like Running Warehouse <https://www.runningwarehouse.com/>, however, Dick Pond Athletics <https://www.dickpondathletics.com/> also carries a good selection of kids spikes (which can sometimes be hard to find here in Mt. Pleasant).

Track and Field

While a good pair of running shoes is all that is necessary, many athletes do choose to wear spikes or racing flats during competition. Footwear in track and field is event specific (for example, sprinters tend to run more on their toes, while distance runners generally land more mid-foot to even slightly heel striking), therefore, you would expect sprinter spikes to be constructed differently than distance spikes. Additionally, field event spikes (jumping events, for example) would also be designed differently. If you would like to purchase spikes for your athlete, we recommend you talk to both your coaches, as well as a reputable running store, to insure you purchase the best spikes for your athlete's events. To cut down on the number of shoes you have to buy, many of the distance runners who also run cross country will buy a single pair of cross country spikes and also use them as distance spikes for events like the 1500m.

Cross Country

Much like track and field, the only requirement is a good pair of running shoes. Ideally you want a shoe that offers enough cushion to handle the miles we will put on over the course of a season, but still light enough to feel responsive during speed workouts and also some races. Some of the practice meets we attend (including our own) are at least partially run over paved surfaces. For those races, "regular" running shoes are best. However, State, Regional, and National meets will be true "cross country" courses (no pavement), and therefore, many athletes do choose to wear spikes for added traction. However, they are not required. Nike and Saucony are probably the best known brands of XC spikes for kids, however, New Balance and Asics do also makes several types of Cross Country spikes.

General Hydration and Nutrition Guidelines

When to eat before/after exercise

Everyone is different, the general rule of thumb is to eat a meal two to four hours before exercise to give your body time to digest the food. Avoid eating high-fat foods such as hot dogs, hamburgers, french fries, doughnuts, and cheese. High-fat foods take longer to digest and may cause discomfort if eaten too close to the start of practice or competition.

If your child needs a snack when home from school before practice something like a granola bar, whole grain cracker with peanut butter is ideal. Avoid sugary foods such as soda and chocolate bars right before the start of practice or competition. Each child is different and you might need to experiment to see what suits them. Try to limit eating for up to one hour before exercise.

Drink Up!

It is important for young athletes to drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration, which can deplete energy and performance. Remember to bring a bottle of water to every practice. Hydrating during the day, every day is important. Sipping a bottle of water (all day) in school is far better than consuming one just before practice.

There are many sports drinks available, but plain water is usually enough to keep athletes hydrated. Sports drinks are designed to provide energy and replace electrolytes that are lost in sweat. While there is benefit in electrolyte replacement following high intensity workouts, many sports drinks are high in sugar, which is not ideal. My (current) favorite low sugar electrolyte replacement is liquid IV from Costco. They offer an excellent electrolyte profile without all the sugar, and the taste is better than most.