

Dear Parents

The Fort Belvoir Track Club will begin its 2010 season on March 29th. Practice will be held on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 5:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. at Pullen Field Track. In the event of bad weather or rain, practice will be held in Speckler Field House. Registration will conclude April 16th 2010. All High School or Junior High School athletes must indicate their interest to the Head Coach or Commissioner prior to April 16th and must register no later than Friday, May 21, 2010. The registration fee for the season is \$ 85.00 for each athlete. Registration fees assist with track meet entry fees and uniforms.

Athletes must purchase a track club T-shirt; however, athletic bags, and sweat suits are available. No athlete will receive a uniform until his/her registration fees are paid. All new athletes must submit a copy of his/her birth certificate to the club administrator, as soon as possible. All athletes must submit all required forms no later than the second week of practice.

The staff and members of the Fort Belvoir Track Club would like to thank you, in advance, for your help in making this track season a positive experience for everyone.

Regards,
Richard Herman
Commissioner
Fort Belvoir "Sonic Boom" Track Club

KEEPING OUR YOUTH ON THE RIGHT TRACK

History

The Fort Belvoir Sonic Boom Track Club was established in 2000 to give a meaningful experience in the sport of athletics to boys and girls from ages seven to eighteen. Our emphasis will always be about the student athlete, underscoring the basic fact that without academic achievement the athlete does not have an arena in which to perform. We are nationally recognized as one of the most outstanding track and field clubs in the United States.

Mission Statement

The Fort Belvoir Track Club provides opportunities for youth ages 5–18. Everyone is given an opportunity to compete in all track meets—**Exceptional athletic ability is not required to participate nor are there tryouts, except for relay teams.** All levels of ability are welcome since emphasis is placed on setting personal goals and training to attain those goals.

We are a member of the Potomac Valley Association of USA Track & Field's (USATF) youth division, the national governing body of Track & Field. Our club goal is to encourage and help young people to develop physically, emotionally and socially through individual involvement in our program. They will improve their physical conditioning as they learn skills related to track & field and they will in turn build a positive self-image as they recognize their individual achievements. Your child will be part of a team that encourages and promotes education and the development of friendships, sportsmanship, self-worth, and they will receive support, encouragement of fellow athletes and also have a good time.

Program Guidelines

- ❑ Parents are welcome to warm-up and exercise with the team. However, once the exercise period is over only staff and designated assistants will be allowed on the track.
- ❑ At track meets, parents are **not** allowed on the track or infield at any time. Violation of this rule could lead to the athlete or team disqualification.
- ❑ The Fort Belvoir Track will not tolerate or accept any form of violent behavior or actions. If any violent behavior occurs you will be immediately removed from the club.

- Hopefully, by adhering to these guidelines we will achieve another happy, healthful, and successful season.
- It is important that parents pay close attention to the types and amounts of food and liquids that are consumed by the athletes during meets. An athlete cannot give a good performance when he or she has eaten greasy or heavy foods. Liquids are to be encouraged, but should be something healthy such as water, fruit juices, Gatorade, etc. Sodas are to be discouraged. Remember, **“Meets are for performance not for picnics”**.
- It is not possible, nor expected, that the coaching staff will be able to provide transportation for athletes to scheduled meets. As always, we will do what we can to be of assistance in this area, but parents are responsible for transportation to and from meets.
- Parents should be aware that the registration fee covers uniforms, entry fees for local meets, and miscellaneous items such as batons, etc. It will be necessary for athletes who qualify for major meets to absorb the expenses for those meets.
- Parents are encouraged to volunteer and contribute to the Sonic Boom Track Club. We encourage parents to travel with their child (ren); however, we understand that schedule conflicts and work responsibilities may arise. In the event that you cannot travel with your child it is your responsibility to coordinate your child's supervision with another responsible adult.
- In order to allow athletes to compete to the best of their ability curfews will be set by the coaches for overnight meets. All athletes will adhere to these curfews. Anyone caught in violation of the set curfew will be omitted from any remaining events for the first offense. Any subsequent violations of curfew will result in expulsion from the team for the remainder of the season. Any athlete found participating in an event that they have been scratched will be immediately and permanently expelled from the team. Curfews for all athletes will be 10:00 p.m. This curfew will be effective for athletes rooming with parents as well as those rooming with other athletes.
- All athletes should be dressed appropriately for the weather conditions. When it is cold, please be sure that the athletes are dressed warmly. Gloves may also be appropriate

- Appropriate footwear should be worn. No athlete should attempt to run in basketball shoes, etc. If there are any questions concerning what footwear is appropriate, please talk with a member of the coaching staff. Also, if you have any track shoes that are too small for your child, we would appreciate it if you would consider donating them to the club. We will clean them up, re-spike them and distribute them to other athletes who might have a need. Running shoes should have spikes ¼" in length; however, spikes are not recommended for athletes under the age of eight.

- Jeans, dresses, skirts, or tight-fitting pants are never to be worn to practice. On days when there is a meet, all athletes should be dressed in the uniform provided by the club. This is especially important for members of relay teams, because teams are subject to disqualification if all of its members are not dressed uniformly. Additionally, uniforms will not be altered. To maintain your uniform in good condition they should be washed in cold water and air-dried. No du-rags are to be worn to track meets.

- The coaching staff will decide (based on observation and time-trials) which events are appropriate for each athlete. If you have questions concerning the events in which your child is placed; please speak with a member of the coaching staff either before or after practice. During meets the staff will be occupied, ensuring that each gives his or her best performance; therefore, time may be limited not allowing for discussions about which events you feel your child should have been placed in. Likewise, times will arise during meets when it will be necessary for a coach to substitute an athlete in a scheduled event. In these instances, it is extremely disruptive to have a parent questioning the coach during the meet. Any questions and/or problems you may have can and will be discussed at the next scheduled practice.

- The relay events in AAU and USATF are highly competitive. Therefore, positions on these teams are coveted and require a strong commitment on behalf of the athletes and the parents. Relay teams have an additional practice day. Relay teams are composed of five athletes; one of which is an alternate. All team members must attend all practices and meets. Remember, relays are generally the last event of the meet; hence, athletes must commit to staying after their individual events.

Program Philosophy

The athletic program at Fort Belvoir Sonic Boom Track Club will provide positive experiences for each athlete who participates. Joining with the family and community, athletes will benefit from the development of a good self-concept,

leadership traits, loyalty, strong sportsmanship, integrity, and the promotion of individual wellness. Each of these characteristics helps in the development of individual and team attitudes that are useful and necessary for a successful season and life.

Sonic Boom Track Club Goals:

- To teach sound track & field techniques
- To allow youth to participate regardless of their abilities
- To strengthen young people's self-image through competition
- To have meaningful impact in the process of training future leaders through the development of disciplined minds and bodies

Sonic Boom Track Club Objectives:

1. **To have fun** - First and foremost, any sport must be enjoyable. With proper training, preparation, and support, track & field can be satisfying and filled with, life-learning experiences for everyone involved.

2. **Athletic development to its fullest** - The athlete's individual development is most important. While we value team spirit, the athlete's development and best interest are our primary focus. Some of the ways we strive to develop athletes are:

Physically - By improving physical conditioning, developing good health habits, and avoiding injuries.

Psychologically - By encouraging a competitive desire and feelings of self-worth and self-confidence.

Socially - By teaching athletes how to cooperate in a competitive environment, showing appreciation to others through sportsmanship, and making friends.

3. **Strive to be your best** - Enjoyment of competition is greatest when the athletes strive to achieve their best performance.

4. **Family** - Family support is a basic necessity for the athletes.

5. **TO HAVE FUN!!!**

Coaching Staff

The Sonic Boom coaching staff are lifelong track & field enthusiasts. They have enthusiasm, knowledge, and experience specifically in youth distance running and for preparation into high school, college and further levels of running. Enthusiasm cannot be faked, knowledge comes through years of study and habit, and experience is required to properly develop athletes to a lifelong love of distance running. They have a thorough understanding of developing youth athletes towards a positive experience, best performance, and lifelong memories.

All coaches must be certified through the National Alliance for Youth Sports and that certification must be valid for one year. The certification will be awarded through Youth Sports after the coach has attended a certification clinic and passed the required test. All coaches are required to have a completed background check on file to work with children.

Jerry Arrington
Youth Sports Director

Richard Herman
Commissioner

James Shellington
Asst. Commissioner/Head Field Coach

Alton Greene
Head Track Coach

Eligibility

Boys and Girls, ages 5 – 18 are eligible to participate in the Sonic Boom Track Club. The athlete must have a current sports physical, a Birth Certificate and a Military Identification Card to register. He/she must also obtain a USATF and AAU membership card.

Registration

Your child must be a family member of an active duty or retired military member, DoD employee, DoD contractor in order to be eligible to participate in the Track Club. The registration fee is \$85.00. Your child must be registered with Child and Youth Services (CYS) with a current physical. Please call (703) 805-9112/ 9114/ 9116 to schedule a registration appointment.

Track Meet Essentials

In order for our athletes to perform their best, we (parents) must provide them with the proper fuel to start their engines. This means giving them a good breakfast (example: toast/waffles, limited meats (ham) and dairy/eggs) before coming to the field; and furnish nutritional foods to eat during the meet. Once he/she is finished their events for the day, they can enjoy a heavier meal. All athletes are responsible for providing their own lunch and drinks.

Listed are suggested items to keep in mind when preparing for those long track meets.

Age group track meets can move slowly due to the number of events being offered and the large number of participants. For that reason we strongly recommend you come prepared. If you are a seasoned veteran, you probably already know what to bring, but some first time parents may need a few suggestions.

- I understand that athletes and their event specialty coaches should be given the opportunity to work together unencumbered during the designated practice sessions.
- I understand that my fellow teammates should be treated with respect and dignity. I will respect the racial, religious, and ethnic diversity of the team. Intolerance of any form is unacceptable.
- Team Travel Athlete: I understand that I will be representing Fort Belvoir and the Sonic Boom Track Club as I travel to compete in meets across the country. I promise to conduct myself in an exemplary manner while on team travel. I agree to abide by travel guidelines set forth by the Coaches and Parent Chaperones. I also understand that failure to do such will result in my expulsion from the team. Furthermore, I understand that I may be sent home from the meet, at parental expense, if I fail to meet team guidelines during travel.
- I understand that I will be responsible for any damages caused by my child while participating on the competitive team. Damages are not limited to the bus, hotel and or host athletic facilities.

I understand that it is the responsibility of the Commissioners to resolve disputes during practice and track meets. If there are any concerns regarding practice, discipline, coaches, safety or administration of the program I will first bring this to the attention of the Head Coach. The Head Coach or the Commissioners will handle any Protests/Entry.

Athletic Rules and Expectations

All student/athletes and parents must read and sign that they received and understand the parent handbook and rules and expectations sheet. This sheet outlines the rules and expectations that we, Sonic Boom Track Club, demand our athletes to follow. We believe it is a great privilege to participate in athletics, but in order to participate, athletes must follow all rules. A Fort Belvoir Sonic Boom Athlete must exhibit, at all times, the highest standards of personal behavior. The staff of the Fort Belvoir Track Club is looking forward to an exciting and successful season. In order to ensure this, we have listed below a few simple guidelines and/or suggestions that should be followed by athletes, parents and the staff.

- ❑ I understand that being a part of this team requires a commitment on my part as an athlete and as a parent.
- ❑ I understand that there are costs involved in the participation of this program, which includes enrollment fees, travel costs, meals and the cost of entry fees if I do not participate in a meet after committing to the event.
- ❑ I agree that the event specialty coaches in charge of an athlete's event area will be treated with the utmost respect and their training and competitive advice adhered to. This is to include event selection, workouts, meet preparation and competition.

FOOD ITEMS	WEATHER PROTECTION	COMFORT ITEMS	KEEP CHILDREN BUSY
Water	Umbrella	Portable chair	Books
Sports drink	Blanket	Pillow	Puzzles
Fruit	Tent	Insect repellent	Games
Pretzels	Sun block	Cooler	Cards
Bagels	Light jacket	Seat cushion	HOME WORK
Low fat pastry	Allergy medicine/Inhaler	Blanket	Board games
Trail mix	Poncho	Towels	Portable CD Players
Orange slices	Hat (sun/rain)		
Crackers	Socks (extra)		
Raisins	Clothes (extra)		
Juice	Epi-pen (Bee stings, nuts, etc)		

Tips:

- Arrive at the meet location 1 (one) hour before the meet is scheduled to start. This allows the athlete time to warm up before the meet begins.
- Put your child's name on all pieces of track equipment (e.g. clothing, shoes, bag, etc.)
- You can expect to be outside in various weather conditions from 8:00 am until as late as 8 or 9:00 pm. Bring items that will allow you and your child to be comfortable for that extended period.
- Track meets are not cancelled because of inclement weather. i.e., rain, cold temperatures, etc.
- Do not allow your child to drink sodas the day of a meet.
- On hot/sunny days keep your child out of the sun as much as possible; this will help reserve that much needed energy for their race or field event.
- Tents that are put up by the coaches are primarily for the athletes; parents make sure the athletes are sheltered first.
- Athletes should keep their sweats (pants) on, when they are not performing their event, to keep their muscles warm. This will help prevent injuries (enhance their performance).
- It is recommended that the club sit together at all meets. This allows the coaches to guide athletes for the upcoming events without hunting for them throughout the event.
- Athletes are eligible in development meets simply by showing up. In state, regional or national meets there are qualifying standards and pre-registration is required through the club.

2010 Track & Field Age Divisions			
Year Of Birth:	AAU Divisions:		USATF Divisions:
2001 and after	Primary		Sub-Bantam
2001	Sub Bantam		Bantam
2000	Bantam		Bantam
1999	Sub Midget		Midget
1998	Midget		Midget
1997	Sub Youth		Youth
1996	Youth		Youth
1995 and 1994	Intermediate		Intermediate
1993 and 1992	*Young Men/Women		*Young Men/Women

*Athletes who are still eighteen (18) years of age through the final day of championship competition shall be eligible to compete in the Young Men/Women and Senior (18 & Under) divisions.

Website: www.usatf.org

Website: www.aausports.org

GREAT PARENTS MAKE A GREAT TEAM

How Can I Help Out?

Our goal is to increase our athlete participation from last season. In order to do that we need:

- o Coaches
- o Assistant coaches
- o Timers
- o Equipment maintenance
- o Practice assistants
- o Track meet results compilation
- o Fundraising
- o Events/Chairperson
- o Team Newsletter
- o Chaperones
- o Team Photographer
- o Entry Fee Manager
- o Awards Banquet
- o Meet Day Management (Tent Set-up; Tent Tear down; Fluids)

In order to make this work, we must have volunteers to help out with practice sessions and track meets. During practice sessions the athletes are broken up into smaller groups (by age) to work with one or more coaches / assistants. Volunteers don't have to make every practice and meet - so please consider volunteering in one or more of the above areas. Previous experience in coaching track is appreciated, but is not a requirement.

CLUB LEVELS

Fun/Developmental Club:

Composed of boys and girls of all ages who want to run track for the fun of the sport, or who have not quite developed the skills or maturity to compete at the level of the Competition Club. These athletes will participate in the local meets and can move up when they are ready. To move up to the Competition Club, an athlete must display the commitment and skills over a reasonable period of time, and must have the consent of the parents because of the increased financial commitment of the Competition Club.

Competitive Club:

Composed of boys and girls of all ages who are dedicated to Track & Field. Athletes must have a positive attitude, be serious at practice, talented, have excellent attendance, parental support, commitment to travel to all mandatory meets, the ability to learn the skills taught in the program, and above average academic standing in school. The coaching staff in consultation with athlete and parents chooses these athletes.

Competitions

Track & Field Competitions: the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), Potomac Valley, and the USA Track & Field (USATF), as well as non-sanctioned competitions, and sanction competitions. Many competitions are local, but some championship-level competitions are contested all over the United States. Competitions are optional, based on the athlete's desire.

Practice Schedule (subject to change)

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays are typically track workouts for all team members.

Relay teams practice an additional day during the week. The 2010 Track Practice Schedule will begin March 29, 2010. Practice times will be from **5:30 PM to 7:30 PM** during the week. Weekend practices are not planned but may be used for make-ups due to bad weather.

Parents, please make every effort to get your athlete(s) to practice on time. We understand that many of you may be challenged by your work schedule and/or traffic; however, it is important that the athlete arrive on time to ensure that they are warmed up properly in an effort to prevent injuries. If arriving late is necessary, please share this information with your child's coach. Also, please ensure that you are there to pick up your child promptly at the end of practice. Thank you.

Team Pictures

Every season CYS brings in a photography company to take pictures of the teams. The photography company offers several different packages. The Fort Belvoir Sonic Boom Track Club does not encourage or discourage buying photos. Even if you choose not to buy photos, each athlete will be in the team photo. The picture schedule for the 2010 season will be announced during a team parent meeting.

Athletic Fundraisers

All Fort Belvoir Sonic Boom athletes will participate in the Track fundraiser. The proceeds from this venture are used to purchase new uniforms and equipment for the track club. i.e. bags, sweats, athletes and coach's recognition, banquet, drinks, advance fees for products, tents, etc.

Accident and Liability Insurance

The Sonic Boom Track Club is a member club of the AAU, USATF, and the Potomac Valley sanctioning organizations and in doing so all Sonic Boom athletes, coaches, and club officers are provided with accidental and liability insurance beginning the date membership was paid and until the end of the membership year. The AAU membership year ends August 31st; the USATF membership year ends December 31.

Communication Guidelines

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult professions. The entire staff and parents want the student/athlete to have a positive experience in the event in they participate. Proper communication is the key to making positive experience a reality. Athletes, parents, and coaches are all responsible for effective communication. The following is a list of appropriate communication that all parties should adhere to in order for a positive experience to happen for the student/athlete.

Communication: Coach to Parents

1. Expectations the coach has for your child as well as the rest of the team.
2. Location and time of all practices and contests.
3. Procedure should an injury occur during participation of the sport.
4. Discipline that result in the denial of your child's participation.
5. Team requirements, i.e. special equipment.

Communication: Student/Athlete to Coach

1. Athletes should express concerns immediately and directly to the coach.
2. Athletes should notify the coach of any schedule conflicts, well in advance.
3. Athletes should notify the coach of any injury immediately.

Communication: Parent to Coach

1. Parents should express concerns regarding their child's emotional and physical status.
2. Parents should inquire about ways to help their child improve
in the activity

Meet Entry Fees

For developmental meets the entry fee cost is typically \$4.00. For state meets and beyond the entrance costs are typically \$5.00 or \$6.00 per event, and an athlete is limited to three or four events depending on their age group.

Entry fees are traditionally paid for all athletes. Due to the large financial loss experienced in the past because of lost entry fees due to no shows we will implement the following procedures: Your child's entry fees for a track meet will be paid; however, if the athlete does not participate in the event, the entrance fees will be refunded to the Track Club no later than Wednesday of the following week.

Depending on the venue, spectators may be charged admission to enter the meets.

Meet Etiquette

Sportsmanship Guidelines -Parents, Coaches & Spectators

Sonic Boom's coaches and parents are a tremendous asset to our youth athletes. We expect athletes to hold themselves to high standards of sportsmanship as outlined in the USATF 2010 Competition Rule Book and hope that all parents, coaches and spectators will serve as role models for our youth athletes by exhibiting high standards of sportsmanship as well. We must never lose sight of the fact that the participants in youth athletics are "youngsters". Officials and event management personnel are there to help make this a positive and rewarding experience for everyone, especially the athletes. Please treat them accordingly. The following guidelines should be adhered to at all times:

- Know and understand the rules of track and field.
- Show respect for the officials and their decisions.
- Show respect for opponents at all times.
- Recognize and appreciate the varying skill levels of all athletes.
- Maintain self-control at all times, i.e. no horse playing, running, hitting, tripping, etc.
- Ensure that you keep your hands and objects to yourself at all times.
- Show a positive manner when cheering.
- Sanctions may be considered toward parents, coaches, and/or teams that do not adhere to any and/or all of these policies.

If you are an athlete participating at a meet you SHOULD...

- Always look in both directions when crossing the track. Never cross the track when any race is in progress.
- Avoid any area between finish line and start line, as officials and timers need clear view of the starter located near the start of each race.
- Never walk through the javelin, discus or shot put area when competition is in progress.

This is dangerous.

- Be quiet when you are at starting line; make sure you stay in your lane, as instructed by the head starter, during your race.
- If you are scheduled to compete in a field event and track event at the same time, you must first check-in with the official of your field in order for you to be able to compete in that field event when you have completed your track event.
- When leaving a field event to take part in a track event, you must first inform (check-out with) the head official of your field event judge in charge of your field event of this or they have the right to disqualify you from your field event.
- If you are scheduled to compete in a relay and you have to leave, even temporarily, you must inform the coach.
- Always stay at least 10 feet back from the edge of the track so you and our club can never be accused of affecting the outcome of a race.

Emphasizing Fun, Skill Development, and Striving to Win

Kids have fun when they are actively involved and the focus is on striving to win. If you maintain a focus on developing skills, striving to win, and doing your best it takes the pressure off of winning. Developing skills is one of the most satisfying aspects of playing a sport.

Developing a Winning Perspective

Every decision parents make in guiding their children should be based first on what's best for the child, and second what may help the child win. Stated another way, this perspective places *athletes first, winning second*. We're not saying winning is unimportant. Winning, or striving to win, is essential to enjoyable competition. Pursuing victory and achieving goals are sweet rewards of sport, but they can turn sour if, through losing, your perspective or your child's proper perspective is also lost.

Building Your Child's Self-Esteem

Building self-esteem in a child is one of the most important duties of a parent, teacher, and coach. It's not easy and it's made even more difficult in a sport by the prevailing attitude of "winning is everything." Athletes, coaches, and parents who find their self-

worth through winning will go through tough times when they lose. An athlete can be successful **without winning**. Success is a measure of an athlete's competency; winning reflects the outcome of a contest.

Helping Your Child Enjoy Sports

Children can learn many positive things from sports. Through sports, your child can learn how to work with others, develop a positive self-image, learn about fair play, and being a good sport. Parents and coaches are the most influential groups in ensuring that the athlete has a positive experience in Track and Field at the Fort Belvoir Sonic Boom Track Club. The *American Sport Education Program's Sport Parent Survival Guide* believes that there are five things that parents can do to help make their child's experience in sports as positive as it can be.

Being a Role Model

Children learn behavior from many different people including coaches, teachers, and other adults and peers. However, the people from whom they learn the most are their parents. Put your child's development and welfare ahead of winning and you'll be better able to display a healthy attitude toward sports and life. It's especially critical that you model good sportsmanship for your child. Display the following attitudes and behaviors when you're at your daughter or son's meets:

1. Encourage all the athletes
2. Control your emotions in frustrating situations
3. Abide by coaches or officials' decisions.