

Goal Setting Options for the Coach and Athlete

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By their nature, cross country and track and field make the goal setting process relatively easy. Times, heights, distances and places easily allow the athlete to plan for success. Yet, when asked to put their goals in writing, athletes often have a difficult time doing so in a meaningful way. Quite often, the athletes will indicate that his/her goals are to “get in shape” or “have fun” (goals that are not easily measured or specific).

As a result, the athletes need some help with the goal setting process. In fact, they often do poorly in their initial attempts to identify realistic and specific goals. To help them with the process, we give them a list of sample goals and resources that can be useful in setting specific goals. These resources include:

- Pre-season and post-season newsletters (with meet results)
- Pre-season booklets (with school record lists, Top Ten Lists, State Qualifying Marks, State/National Record Lists)
- Personal Best Lists (previous season)
- Summary Booklets
- Goal Cards/Forms (easy to use: mileage cards, weekly/monthly/seasonal goal sheets)

During the cross country season, I require each athlete to establish a “pace and place” goal for each meet. In addition, as a group, we set team goals for the season.

Our track and field athletes use two forms to record their goals. Prior to meets, we often use an “Event Preference and Goal Sheet”. Early in the season, athletes are asked to establish (and put in writing) monthly goals for the remainder of the year.

I prefer to introduce the initial goal setting process in a classroom setting (this is probably best for the freshmen and athletes who are new to cross country and track and field). Pre-meet event preference and goal sheets are often completed at the beginning or end of a practice.

Athletes are required to (neatly) put their goals in writing. They are given a “deadline” for the return of the seasonal goal sheet (and an “incentive” is offered for the timely return of forms). Each goal sheet is reviewed; comments or suggestions are offered; a copy is kept by the coach for future use. As goals are met, athletes are asked to set new goals as they progress toward the end of the season.

Planning Ahead, Step by Step

Factors in Successful Goal Setting and Achievement

- Decide what you want to do, accomplish or achieve
- Your goal(s) must be realistic and attainable
- Your goal(s) must be specific and measurable (time, height, distance, place)
Establish a timeline/deadline for reaching each goal
- Put your goal(s) in writing
- Believe in your ability to achieve the goal(s) you have set

Use your pre-season and post-season summary booklets to help with your goal setting or speak to your coach about setting and achieving realistic goals. Review the sample goals listed below. They may help you in establishing your own choices

Sample Academic Goals

- Earn all A's and B's
- Honor Roll Status
- All-Conference Academic Honors Academic Scholarship
- * National Honor Society
- * Top 10 % in your class
- * National Merit Finalist

Sample Individual Goals

- Establish a P.R. in a particular event; place or pace goals
- Earn a school award (letter, numerals, etc.)
- School record in an event or relay
- All- Conference, all-area, all-state honors
- Qualify for the State Meet
- To Place in the State Meet
- To win a conference, sectional or state championship
- To earn a spot on the All-Time Top Ten List
- To set a school record (indoor or outdoor)
- To set a State or National record
- To earn a scholarship

Sample Team Goals

- Top 3 finish of every invitational
- Conference Championship
- Sectional Championship
- State Championship (or place in the top _____)

Track & Field Event Preference & Goal Sheet

Name _____ Grade Level _____

Meet _____ Level: FR SO FS JV VAR

Circle your choices and list a goal (time, height or distance) for each event you select.
Note: Track and Field rules allow you to compete in a maximum of four events.

Field Events

Pole Vault	_____	High Jump	_____
Long Jump	_____	Triple Jump	_____
Shot Put	_____	Discus	_____

Running Events

3200 (4 x 800) Meter Relay	_____ (leg)	_____ (team)
400 (4 x 100) Meter Relay	_____ (leg)	_____ (team)
3200 Meter Run	_____	
110 Meter High Hurdles	_____ (semi-finals)	_____ (finals)
100 Meter Dash	_____ (semi-finals)	_____ (finals)
800 Meter Dash	_____	
800 (4 x 200) Meter Relay	_____ (leg)	_____ (team)
400 Meter Dash	_____	
300 Meter Intermediate Hurdles	_____	
1600 Meter Run	_____	
200 Meter Dash	_____ (semi-finals)	_____ (finals)
1600 (4 x 400) Meter Relay	_____ (leg)	_____ (finals)

Other Goals (team, individual places, etc.) _____

NAME: _____

GRADE LEVEL: _____

TRACK & FIELD GOALS

Planning Ahead, Step by Step

	Pre-Season	February	March	April	May	Summer
EVENTS:						
Pole Vault						
High Jump						
Long Jump						
Triple Jump						
Shot Put						
Discus						
3200m Relay						
4 x 1 Lap Relay						
400m Relay						
3200m Run						
55m High Hurdles						
110m High Hurdles						
50/55m Dash						
100m Dash						
800m Dash						
800m Relay						
400m Dash						
300m Intermediate Hurdles						
1600m Run						
200m Dash						
1600m Relay						

Individual/Team place goals: _____

Academic Goals: _____

Comments: