

Cambridge Jets Track Club

Philosophy, Policies, and Procedures Guide

This guide is intended for members, parents and coaches of the Cambridge Jets Track Club. For members, this guide will help you understand what you can expect and what is expected of you. For parents, we hope this guide will help you understand the Club's philosophy, mission statement, and conflict resolution policies so that you may be assured that our Club and our coaching staff are doing everything possible to teach our members/athletes fundamental values that transcend sports. For coaches, this guide will help you to arrive at a coaching style that most reflects our Club's policies, philosophy and values. We hope that this knowledge will assist all involved to achieve a successful, enjoyable and rewarding experience. Many of the decisions made by our coaching staff and Parent Board Committee require judgment and errors may be made. We do not and should not expect perfection from our coaches, committee members or athletes. We should expect that all decisions will be made with the best interest of all involved.

Please refer to our web site at www.cambridgejetsofma.org for up to date information concerning our programs and valuable related links.

History – The Cambridge Jets was established in 1987 by husband and wife team Curtis and Kimberly Jackman. Through our growing affiliations with local colleges (Harvard, MIT, Tufts and others) we are able to practice and hold events at top-notch facilities, with strong support from parents, local organizations and our coaching staff. Jets athletes have thrived in the sport, winning a number of team championships and individual awards. To date, Jets runners have qualified to run for the U.S. national team in the AAU & USATF Junior Olympics. Many Jets runners continue their sport at the collegiate level, some even earn scholarships to universities all over the country. The Cambridge Jets team participates in state, regional, and national meets throughout New England and also in exciting locations including New York City, Orlando, Virginia Beach, and New Orleans.

Mission Statement - Our Club's main mission is to provide a safe environment for all members in order to not only build self-esteem and to foster an active, healthy life-style, but also to provide opportunities to develop sport related talents to the fullest.

Philosophy – Our Club is committed to the total physical, emotional, social and mental development of its members. In both practices and competitions a goal is to build self-esteem and self-confidence. Our intent is to challenge and develop members technically and emotionally, in a positive manner, using praise and constructive criticism.

Cambridge Jets Track Club members, parents and coaches are expected to demonstrate proper respect for each other, other teams and coaches, teammates, officials, spectators, facilities and equipment. Members and coaches are expected to exhibit the highest level of conduct, both on and off the playing field, as they are, at all times, representatives of their team, Club and community.

The Club's sole goal, in terms of athletic performance, is for each member to strive to be "the best that one can be".

Purpose

- to encourage and support the sport of running and track and field
- to promote running as a way to health and fitness
- to provide individualized instruction in the skills of track and field, along with offering actual competitive experience
- to emphasize individual achievement in an attempt to get each member to reach his/her fullest potential

Requirements for Membership

Membership is open to boys and girls, ages 6-18, who wish to pursue instruction, training and competition in the sport of track and field and who have the desire to achieve and the willingness to participate in Club activities. Members who reside outside Cambridge are welcome. All members and parents are encouraged to become actively involved in

organizing, attending and supporting Club related activities. Parents must choose at least ONE volunteer commitment in support of our youth program.

- To become a member:
1. Fill out online membership form
 2. Pay appropriate dues for the program.
 3. Provide recent physical form to show your child is in good health and able to participate
 4. Sign the Parent Contract and Consent form at the end of this document.

CLUB PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

There are two activities provided by the Club:

- Practices: The Club provides individualized coaching and organized workouts at all levels.
- Meets/Competitions: In all seasons, the Jets will participate in meets where the members are able to compete. The Club will register all eligible members for meets. The team will not cut or limit the number of members it registers. That said, there are some meets that members must achieve a qualifying standard.

High School Program

Open to high school males and females looking to prepare for upcoming seasons or to excel to the next level in their development. This program offers instruction and training by coaches in all track and field events, with specialization in the sprints, hurdles and jumps. Practice sessions are held year round, but times and dates vary with the season. The high school program is similar to our Youth Program, but offers more specialized training than with members of younger ages.

Youth Program

Open to boys and girls, ages 8-18. There are no tryouts or cuts. But for children 6-7 years old, there is a two week trial period to see if the interested child can follow directions and is really interested in the program. This is mainly a safety concern. There can be many different groups running on the track at the same time, including adults running full speed. A child who does not follow directions can be on the wrong lane and get hurt.

Practice sessions are held at the Danehy Park on Sherman Street in Cambridge during the spring, summer and fall seasons and at the indoor facility at Harvard University -Gordon Track, Cambridge during the winter season. Practice is held Monday and Wednesday evenings, from 6:30pm-7:30pm, depending on facility usage.

Members should come to practices and meets properly dressed and equipped with t-shirts, shorts, warm ups, proper running shoes (no basketball high tops, tennis shoes or dress shoes, etc...). It's also a good idea to bring water bottles, sun screen, hats, and light snacks. Practices will be held whenever possible, even in light rain. Cancellations due to rain or bad weather will be decided by the coaching staff. Every effort will be made to email cancellations due to weather. But please use your best judgement.

During the first several weeks of the program, coaches offer instruction and training in the basic skills of track and field. Members discuss with the coaches their event preferences. But it is up to the coaches to make a final determination of which events the members will be most successful and should pursue.

Parents Must Volunteer

To make the Cambridge Jets successful, we need everyone to participate and contribute. Parents of youth members are asked to volunteer for a minimum of 2 hours of volunteer work per family per year.

Volunteer activities include but are not limited to:

- Uniform ordering and distribution
- Meet volunteer – help with running and setting up the meet
- First aid volunteer – must be first aid or CPR certified
- Concessions volunteer – preparing, purchasing and selling food
- Member of the Parent Board Committee
- Fund raising

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS OF ALL TEAM MEMBERS

- members are expected to be respectful of coaches, teammates and opponents at all times, before, during and after each practice or competition
- members are to be quiet and attentive whenever a coach is providing verbal instruction
- members are to be gracious in victory and in defeat. Play within the rules and accept the outcomes
- members are to conduct themselves with honesty, integrity, poise and composure at all times
- members are to demonstrate sportsmanship at all times and act as a positive role model

Even though track is primarily an individual sport, there is also a team component where members may be registered in relays and events that will help the team win points in team competitive meets.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

- respect the efforts and performances of all team members and opponents
- respect coaches, parents, officials and competitors at all times
- demonstrate sportsmanship at all times and act as a positive, adult role model
- acknowledge the efforts of your own child and of others
- conduct yourselves in an appropriate and civil manner
- maintain composure at all times

Governing Body

The Club has a Parent Board Committee that is comprised of 5 parent volunteers and citizens interested in supporting the Cambridge Jets, for a 2 year term. The committee meets monthly throughout the year to conduct club business. To become a member of the Parent Board Committee:

1. The family must be up to date with dues and fees.
2. Must have participated with the Jets for at least one season.
3. Must be willing to attend meetings and participate in club business even if their child is not participating for that season. (For example, if an athlete only participates in the indoor season, but the parent wants to be a member of the Parent Board Committee, the parent must attend meetings in the Outdoor season, during spring and summer.)

Members and parents are encouraged to take an active role in the administration and organization of the Club and are welcome to become participating members of the Committee. Any ideas, proposals or suggestions should be directed to the Committee and will be discussed at the monthly meetings. Special committees, including, but not limited to a Fund Raising Committee, may be formed by the Parent Board Committee whenever it initiates or approves a special event. Such committees are responsible for organizing and carrying out all phases of their respective activity until its completion and must report all aspects of the event to the Parent Board Committee.

Those interested in participating on the Parent Board Committee should submit their interest in writing/email to Coach Curtis by November 20. The coaches will then choose 5 applicants by the end of December. The first meeting for the Parent Board Committee will be held in January.

Conflict Resolution

Athletic participation is highly emotional and very time consuming. Sometimes conflicts arise between members, coaches and parents. Everyone's best interest, especially of a team member, is best served when each participant understands the position of the other. This understanding can only be accomplished by open and honest communication.

When conflicts or issues arise, it is important that they be addressed **immediately** and as directly as possible, to the "appropriate party", so that they can be promptly resolved. Other parents are not "appropriate parties". Coaching staff and Committee members are considered Club leaders and issues should be communicated to one of these leaders. There should be no delay in airing any and all concerns, since this process could take time and athletic seasons and club programs are relatively short. Any comment, concern, issue or suggestion **MUST** be directed in a respectful, appropriate and impersonal manner in order for it to be addressed. **Voicing concerns, issues or conflicts in an inappropriate manner may result in immediate dismissal from our Club.**

It is important for all members and parents to know that any comments, concerns, issues or suggestions given to a coach or committee member will be addressed and seriously considered. While there can be no guarantee that all parties will agree with all resolutions or findings, a thorough, respectful airing of different perceptions and experiences can lead to more productive relationships and clearer understandings in the future. We have developed the following two step process to deal with potential conflicts.

First Step

Present the conflict/issue to a coach as soon as possible. This may be done in person, via a note, an email or a phone call. (Current contact information can be found on the Club website). Members are encouraged to do this personally, but if they are not comfortable doing so or if doing so is not practical, then they may have a parent or other representative do so on their behalf.

In order for such contact to be as productive as possible, it should be done privately and **not**

- Prior to, during or immediately following a competition,
- During a practice session, when other members are present
- When it is readily visible to others that the discussion is taking place
- When it is apparent that there is not sufficient time to allow for a complete discussion.

Second Step

If a satisfactory solution is not reached through direct contact with a coach, the member and/or parent/representative should then contact the Parent Board Committee. The coach should be informed that this contact is going to be made. All discussions and decisions made by the Committee are final and all parties agree to abide by such decisions.

Retribution

Retribution will not be tolerated. Members and parents must be confident that the voicing of an opinion or concern, using proper forum and method, is not only free from penalty or retribution, but also is strongly encouraged. If at any time a member or parent suspects that some form of retribution is surfacing as a result of having voiced an opinion, concern or issue, he or she should immediately contact a member of the Parent Committee, using proper forum and method.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT A COMPETITION

1. Once a Club member is confirmed to participate in a meet, the appropriate entry fee will be collected in advance and the member will be registered for the meet. There may be some competitions in which it is easier and more efficient for members to enter on their own. This will be discussed far enough in advance for such to happen.

When possible, the Club will make every effort to email parents about upcoming events. Parents **MUST** adhere to all deadlines for returning entry forms and entry fees or the Club may choose not to enter their athlete with our team entry and the parent will then be responsible for their athlete's entry.

2. Please bring and wear proper attire:

- Full Club uniform (top & bottom)
- Running flats to warm up and cool down
- Racing shoes, spikes or throwing shoes to compete in
- Warm up suit in case it gets cold; Club warm up if you own one
- Travel bag packed with anything and everything that you may need to compete successfully

3. Weather is changeable, so always pack accordingly

4. Team parents sit together - in most cases, our Club will have a team tent set up for all to gather under

- Parents may bring lawn chairs to set up along the outside of the team area or tent and kids can spread blankets on the ground to lie on and stretch
- Parents and members should bring things to keep themselves occupied during competitions – coloring books, games, headsets, books to read, etc..
- Be prepared to stay for the day and cheer for all members of the team not just for your child's event.

5. Most meets have snack bars, but most parents pack their own coolers.

- Pack coolers with ice, water, lots of fresh fruit and other healthy foods that can be consumed throughout the day
- Competitions (especially track & field) can take up most of the day, so plan accordingly
- Sharing is not required, but fresh fruit and such is often an item that the kids like to pass around

6. Pack it in...you pack it out - we do not want to become known as the slob team. Make sure that all items you bring with you, leave with you or find their way to a trash can. Be respectful.

7. Keep a positive attitude:

- The days can get long and hot or cold and they can be quite unbearable when you have to listen to someone complaining throughout the day. Be respectful of others who have come to enjoy the meet and to watch their athlete perform - do not burden them or abuse them with inappropriate negative talk.
- Encourage and cheer for all team members. If you don't know someone's name, ask another parent or team member.
- Taking first in a heat or overall event feels great, but what we really want each athlete to focus on is continuous improvement of form and technique and of their own personal records - effort, not outcome is the main goal
- Make sure every member feels important and knows that his/her best is what we ask them to give in every competition
- No gossiping about Club members or associates. If you have issues, address them with the appropriate person in a constructive manner.
- Encourage and cheer for athletes who are not members of our Club

8. Be ready to volunteer:

- You may be asked to take a group of kids to the bathroom, to the starting area or to the warm up area. Be open to helping out.
- You may be asked to collect stats or results, video tape or help with times. In some instances, our Club may even be asked to supply volunteers to help with a meet.

9. If you see a safety concern, bring it to the attention of one of our coaches so that it can be addressed.

10. Have fun!

Parent Contract

- Let the coaches do the coaching. Pressuring and/or sideline coaching leads to a negative experience for your child as well as the other participants and it is confusing to the runners and complicates the coach's job. Instructing your child to not follow the coach's direction will not be tolerated.
- Practice is essential and it's important that all members participate in practice and that they arrive on time.
- Involved parents are vital to the success of Cambridge Jets; we will need many volunteers to step forward in various roles to help make our program a success. We are asking a minimum of 2 hours of volunteer work per family per year.
- Disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated at track events; this includes, but is not limited to, yelling at coaches, runners or expressing your dislike in a loud manner. Anyone displaying this behavior will be asked to leave.
- If you wish to speak with a coach, make an appointment, email or phone the coach with your concern. DO NOT approach the coaches at a track meet or during practices unless previously scheduled.

By signing below you agree to the terms provided in this agreement

Athlete name(s) (Please Print)

Parent Signature

Parent name (Please Print)

Date

Cambridge Jets Registration Consent Form

USE OF PHOTOGRAPH CONSENT: I do hereby give the Cambridge Jets Youth Track Club permission to take and use my child's photograph

Parent Signature

CONSENT FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT: I do hereby give authority to the Cambridge Jets Youth Track Club staff to obtain emergency medical treatment for my child with the understanding that the family will be notified as soon as possible. The Cambridge Jets assume no liability for cost of treatment.

Parent Signature