

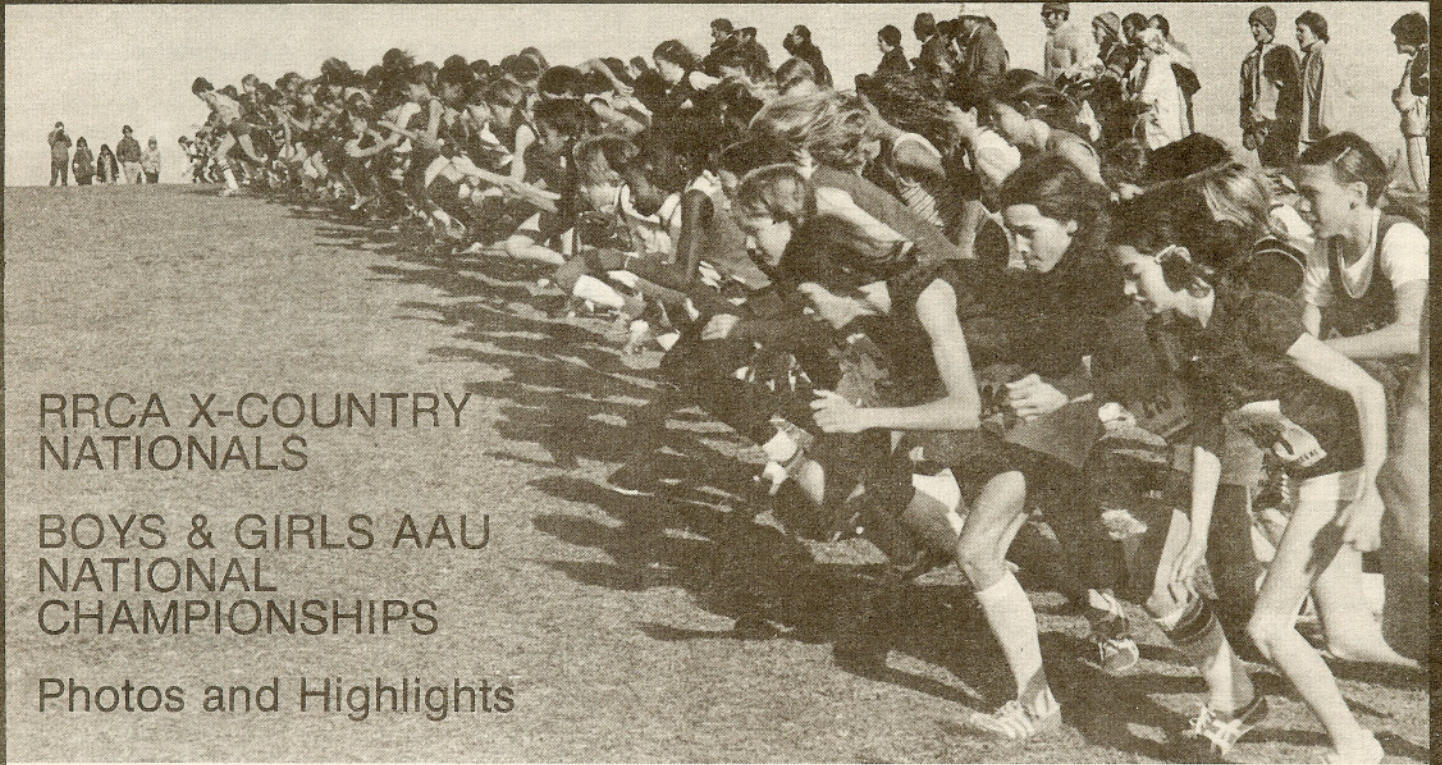


STARTING LINE^{T.M.}

TRACK & FIELD FOR YOUNG ATHLETES

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1975 VOL. 5 No. 39

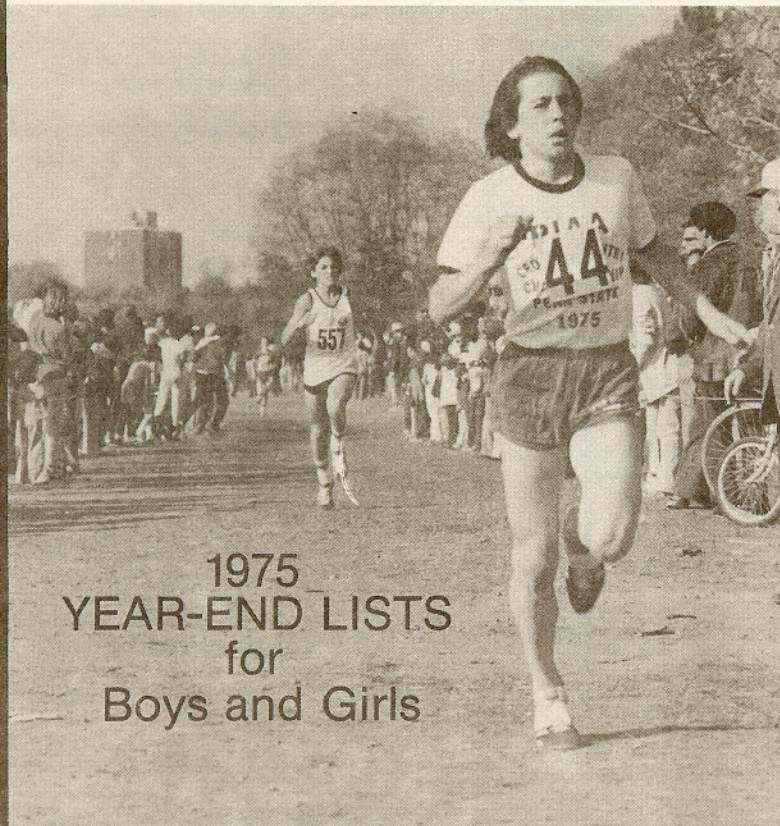
P. O. BOX 878, RESEDA, CALIFORNIA 91335



RRCA X-COUNTRY
NATIONALS

BOYS & GIRLS AAU
NATIONAL
CHAMPIONSHIPS

Photos and Highlights



1975
YEAR-END LISTS
for
Boys and Girls



Sirs,

I look forward to receiving each of your bi-monthly publications of Starting Line, as I'm sure all of your readers do. Like myself, I feel many of the parents and coaches get some personal satisfaction from seeing their son(s)/daughter(s) or team members' names in print. But I'm sure, for all of us, the reason for subscribing to your magazine is the interesting articles and editorials, comments on the Forum page, or the enjoyment of going through the age groups checking on times, etc. of team-mates or members of other teams that we've watched grow up in our years of attending track meets. I also spend many hours throughout the year, going through the back issues, comparing times of the previous year's meets, where I have found them to be much faster this year, mainly due to the year-of-birth change in the age groups.

While at the track meets I hurriedly write down the results and times, etc., given by the announcer, in my program. For one reason or another, I never seem to get them all — maybe it's because I rely on the "S.L.," knowing the next issue will have the complete results. But this year your first five publications have been a disappointment, as regards the coverage given to girls' AAU track in the So. Calif. area.

I know some the reasons for not being able to give coverage is the lack of results, etc. from contributors, but being a So. Calif. based publication, I'm sure your staff were at most of the above mentioned meets (a couple of which were rained out).

I think part of the problem is you're trying to give too much national coverage, hence the reason for less "local" meets (not just in So. Calif.) getting better coverage.

Therefore, may I make this suggestion. That you give some thought to dividing the area served by Starting Line into four geographical locations. Then print 24 pages, 16 of which would be standard to all areas, the remaining eight pages could be devoted to "local" coverage and each inserted into their respective geographic location editions.

Of course, this may be easier said than done, as I'm sure this would create additional costs to your typesetting, printing, etc. But if it is at all feasible, I'm sure it would make for a better publication and more interesting reading for your subscribers.

T. McKenna, No. Hollywood, Calif.

(Editors: The points you raise are good ones. We have been wrestling with "local" vs. national coverage since the inception of SL in 1971. We were deluged with meet results from all over in 1975, in contrast to our first year, when at least 1/4 of all the material submitted to us was from southern California girls' meets.

Though our essentially "part-time" two man staff prohibits adopting the solution you suggest in the immediate future, the format of SL will be changing in order to strike a compromise between regional and national coverage. We are happy to know we are not simply a southern California publication.)

Editors

Last year's Boys Nationals was a pretty good meet. We came a long way and I must say the competition was good. But I think a few more ideas should be added to the Nationals:

(1) There should be a type of get-together for the kids so at least they can meet new friends instead of on the track,

(2) Why don't they have a point system like they do in cross country. It gives the whole team a chance to strive for one basic goal -- to win the Nationals and be national champs,

(3) Why don't they run mile relays? The 440 relay is great, but I would like to show the west we can also run quarters better than any team around.

Bob Jackson

Morris Estate Track Club
Philadelphia, PA

(Editor: SL heartily endorses your first point. As for the other points, we believe that team points and relays have no place in national individual championships, especially since these aspects traditionally cause more disputes than all other parts of track & field put together. However, why not have a big relay carnival or a real team championship meet, a few days after the individual championships let's say, at the same site or nearby. In the interim, athletes and coaches would have time for the "get-together".

Editors:

I have received your magazine for over two years now and enjoy it very much. I am very surprised though, that you support the January 1 rule.

Hugo Pruter and Jerry Montgomery covered all the issues so well (see Forum, No. 34 and 37) but I would like to add that I have only met one person who likes the rule. The reasons for the rule seem so weak, like changing divisions in the middle of a season. This would not happen if cutoffs were at the beginning or end of a season such as May 1 or August 1 for outdoor Track & Field.

Since the three seasons - Indoor Track, Outdoor Track and Cross Country - extend through the entire year, everyone would be at the top of their age group during one of the three seasons. January 1 is just too far from Outdoor Track & Field and Cross Country seasons.

The rule appears to have been made for older kids. Four to six months means so much to the younger (15 and under) kids. I am grateful that you print comments both pro and con on this important subject.

A concerned parent,

Don Gejer
Peoria, Illinois

Opinions expressed in this column are not necessarily those of the editors of STARTING LINE. It is hoped that the pertinence and timeliness of the subjects discussed will stimulate our readers to re-examine their attitudes toward the sport of Track & Field. The editors invite comments on these and other topics.

Editors,

In the Region Four Junior Olympics, the winner of the intermediate/senior girls-discus throw at Gainesville, FL was Karlyn Gansel, who was only 14 years old. Karlyn could not go on to the National Junior Olympic Meet, because the discus throw is only held every other year at this level.

Next year, at age 15, is the only year she will be able to compete at the national level unless some non-sensical rules are changed. When Karlyn is 16, the event will not be held at the national level.

Charles Gansel
Lake City, Florida

(Editor: Good news for Karlyn and many others. According to late word, the discus throw will be among the eight additional events which will be contested every year at the National JO Championships, beginning in 1976).

Editors,

I can't see what Mark Becker is complaining about (see Forum, Sept/Oct Starting Line). At the 1974 Cross Country Championships in Dayton, I openly announced that I wanted to host the 1975 Nationals in Albuquerque, so the western teams wouldn't have to travel East again, which they have to.

I wrote Gabe Mirkin many, many times and never got an answer. Then all of a sudden Annapolis (coincidence?) gets the bid and once again we westerners have to travel east.

So now I am publicly announcing my bid for the 1976 Men's and Boys National Cross Country Championships. Want to bet we don't get it?

Dave Sanchez
Albuquerque, NM

LATE NEWS!

According to reports from the National AAU Convention in New Orleans, more track & field competitors will be at the National Junior Olympic meet in Memphis, Tennessee this year. Not only will each of the thirteen regions be allowed to advance two contestants in each event, compared to one per event previously, but four more national championship events will be added for both boys and girls.

In addition, the JO age determining date has been moved to January 1 (again) to coincide with AAU Age Groups.

Among other site selected for National Championship Meets: AAU Jr. Women - Los Angeles (UCLA) on June 13 & 14; JO Cross Country - St Louis on Dec 11; Jr. Women AAU Indoor Pentathlon - Boy's Town, Nebraska; Outdoor Pentathlon - Santa Barbara, Calif; JO Boys & Girls Pentathlon/Decathlon - Chicago.

Additional details will appear in the next issue of Starting Line.



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STARTING LINE

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STARTING LINE depends on contributions of results, news, opinions and photos from all of our readers (athletes, coaches, officials, parents, and general followers of junior and age group track & field).

It is more likely that your contributions will appear in the pages of STARTING LINE if you adhere to the following guidelines when submitting material:

RESULTS

Include first and last name of at least the first three competitors in each event, along with hometown or team affiliation, time or distance of each competitor listed, type of track (dirt or all-weather), wind conditions (the more specific the better), height of hurdles, weight of implements (shot, discus, etc.). Also include heat or qualifying round marks (if better than final mark) and birth-dates on top athletes would be helpful for best performance lists.

NEWS

General interest items (in contrast to news merely of your team or of one individual) are more useful. We want material on both boys and girls (such as schedules of upcoming events, new teams or programs), background info on area, athletes, etc.), especially from areas which haven't gotten much space before.

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If you're moving, please let us know three weeks before changing your address.

On the Cover PHOTO CREDIT

(Photo at top) Reacting to the starter's pistol in the Midget (10-11) Girls race at the National AAU Cross Country Championship Meet in Belmont, California on November. The field, 154 strong, traversed the mountainous and scenic Crystal Springs Course for 1.5 miles. Can you pick out any familiar faces?

/Photo by JEFF JOHNSON/

(Photo at bottom right) KATHY MILLS of the Syracuse (NY) Chargers leads the charge of eastern girls who burst into the national limelight, by winning the AAU Junior Women's Cross Country Championship handily. Running confidently, the Fayetteville-Manlius High School harrier was by herself the second half of the 2.5 mile race, eventually finishing 80 yards in front.

/Photo by DOUG SCHWAB/

(Photo at bottom left) MARK SOLTIS of Clarks Grove, Pennsylvania, added a major title to his list of victories, taking the 12-13 Division of the RRCA National Postal Mile at Van Cortland Park, NY. SEAN TRACY of the D.C. CYO is seen making a valiant effort to pick up some ground, but fell short by two seconds. The other placers were rather far behind those two outstanding runners.

/Photo by STEVEN SUTTON/

In 1976, S.L. will be expanding their services in areas that we had planned for some time. (1) CLUB MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS - while every other track magazines are raising their rates, we, on the contrary, will not only maintain ours but will also offer substantial discount rates to clubs as well; (2) We are coming out with our first CATALOG of important books and stop watches starting in February. There will be over 35 items especially selected for age group track participants. It will be offered to clubs, and distributed at meets throughout the United States by selected distributors. If you want to be one of our distributor and earn royalties (without investment) write to us and we'll tell you all the particulars. We will start our mailing to clubs at the end of this month. Look for it!

From the Editors

At a recent championship meet, one of the top junior distance runners in the nation remarked, after watching an age group race, "I'm glad I didn't have to compete when I was that age". The runner's teammates agreed unanimously.

We have heard similar remarks from several top high school athletes. Many of them are astonished to see over-zealous parents or coaches exhorting their nine year-olds, at the top of their lungs to win at all costs.

SL believes that winning may be an important aspect of competition, but not nearly so much as health (physical and mental), self-satisfaction, enjoyment and personal improvement. We often wonder who is getting the most from age group track and cross country. Is it the boy or girl who must win in order to gain the approval of mom, dad, coach or friends? Is it the young athlete who competes for years without ever winning? Might it be the one who tries it for a year or two, then quits to devote more time to some other experience?

Maybe it is the adults who get the most out of the age group programs. Which reminds us of the remark made by basketball player Bill Russell, when asked what he thought of Little League. "The best I can say for it," Bill replied, "is that it keeps the parents off the streets." We wonder if that is the best that could be said about age group track.