



Courtesy: Athletics Ontario

Note: This document has been modified to suit the needs of Athletics PEI

The purpose of this document is to assist people in the initial stages of getting a club organized in their community. It is not intended to cover all areas that could affect clubs. Club officials are encouraged to contact Athletics PEI if they require information not covered in this document.

Before a track club is formed, one important question should be addressed: Who will the club serve? A number of different types of clubs are possible (and exist), including:

- All Around Clubs (including Track & Field, Cross Country, and Road Racing)
- Track & Field Only
- Track Only (all track, distance only, sprints only, etc.)
- Field Only (jumps only, throws only)
- Multiple events Only
- Cross Country Only
- Road racing Only

The type of club to be formed will primarily depend on the interests of those who will be doing the coaching:

- How many coaches will be involved?
- What is their commitment in terms of time?
- What events do they want to coach?
- With what type of athlete do they want to work?

After this important item has been dealt with, it is time to establish an executive and to name committee chairpersons. The club executive usually consists of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Sometimes a Board of Directors is formed, consisting of the above executive members plus the Head Coach, Athlete's Representative, and the chairpersons of some of the committees named below:

- Fundraising
- Facilities
- Social
- Community and Media relations
- Club Newsletter
- Records and Statistics

It is best, initially, to appoint Directors and Chairpersons. After the club is established, elections should be held annually to determine the members of the executive. It is wise to hold meetings on a regular basis. Board members and Committee Chairpersons who are not active should be replaced. Most clubs will have a constitution which outlines their philosophy and general policies.

Coaching

When starting a club, it is not essential to have certified coaches. The main ingredient for success at this stage is for the coach(es) to be enthusiastic and be willing to read books on technique and training methods. In many cases, the personal experiences of former athletes who wish to offer their services as coaches can be called upon to get the club started. Once the club begins to develop, it is advisable for coaches to proceed with their certification. At this point, Athletics PEI can be contacted for details with regard to proper procedure and availability of courses.

Coaches are required to register with Athletics PEI so that they can be kept informed of all developments relating to coaching.

Fundraising

The first step in fundraising is to find out from the local recreational department which are the various service clubs and large businesses in the area and if they will support a club in the area. It could be that they will give a one-time only donation to get the club started, or they may provide some funding over a period of time. A prepared submission is superior to a verbal discussion as ultimately, a written statement will be required.

A number of clubs obtain a licence to operate a bingo. Check with municipal and/or provincial officials. A steady source of funds with minimal work is the result of being successful in this venture.

Affiliation/Registration with Athletics PEI

The club must send a completed club affiliation form to Athletics PEI. Affiliated clubs receive voting privileges at the Athletics PEI Annual General Meeting, space on the Athletics PEI website to advertise, and the right to enter athletes in sanctioned competitions under the club name.

Athletes wishing to compete in provincial or national championships or be considered for provincial teams or training camps, etc., must be members of Athletics PEI. Athletics PEI membership automatically includes membership with Athletics Canada. Where possible, it is expected that athletes will also belong to a local club.

Club Membership Fee

A membership fee structure should be established, taking into account projected travel costs, club administration expenses. Clubs may also consider paying coaches an honorarium for their services and may increase membership fees to subsidize this expense.

A good fundraising program usually means relatively low membership fees. All athletes in the club should be required to participate in fundraising activities.

Media/Public Relations

If a club is to become well supported by the community, the local media must be provided on a regular basis with a write-up of the club's activities. Through exposure in the media, people in the community will read or hear about club activities and take an interest. Sponsors are generally impressed if they can read or hear something in the local press or on the radio, or on television.

Facilities/Equipment

Areas to look at for a club are an outdoor location and a school gymnasium for indoor (winter) use. Usually, a club organizer will have to contact the local Parks and Recreation Department and/or School Administrator on this. He/she should be prepared with a written brief about club objectives and why the club needs both of the above as well as basic equipment. Remember, facilities must be obtained for the lowest cost, or, better still, for FREE! If you are lucky, your club will have access to an indoor track. However, a great many athletes, past and present, have reached international status without having an indoor track on which to train.

Competition Program

Athletics PEI, along with its clubs, offers a range of competitions in various age groups. Clubs interested in hosting a sanctioned competition should contact Athletics PEI concerning sanctioning procedures.