

2017 Donegal Track & Field Season Preview

The 2017 boys' and girls' teams will be very competitive again. The girls' team looks to 3-peat as section champs, while the boys' team looks to pick up their first section title.

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“Some people create with words, or with music, or with a brush and paints. I like to make something beautiful when I run. I like to make people stop and say, ‘I’ve never seen anyone run like that before.’ It’s more than just a race, it’s style. It’s doing something better than everyone else. It’s being creative.”—Steve Prefontaine, American Track Legend

Please visit www.rundonegal.com and check out important dates, info and Donegal's Top 10 to better understand times and distances athletes are aiming for in any event. There are many additional resources on this site for one to explore as well.

Girls' Team

Last year, the girls' squad won their 2nd straight section championship, winning section meets by an average of 68 points per meet. At the League Championship the girls finished 11th out of 22 teams. This year they look to 3-peat as section champs, win a few league meet medals, and move several relays and individuals to the District 3 Championships.

The girls' squad lost a few athletes due to graduation, but should remain a strong squad. The sprints and hurdles will be the girls' deepest and most talented squad, returning an individual medalist and members of their league medal-winning relays. In the field, jumps should be improved and will have a little more depth. The throwers will have some big shoes to fill, and distance, the squad hardest hit by graduation, will have to reload to be as competitive as last year.

Sprints

The Lady Indians are returning two sprinters that ended last year on the league honor roll of top 8 performers. Alice Fernald was 4th in 400m at the League championships, and qualified for the District 3 championships. Taylor Nissly finished the season 8th on the League Honor Roll in the 200m and 400m dashes, and tied the 34 year old Donegal record in the 200m. Alice and Taylor were also on the league medal winning relays, finishing 5th in the of 4x100m and 3rd in the 4x400m relay. Also returning from those relays are Kalee Fahndrich (4x100m), Caroline Goodwill (4x100m), and Ashley Maxwell (4x400m). Other returners that add to the sprint squad depth are Aliza Young, Lauren Redcay, Natalie Fellenbaum, and Karlie Dunn.

Erin Slattery is the top returning sprint hurdler. She has Donegal's 4th fastest time ever in the 300 hurdles and the 6th fastest in the high hurdles.

Distance

The distance squad was hardest hit by graduation, losing 4 of their top 5 point scorers. Seneca Straub is the top returning runner. She has Donegal's 9th fastest time ever in the mile and 7th fastest 3200m time. Other returning runners that will be counted on to score points are Miranda Nagle, McKenzie DuBusky, Anna Hawbaker, and Erika Schell.

Throws

Returning in the javelin is Alyssa McNece, a 10th place finisher at Leagues. Jamilyn Nimo finished in the top 8 in the League Honor Roll last year for shot put. She is Donegal's 7th best shot putter of all time. Other returning throwers are Naomi Avila, Ella Warburton, Hannah McNece, and Rosiland Staie.

Jumps

The jumps could potentially be a much-improved area for Donegal. Carly Diffenderfer (long jump and triple jump) and Hannah Loyd (triple jump) return in the horizontal jumps. Lauren Becker returns as last year's top high jumper, just missing Donegal's Top Ten Honor Roll, and in the pole vault Janell Brinser returns as the 5th highest pole vaulter ever for Donegal. Other returners are Alexandra Daly, Hayley Grosh, and Lauren Fox, and after a one year hiatus, Jaiden Droege.

Boys' Team

Last year the Indians were 3-3, but lost very close meets to Annville and Northern Lebanon. As a much more experienced squad, they should be able to challenge ELCO and Annville for the section championship.

Sprints/ Jumps

Improvement in the sprints and jump squads will determine a large part of the team's success. Losing their top 3 sprinters and 2 jumpers from last year won't be easy, but the Indians do return some young talent that will have matured. Avery Walker scored points in dual meets last year in the triple jump and will have a chance to make the top ten Donegal Honor Roll after missing the list by a few inches. Calvin Woods and Keeryen Stevens performed well late in the season in the hurdles. Both Calvin and Keeryen could help the team out in other places besides just the hurdles, especially in high jump where Calvin jumped 5'6".

In the 400m dash Cameron Arntz is the top returning runner and could help in both the 4x100 or 4x400m relays along with returner Tyler Rupp. There will be quite a bit of competition to make the relays during the entire season, so expect a focused sprint squad.

In the pole vault, Jarred Ford lead the squad with a 10 foot vault. He is joined by Davon Brantley and Jarad Brown. Which of these vaulters can tie Coach Wittle's vault of 12'6" (Donegal's #2 all time)? Other returning jumpers and sprinters are Mason Bradfield, Nick Jordan, Payton Luft, Adam Hawbaker, Shane Buhrman, and Gabe Hawley.

Distance

The top returning miler from last year is Silas Buckwalter. Between Silas, Keith Atayde, Dylan Zuch, and Cody Canterbury, the Indians should have four boys running under a five-minute mile. In the 800-meter run, Justin Rivera returns as the top runner. As a goal the squad would like to win a medal at the League Championships in the 4x800 meter relay. Other returners are Kyle Anderson, Brandon Hess, Ben Shaffer, Hunter Williams, and Eion Cushy.

Throws

Brooks Bear and Nick Ketner are the top two returning throwers. In his first season last year, Brooks threw the 7th best shot at Donegal and 8th best discus throw. Together they should score a lot of points. Other returners are Mason Sauder, Zech Stiver, Gabe Cressman, and Logan Nauman.

Order of Events

On the Track:

Girls' race first followed by boys.

Sometimes, in distance races, girls and boys will run together to save on time.

4x800 meter Relay (3200 m Relay)

100 m Hurdles (girls)

110 m Hurdles (boys)

100 m dash

1600 m

4x100 m Relay (400 m Relay)

400 m

300 m Hurdles

800 m

200 m

3200 m

4x400 m Relay (1600 m Relay)

One lap around the track = 400 m which is approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of one mile.

In the Field:

Long & Triple Jumpers and Shot-Put, Javelin, & Discus throwers are given (3) trials/attempts to start. After the third attempt, the top (4) competitors are given an additional (3) attempts.

In Pole Vault and High Jump, competitors get (3) attempts at each height of the bar. If a competitor does not complete the attempt after (3) they are done. If a competitor does complete a height, they then advance to the next height and receive (3) more attempts. Scoring is based on highest clear and ties are broken by missed attempts.

Jumps

- Boys Pole Vault followed by Girls
- Girls High Jump followed by Boys
- Boys Triple Jump followed by Girls
- Girls Long Jump followed by Boys

Occasionally, in the horizontal jumps, meets will have "Open Pits." An "Open Pit" is when Long and Triple jumpers have a set amount of time (i.e. 30 minutes) to complete their first 3 trials.

Throws

- Boys Shot, followed by Discus then Javelin
- Girls Javelin, followed by Shot then Discus

Scoring:

Dual Meets

First Place = 5 points

Second Place = 3 points

Third Place = 1 point

Relays

Winning Relay = 5 points

No other points awarded

In field events, ties are broken by the next best attempt.

Athletes may only compete in (4) total events in one meet.

Invitational Meets

These meets are traditionally run on Saturdays and cater to the top one or two athletes in an event on the team. Invitationals usually have minimum marks athletes must have met to be allowed entry into the meet. There are usually anywhere between 6 and 30 (or more) schools represented at any given invitational.

Scoring at an invitational is different from a dual meet because they award more points. The scoring is usually handed out to the coaches upon registering. An example would be as follows:

1st – 10 points

2nd – 8 points

3rd – 6 points

4th – 5 points

5th – 4 points

6th – 3 points

7th – 2 points

8th – 1 point

Invitationals may last from 9 am until 5 pm. Because it is a very long day for the athletes, we do not require them to ride in the vans with us when we leave at 6:30 or 7:00 am. However, parents may drive children to and from the meet. If an athlete rides to the meet with us, but you would like them to ride home with you, I would ask that parents speak directly to one of the coaches before leaving with your child. Ideally, a written note would be preferred as the assistant coaches could pass it to the head coach.

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POST SEASON

League Meet

The league meet is essentially the Lancaster-Lebanon League Invitational. Each school is allowed (1) entry per event. However, 2nd Entry Guidelines allow coaches to enter more than one athlete if multiple athletes have met the standard.

The League Meet is held over two days (Friday 5/12/17 & Saturday 5/13/17) at Hempfield High School.

District III Meet

The District III Track & Field Meet is an exceptional meet to attend. The meet is held the weekend after our league meet at Shippensburg University. This meet is a Friday & Saturday meet that have very rigorous standards for entry.

The District releases qualification guidelines that have been revised yearly to give coaches an estimate of what athletes will need to perform in order to be accepted into the meet. These are, in fact, just guidelines. Just because an athlete hits the district guideline, does not mean they will actually be accepted into the meet. This would mean, athletes in District III far exceeded the anticipated guideline marks. The district would seed the meet and only take the top 18 competitors. The district may also look for a natural break in the ranks and take two or three extra athletes in an event. Additionally, if an athlete falls short of the standard, coaches will still submit the athlete. We do this, because sometimes what District III has set as the guideline is far about what many athletes were able to achieve that season. In this case, District III will take athletes below the guideline.

At the District III meet, athletes have the opportunity to advance to the state championship. Track & field is separated into two divisions: AA and AAA. Donegal is classified as AAA for both male and female teams. As a AAA school, the top (5) athletes in the district will advance to the state championship. PIAA has also set a standard per event known as the, "State Qualifying Standard" (SQ). If an athlete hits the SQ, they automatically advance to the state championship if they place in the top (8). For example, the SQ mark for boys AAA shot-put was 52 feet and no athletes hit the SQ, the top 5 athletes would still advance. If 7 athletes hit the standard, 7 athletes advance. However, if 12 athletes hit the standard, only the top (8) advance. This is not a universal rule. Because of the size of District III, we are given more slots to enter into the state meet compared to a smaller district.

PIAA State Championships

The PIAA State Championships are held at Shippensburg University every Memorial Day weekend. The stadium will be completely full as will the field events outside of the stadium. Hotel rooms are booked a year in advance and the town is impossible to drive through the Friday & Saturday of the meet. It is best to arrive plenty early.

The PIAA State Meet is run incredibly efficient and will run perfectly on schedule. There are always vendors and stations with activities to participate in, but there is also the chance of watching a state or national record fall by one of the many talented athletes in Pennsylvania.

There are many spectators that have been attending the event for 50+ years simply because of how incredible the sport truly is and how impressive the meet is run.

Nutrition

As coaches, we do understand we are dealing with teenagers. However, we also want our athletes to understand how to appropriately fuel their body and hopefully pick up some habits they can carry into adulthood. This is not an absolute guide for nutrition and we're not saying you can't be on the team if an athlete goes to Burger King, but on most days, we hope they make the decision to fuel their bodies appropriately.

The 10 Foods Every Athlete Should Attempt to Eat Every Day

- 1. At least one dark green leafy vegetable:** Broccoli, Brussel Sprouts, Collard Greens, Kale, Spinach, Mixed Greens
- 2. At least one bright yellow, orange or red fruit/vegetable:** Peppers, Squash, Jalapenos, Squash, Apples, Red Cabbage
- 3. At least one citrus fruit or Vitamin C containing vegetable:** Oranges, Lemons, Limes, Potatoes, Kiwis, Melons
- 4. At least one tomato or tomato product:** Salsa, Fresh Tomatoes, Spaghetti Sauce, Catsup, Tomato Soup, Chili
- 5. At least one serving of dark blue or purple fruit/vegetable:** Blueberries, Blackberries, Cherries, Raspberries, Eggplant, Red Cabbage
- 6. Six or more servings (1/2 cup each) of 100% whole grains:** Brown Rice, Whole wheat cereal, Bran muffins, Oatmeal, Whole grain pasta, Whole grain bread
- 7. Two or more servings of lean protein:** Chicken, Turkey, Eggs, Lean Beef, Soy , Fish, Protein Powder Drinks
- 8. One or more servings of fresh legumes:** Beans, Nut butters, Walnuts, Chickpeas (hummus), Lima Beans, Almonds
- 9. Two or more servings of high calcium foods:** Fresh milk, Soy Milk, Yogurt, Real cheese, Yogurt String Cheese
- 10. A high quality multivitamin supplement insures you are getting everything you need. It is a supplement, not the real thing though!**

The 10 Foods Every Athlete Should AVOID Almost Every Day

- 1. Soda: Any type, any brand, any flavor:** Coke, Pepsi, 7-Up, Mtn. Dew, Dr. Pepper, Generic Brands
- 2. Hot dogs:** So bad they get their own category!
- 3. Luncheon meats:** Bologna, Salami, Pepperoni, Sausage, Pastrami, Corned Beef
- 4. Fried foods:** Fried Chicken Fingers, Fried Cheese, French Fries, Fried Twinkies
- 5. Pastries: Anything made with white flour, sugar and fat:** Ding Dongs, Donuts Cookies, Ho-Ho's, Little Debbie anything!
- 6. Candy:** M & M's, Reese's, Snickers, Baby Ruth, Kit-Kats, Twizzlers, etc.
- 7. Fast food:** Anything from any fast food place is bad for you. Even McDonald's!
- 8. Highly sugared cereal:** Frosted Flakes, Apple Jacks, Coco-Puffs, Capt'n Crunch, Honey Smacks, etc.

9. Trans-fatty acids: Creamy Salad Dressing, Chips, Mac & Cheese, French Fries, Margarine, Chicken Nuggets

10. Anything with Olean or other types of synthetic fats! Read the label!

Snacks on Meet Days

It's important that the athletes (and parents) pack the right type of snacks on meet days. Track & Field meets are all day events. The proper snack choices keep our athletes nourished and will provide the needed energy to successfully compete throughout the day. We strongly urge that you steer away from highly processed snack foods (high fat, high sugar, and other ingredients you can't pronounce). Fresh fruit, protein and whole grains are always a good choice.

Here are a few ideas on what to bring:

WATER, WATER, WATER!

Fresh Fruit (Bananas, Oranges, Apples, Kiwi, etc.)

Muffins

Raisins

Peanut Butter & Jelly (on whole grain bread or bagel)

Granola Bars

Carrots

Celery (with or without peanut butter)

Dried Fruit Chip

Whole Grain Crackers

Nutrition/High Protein Bars (Balance, PowerBar, etc.)

Sports Drinks (Gatorade, Propel, Powerade, etc.)

Track Meet Etiquette

Track & Field meets are generally very positive. There tends to be very little, if any, arguing and challenging of officials and other coaches. Coaches are very social and cordial with each other as well as the officials. We expect the same from our athletes. Sportsmanship is one of the biggest priorities on our team.

This sport is physiologically and psychologically taxing on all of the athletes competing. Positive reinforcement is used by all coaches towards not just our team, but towards the team we are competing against.

When asking your child about how they competed, always ask if they improved not if they placed. They will tell you if they scored points, but especially at a young age, encourage growth in the sport, not winning or placing in the top 3.

Finally, when you show up to a track meet the atmosphere is much more laid back than team sports. However, please do not distract your child by coming into the competition area, showing them pictures/video's you have taken, or try to discuss plans for the weekend. You may unknowingly get your child disqualified from competition because rules have been violated or you may unintentionally distract them and cause them to lose focus.