

## Tri-State Athletic



## Club

It is my pleasure to announce the creation of the Tri-State Athletic Club in time for the 2004-2005 Indoor Track & Field season. It is my hope that we will be able to serve the needs of athletes in the West Virginia – Kentucky – Ohio region who wish to become more involved in the sport of track & field by opening up opportunities not readily accessible in the past. This club is an effort to build upon the great work done by the Capital City Striders and the West Virginia Indoor Track Club (WVITC) who have helped create a great forward momentum for the sport of track & field in West Virginia.

The Tri-State Athletic Club (TSAC) was created this year for a variety of reasons. First, while track & field is experiencing a massive growth on the scholastic level highlighted by the record breaking exploits of Alan Webb, Xavier Carter, Monique Henderson, and many others nationwide over the past several years, the tri-state area and West Virginia specifically have not seen the same growth. In fact, in West Virginia, the sport is in trouble. From the shortening of the Outdoor Track season, to the elimination of the Men's programs at Marshall University and West Virginia University, to the amazing lack of support from administrators who prioritize baseball and softball, our sport, the oldest in the world and the only sport that everyone can participate in needs to be strengthened for the young people coming up to be able have the same opportunities that many of us have already enjoyed.

Second, the TSAC seeks to provide the opportunities that have been difficult for athletes in this area to undertake including Indoor Track & Field, AAU and USA Track & Field events, and major competitions such as the Nike Indoor Classic, and the Adidas National Scholastic Outdoor Championships. Enabling athletes to compete in these situations will result not only in greater exposure and competitive opportunities for athletes, but will raise the bar of expectations and performances during the traditional scholastic season. For example, many local athletes from Ohio are at a distinct disadvantage against the schools from the central and northern parts of the state that compete during the Indoor season and the results show at both Regional and State Meets. By practicing and competing over the Indoor season, we hope to close the gap that now exists.

Third, this club seeks to enlarge the sense of community that exists within athletes who compete in track & field in the tri-state area. Despite the large concentration of high schools in the area, many of our athletes will never compete against each other at the same time. This is a truly disturbing phenomenon. Track & Field is the most communal sport, allowing athletes to meet and get to know athletes from other schools and parts of the country without sacrificing competition.

Finally, this club was created to be here for the long run. We hope to provide the best possible coaching and competition for our athletes as they strive to perform to their

best. Our main goal will always be to see to the greatest development of an individual's potential, whatever that may be, while helping to instill a strong work ethic and a commitment to excellence both in the classroom and in sport.

Below you will find a series of questions and answers that will hopefully give you a better sense of what we are about. Please feel free to contact us at any time with questions.

Jason Lea  
Founder, Head Coach  
Tri-State Athletic Club  
304-617-3044  
lea3@marshall.edu

### **1) What is the Tri-State Athletic Club?**

The Tri-State Athletic Club is a non-profit track & field club created to help athletes in the West Virginia-Kentucky-Ohio area. The TSAC will be part of both AAU and USATF.

### **2) What is the purpose of the TSAC?**

The purpose of the TSAC is to provide and enhance opportunities for members to further develop their abilities and be exposed to additional competitive venues including, Indoor Track, the Nike Indoor Classic, the Adidas National Scholastic Outdoor Championships, and AAU and USATF competition.

### **3) Who can join the Tri-State Athletic Club?**

Anyone old enough to compete in AAU competition (10 yrs. +) can join. There is no upper age limit for membership and since track & field is a lifelong sport, individuals wishing to compete in open and Master's competition are welcome. Please note that the main emphasis, especially during indoor, will be on scholastic and youth athletes.

### **4) What will it cost to join the TSAC?**

The cost of membership for youth and scholastic athletes for one year (indoor, summer, and hopefully cross country next fall) will be \$150.00.

### **5) What will I get for my membership?**

The membership fee will cover the cost of uniform (must be purchased, athletes from West Virginia cannot wear their school's uniform indoors or forfeit eligibility, and the uniform becomes the athlete's to keep and use during the summer season and in road races, practice, etc.), registration fees for AAU and USATF, meet entry fees, and equipment costs. Our hope is to be able to have successful enough fundraising to assist with transportation and lodgings when possible. However, it may at times be necessary for club members to cover additional travel related expenses. We hope to avoid a situation of a parent or athlete having to constantly pay more and more money out over the course of a season; we want this to be a quality, affordable experience.

**6) Will there be practices?**

Yes. Tentatively, practice for Indoor track will begin Monday, November 29. This date will allow athletes to complete their fall seasons and enjoy a break over the Thanksgiving holiday. However, if there is sufficient interest practice may begin sooner. I am a USATF Level I Coach with over 10 years experience at the youth, high school and collegiate level. All other coaches will be experienced and capable of providing excellent instruction to athletes. However, athletes can feel free to practice on their own. In other words, practices are not mandatory and will not in any way prevent athletes from competing, but will be available for anyone wishing to take advantage of them. We plan on being able to introduce a couple of new events to some athletes including the Weight Throw (an event all throwers learn in college), Hammer Throw (its outdoor equivalent), and the Triple Jump (not contested in OH and WV, but in all but one other state).

**7) What will Indoor track encompass?**

Since Indoor track is not a scholastic sport in the tri-state area, athletes are on an uneven playing field against athletes from many other states. By practicing and competing during Indoors we hope to increase the exposure for local athletes and track & field as well as overcoming the limitations of a short scholastic season interrupted by Spring Break. We will practice as often as possible and outside as often as possible. We will compete at sites including WVU, Kentucky, Kent State, Marietta College, Virginia Tech, and the Nike Indoor Classic in Maryland (the final schedule is still TBA). This schedule will give athletes the opportunity to compete against many outstanding athletes from several states. Indoor track is truly a different sport Outdoor track, and athletes who enjoy a challenge, wish to maximize their potential for the upcoming outdoor season, or simply want to try something new will all benefit and enjoy the experience.

**8) How many meets must some one compete in?**

Athletes can compete in as many or as few as they would like with the exception of meets where there are entry standards in which case the athlete must qualify according to the standards (this only occurs at a few meets).

**9) When will the summer season begin?**

Summer practice will begin for youth/middle school athletes after the conclusion of their season. **After** the conclusion of the high school season those athletes will be welcome to begin practice.