

Hershey's Gallatin Valley Youth Track Meet Tuesday, May 12, 2011

Running --- Jumping ---- and Throwing! But wait, there is more! Ribbons --- Awards --- and Ice Cream! Wow, how can you go wrong with that combination! It's the annual Hershey's Gallatin Valley Youth Track Meet in Bozeman!

Hosted by the Bozeman Track Club and Noon Optimist Club this is a grass roots program for young children in the Gallatin valley between the ages of 9-14 years old. Open to all public and private school athletes, as well as home school children the program emphasizes the importance of physical fitness by participating in the sport of track & field.

The purpose of the Hershey's Track & Field Games is to promote physical fitness, participation, friendship and sportsmanship through basic track & field events like running, jumping and throwing for the youth of North America. The program emphasizes the basic philosophy of hosting a youth track meet that will stimulate the participation of all eligible children and that everyone is a winner by participating in the event.

It is in no way to be construed as an all-star program for chosen individuals. Learning, participation, enjoyment and physical exercise are the main elements of this program. Uniforms are not necessary and competition shoes with spikes may not be used.

While all participants will leave the Hershey track meet with a newfound sense of accomplishment and confidence, a select few will advance on to the state meet in Colstrip, or even the annual North American Final Meet in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

General

The Bozeman Track Club will host the 2011 Hershey's Gallatin Valley Youth Track Meet on Thursday, May 12nd. The event will be held on the track and field facility at Bozeman Sr. High School and is open to all Gallatin Valley area elementary and middle school students between the ages of 9 to 14 years old. All public, private and home school children are invited to participate.

Competition age for participants is based on the athlete's age on December 31, 2011. Participants can enter either two (2) track events and one (1) field event, or two (2) field events and one (1) track event up to and including the State Finals. Make sure to review the schedule of events for each age group before determining which events to enter.

Officials, volunteers, and parents are needed to assist with hosting this event. Tasks may be as simple as helping with check-in, raking a pit, pulling a tape, or helping at the finish line. Experience in officiating is not necessary, just a passion to see young children have a special experience and a lot of fun! To achieve this please contact Dave Skelton, Meet Director at bztkclub@bresnan.net if you are able to help.

State Championships

Winners in each age division, from each city/town, will automatically qualify to advance to the State Finals on Saturday, June 11th in Colstrip, Montana. Athletes will represent the city/town based on athlete's home mailing address, not the school that they attend. Example - an athlete attending school in Manhattan, but has a Belgrade mailing address will be designated as an athlete from Belgrade, not Manhattan.

The state championships will host a barbecue and evening entertainment Friday evening before the competition. State winners are entered into a regional pool and become eligible for selection to a Regional Team, which will travel to Hershey, Pennsylvania, to compete in the North American Final held on August 4-7, 2011.

Deadline for receiving applications is postmarked Friday, May 6, 2011 and must be received by Monday, May 9th. It is recommended that entry forms be mailed before the start of Memorial Day weekend to ensure they will not be late. Pre-ordered T-shirts, entry forms, information and schedule of events are available in all area valley schools, Bozeman Swim Center, and Bozeman Public Library. For more information contact the Bozeman Track Club at bztkclub@bresnan.net.

Awards and Ice Cream Social

To promote a positive experience and just a lot of plain ole' fashion fun, ribbons will be awarded to the top five finishers in each age group with participant ribbons for all athletes partaking in the event. In addition, participants, family, and spectators will be invited to join us for an ice cream social sponsored by the Noon Optimist Club immediately following the youth track meet.

Meet Photos and T-Shirts

Local photographers will be donating their time to shoot photos of the athletes and competition, which will be posted on the track club's website the following week for viewing by athletes and family members. Copies of photos may be downloaded at a minimal cost to individuals. Hershey T-shirts (\$12) will be available to pre-order with the entry form if mailed and postmarked by no later than Friday, May 6, 2011.

Deadline for Entry Forms

Complete entry instructions and the entry fees can be found on the website. Don't forget to clearly print and complete all information on the entry form. A proof-of-age document (i.e., birth certificate, passport, baptismal record, etc.) is required with the entry form. Entry forms will not be accepted without an attached copy of proof-of-age. Please do not send original documents of proof-of-age. Proof-of-age can be returned the day of competition upon request. Entry forms and general information are also available at the Bozeman Swim Center, City of Bozeman Department of Recreation Office, City of Bozeman library, or local schools.

Entry forms, proof-of-age, and entry fee of \$3.00 must be "postmarked" by no later than Friday, May 6 and will be accepted until Monday, May 9, 2011.

Hershey T-shirts will be available to pre-order with the entry form for an additional \$12 and **must be postmarked by Friday, May 6th to ensure that you will receive a T-shirt.** There will be absolutely no late registration accepted in person after Monday, May 9th or on the same day of competition. Estimated start time for the track meet is 4:00 p.m. sharp!

Relay Team Registration

All children are encouraged to participate in the hi-light event of the Hershey track meet --- the 4 x 100 meter relay. Athletes planning to attend as an official relay team must complete their entry forms, attach proof-of-age, and entry fees and mail the entry for all four (4) athletes together to the meet director. Only relay teams entered as a full team of four athletes prior to the local meet may qualify for the state championships in Colstrip. However, throw together relay teams may be put together for fun on the day of the meet for those participants who still want to compete in the relay race and are unable to put an official relay team together.

Highlights of Rules

General rules and regulations for the Gallatin Valley Hershey Youth Track Meet can be found in the **Highlight of Rules** on this page. The information provided in the highlights contains the general rules set forth in the Official Rule Book by the Hershey Track & Field Youth Program. The National Federation of State High School Track & Field Rules govern the conduct of the Hershey's Track & Field Youth Program except when noted in the Official Rule Book adopted by the Board of Directors.

Friendly Reminders

1. Athletes must compete in their own age group based on their age as of December 31, 2011.
2. A copy of proof-of-age must be submitted with the entry form and \$3 entry fee. Hershey T-shirts are optional at an additional \$12.
3. Participants can enter either two (2) track events and one (1) field event, or two (2) field events and one (1) track event up to and including the State Finals.
4. Since the 9-10 and 11-12 age groups in the 4 x 100 relay does not advance to the North American Final, those age groups will be allowed to participate in a relay as an extra event at the local and state level. The relay will count as an event for the 13-14 division.
5. Uniforms are not necessary and competition shoes with spikes are not permitted. Training flats or regular tennis shoes are permitted.
6. All participants must wear a competition bib number included in their athlete packet on the front of their shirt and be pinned at all four corners.
7. Athletes will represent the city/town based on their home mailing address, not the school that participants attend.
8. To pre-order a T-shirt it is absolutely necessary that you mail the entry form by no later than Friday, May 6, 2011.
9. Official relay teams must submit all four (4) entry forms of the four (4) athletes entered, "clipped together" and mailed in one envelope.
10. The track meet starts at 4:00 P.M. sharp! Review the schedule of events and plan accordingly. Participants should plan on checking in approximately 15 to 30 minutes early in order to pick up their athlete packet and bib number.
11. Don't forget to join us in attending the ice cream social immediately following the track meet!