

INFORMATION ABOUT THE DURHAM STRIDERS TRACK PROGRAM:

The Durham Striders will begin their 39th season on SATURDAY, February 22, 2014 at Southern High School in Durham with REGISTRATION and free Pre-Participation Physical Exams for athletes from 6-18 years old.

General Information:

The Durham Striders Program is one of the largest youth track developmental programs in the country, is in its 39th year, has been a leader in the country by not only focusing on the development of athletic ability in track and field events but also has developed a comprehensive and equally important focus on academic excellence, leadership development through modeling and reinforcement of positive behaviors, informed decision-making where lifestyle choices are concerned, and health/wellness/nutritional priorities resulting in age appropriate health parameters for more than 95% of its participants. Each of the past 20 years, the program has enrolled more than 200 children in year-round programming that include USATF-sanctioned competition including the following:

- 1) spring-summer outdoor track training and competition (March to the end of July),
- 2) cross-country program in the fall (late August through late November)
- 3) winter pre-season conditioning/indoor track program (January – late February)

The Striders have won multiple national and regional youth championships, and have given more than 300 of the Striders "graduates" access to college careers through track and field scholarships. The program is host to the Russell E. Blunt East Coast Invitational Track Meet, the country's largest and most competitive track and field competition in the late summer just before the USATF Junior Olympic National Championships. The meet, named for Durham coaching legend Coach Russell Blunt who coached at Hillside and Southern High Schools, attracts the country's most elite youth track athletes on their way to the Junior Olympic championships each summer. The program organizes developmental meets, USATF state and regional meets, and is known for and sought after for its timing and meet management.

Last summer, the Striders qualified 62 of its athletes to the USATF National Championships at North Carolina A&T State University in where more than half of its athletes finished in the top 20 in multiple events among almost 8300 athletes present at the National Championships. In addition, one of its athletes, Isaiah Moore, was chosen to represent the United States on the World Youth team at the World Games in the Ukraine, finishing sixth in the world in the 110m hurdles and third long jump competitions. Isaiah went on to win the USA Junior Olympic Championship in the 110m Hurdles this summer at the USATF Junior Olympic National Championships in Greensboro.

The training/competition year begins with SPRING-SUMMER track however; **children may enter the program AT ANY TIME.**

Official registration/physicals are held from 9AM-1PM at Southern High School, 800 Clayton Road, Durham NC 27703 on the **last Saturday of February each year.**

The DURHAM STRIDERS registration fee for participation is \$50/child (**payable in cash or money order only, personal checks not accepted**) for the year of participation and includes access to ALL components of the program: spring-summer track, cross-country (XC), pre-season conditioning (Pre-Con), and the indoor track season. Fee-reduction programs are available for families with multiple children and/or financial need.

BEFORE Children may participate, they must have the following:

1. A parent or legal guardian to complete and SIGN registration forms
2. A copy of their birth certificate that the team can keep on file
3. A copy of a recent physical exam (that will remain valid for the duration of the season) or have a FREE physical examination performed at registration in late February
4. A signed code of conduct and an academic expectation agreement. These documents are signed by the parent or legal guardian AND the children.

5. Although required at varying points in the season, we **strongly recommend** all participants, 8 and older, obtain/renew their USATF membership on January 1st. Please see note below and visit <https://www.usatf.org/membership/application/index.asp> to learn more.

Weekly news letters are published to our Durham Strider list serve and to the Durham Strider Parents Group Facebook page. It is essential that we have CORRECT email addresses for families as the list serve and the Facebook page are our PRIMARY COMMUNICATION for parents, athletes, etc. You must request access to the Durham Strider Parents Facebook page. You must do so by contacting Takashia Penny at takashiap@yahoo.com. **It will be VERY IMPORTANT that we have CORRECT E-mail addresses for everyone to communicate changes in practice sites, information about meets and all other important details to you. The official Durham Strider website is: www.durhamstriders.com**

CROSS COUNTRY: August – late November

We will begin our cross country season on Saturday, August 24th at 8:45AM at the Buehler Trail in Duke Forest. Cross Country is open to children 7-18 years old. Practices are held three times/week as listed below. There are at least 3 competitions BEFORE the USATF North Carolina qualifying meet for USATF. More information will be provided to athletes and parents at our first practice, August 24th.

The practice schedule for XC will be:

Mondays/5:30-6:30PM East campus, Duke University: The children will warm-up and then run the inside perimeter of the wall around Duke's East Campus.

Wednesdays/5:30-6:30PM Duke Gardens, Duke University: The children will warm-up and then run the Gardens

Saturdays/8:45-10AM: Buehler Trail alternating with the Whitfield Road Trail. This practice is our toughest practice each week. The Buehler Trail is a 4-5K trail with graduated hills. The Whitfield Road Trail is a series of vertical hills that is used to develop power running and endurance.

PRE-SEASON CONDITIONING/INDOOR TRACK/NEW USATF: January 4, 2014

We will begin pre-season conditioning Saturday morning, **January 4th at 9:00AM** at Southern High School and continue every Saturday morning through the end of February

There is **NO ADDITIONAL COST** for pre-season conditioning for athletes **who are already registered** in one of the Durham Striders programs for the year e.g. XC, Spring-Summer track, Indoor Track/Pre-season conditioning and is open to children from 6-18.

On days when the weather permits, we will run outside and in some cases, instead of running at Southern, practice at the Buehler Trail in Duke Forest.

We anticipate that the kids will run in at least 2 indoor track meets which may include the USATF South Zone Youth Championships, the qualifying meet for the USATF JO Indoor National Championships, to be held in Maryland in early March. We will have details about all of this when we meet in January.

The kids will need to **dress warmly** for Cross Country/Indoor conditioning/Indoor Track - something on their heads (toboggans), something on their hands (gloves), something on their legs (leggings or sweatpants) and a sturdy pair of running shoes appropriate for their feet. We **STRONGLY** urge that you go to **9th Street Active Feet** (on Iredell Street right behind 9th Street in Durham) and have the personnel there evaluate your children's foot structure, gait, etc. and put them in APPROPRIATE shoes that will help AVOID some of the aches and pains associated with CUTE BUT POORLY FUNCTIONAL shoes that you can pick up anywhere. Please identify yourselves with the Durham Strider program to receive the Strider discount.

SPRING-SUMMER TRACK: March - late July

Spring-Summer Track is the longest of the competitive seasons beginning in early March and completing with the National Junior Olympic Championships for those who qualify at the end of July. Children 5-18 may participate.

Practices are held 3-4 times/week from 5:30-7PM until DST begins and then from 6-7:30PM on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursday and on Tuesdays for specialty events.

The children are coached by age-groups and skill level. We anticipate every year that many of the children will progress rapidly as far as skill level and athletic conditioning is concerned. The children will compete in developmental meets 2-3x/month in April and May which are usually held on Friday evenings or Saturday mornings. Beginning in June, the more competitive meets will begin which will require meeting competition standards set by the meet hosts. These are usually INVITATIONAL MEETS or USATF ELIMINATION BY COMPETITION MEETS to qualify to the Junior Olympics.

USATF REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

For those who intend to run Indoor, Spring-Summer, and/or XC in 2014, you will need a **new USATF number that will last through December 31, 2014.** The official USATF "year" begins January 1 and closes December 31st of EACH year. This means that ALL USATF registrations EXPIRE on December 31st and **MUST BE RENEWED** whether a child is running part or all of the competition year. There are **NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE.** To avoid the rush, and if your child will participate in **INDOOR TRACK MEETS** in January and February, you **MUST** have a **NEW USATF number** whether you are new to the program or a returning athlete. The USATF Registration fee is **\$20/child.** That new number will be good THROUGH December 31, 2014.

A **CRITICAL PART** of the membership registration is to **AFFILIATE** with the **Durham Striders.**

- 1) If you are **RENEWING**, then your affiliation is already in place with the Durham Striders and you need **ONLY** to **RENEW** your registration
- 2) If you are **changing from another Club to the Durham Striders**, you should change your club affiliation when you register for the 2014 season. It is **VERY DIFFICULT** to make the change mid-season.
- 3) If you are **NEW** to the Strider program or new to USATF altogether, you **MUST** register as a **NEW** member and a **CRITICAL PIECE** of this is to **affiliate with the Durham Striders, Club number 13-0618** (13-North Carolina, 0618-Durham Striders).

The membership registration is ONLINE at: <https://www.usatf.org/membership/application/index.asp>

2013-2014 IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

August 24	Cross Country practice begins
November TBD	NC USATF Association XC Championships, Hagan Stone Park, Greensboro NC (Qualifier for USATF XC Championships)
December 14	USATF XC Nationals, San Antonio, Texas
January 4	First Pre-Season/Indoor Track Practice at Southern High School
January 17	All Comers Meet/JDL Fast Track (Winston Salem) (Tentative)
February 15-16	USATF South Zone Youth Championships, Location TBD (Qualifier for USATF Indoor Nationals)
February 22	Durham Striders REGISTRATION and PHYSICALS for Spring-Summer Track (9A-1P, Southern HS, 800 Clayton Road, Durham NC 27703)
March 3	FIRST DAY of Outdoor Track Practice at Southern High School/5:30-7PM
March 5-6 (tentative)	USATF Indoor National Championships, Prince George County*

*Prince George's County, Maryland will host to USATF's 3rd National Youth Indoor Track & Field Championships. Entry into this championship will be based on performance and advancement through Zone Championships. Top six (6) finishers in each event at the Zone Championships qualify for participation in the National Championships. Competition takes place in six two-year age divisions, with athletes falling between the ages of 7 and 18.