

Indoor Competition Tips

This document has been compiled by Janet Naylor from the various tips written by Australians ahead of the World Indoor Championships in 2010, 2012 and 2014. Authors are noted and thanked once again for their contribution.

Photos taken/supplied by Janet Naylor and Stuart Paterson.

Current at 20/1/2017

IAAF and WMA Rules

It is worth checking out the rules that apply to your event/s.

IAAF Rules - Section 6 deals with indoor rules where there are differences to the outdoor - <http://www.iaaf.org/about-iaaf/documents/rules-regulations#rules>

WMA Rules General - updated link to come

WMA Appendix A-K - updated link to come

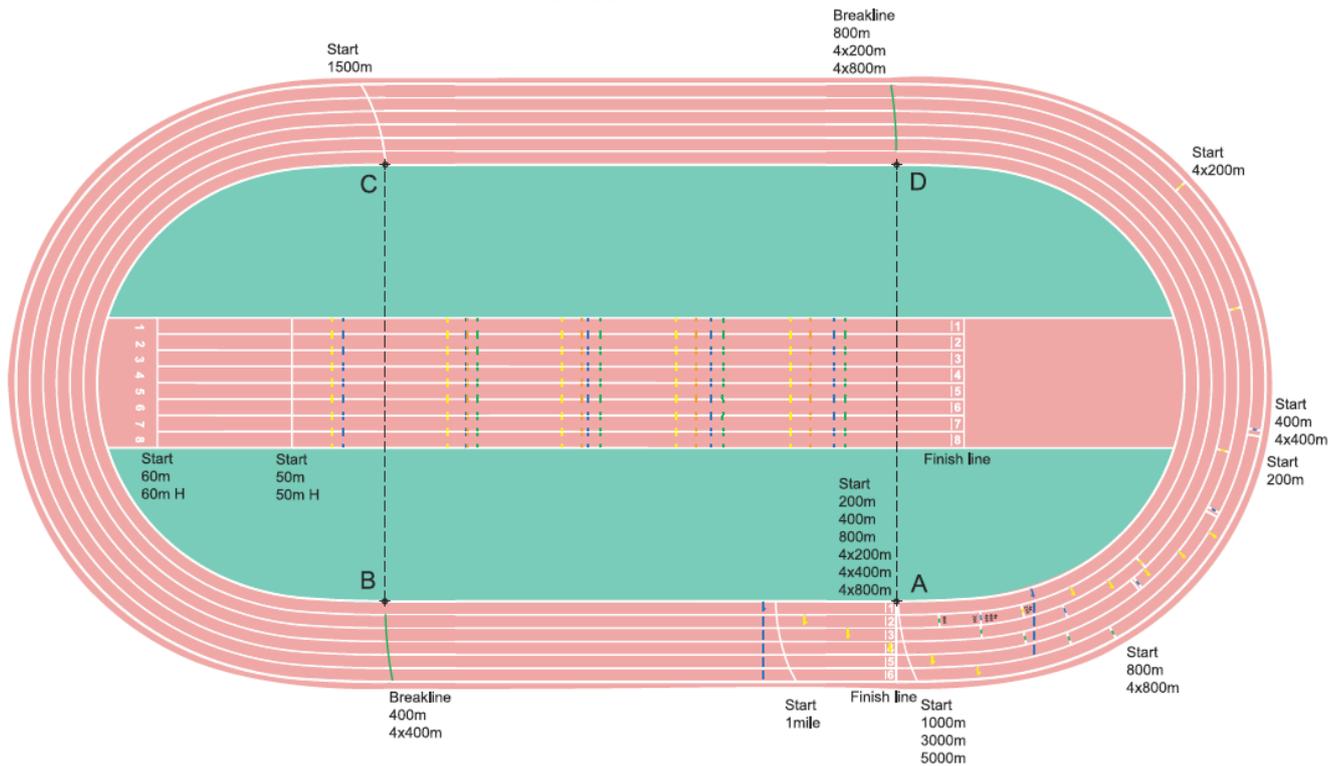
If there is no variation to a rule, then the normal IAAF rule applies. The above sections need to be read and understood in conjunction with the IAAF Competition Rules 2016-2017.

Protests and Appeals

If you believe you have been disadvantaged by another athlete breaking a rule or that the officials may have incorrectly ruled against you, you need to make an immediate oral protest to the event referee. In the case of field events this can include requesting that the performance be measured and recorded for later use. The team managers are often also competing or in another location so we can't emphasise enough that this needs to be done immediately by the athlete concerned. It also buys some time. See our Facebook group for more details (notes tab).

IAAF 200 METRE STANDARD INDOOR TRACK, MARKING PLAN

SCALE - 1:250



Track Specifications and comments by Janet Naylor, Peter Sandery, Marie Kay

- The straight has 6-8 lanes of normal width, i.e. 1.22m.
- The circular track has 4-6 lanes which are narrower, i.e. 90cm to 1.10m
- The circular track can be banked or flat and is usually 200m.
- The track surface is usually synthetic and similar to outdoor tracks. Depending on the construction, the surface maybe thinner which will necessitate shorter spikes.

There is much more variety in the design and construction of indoor stadiums. Some are purpose built, but most are part of a multi-use indoor space that may also cater for indoor soccer, basketball, volleyball etc.

The fixed tracks in multi-use stadiums are generally laid on a wooden substrate, either flat or fitted with a mechanism to raise the bends to provide variable height banking (often with no barrier on the outside lane).

In some cases portable tracks are erected in multi-purpose buildings for major events. There is some "give" in these tracks in response to foot strike and they are a little noisier to run on - not that you are likely to notice the latter with all the noise in the stadium.

The purpose built tracks are built on a solid substrate with the normal rubber layer and surface on top of that with much the same feel as an outdoor track. Some tracks may not have fences around the edge of the outside lane bends.

You don't need special indoor racing shoes - just use those you would normally use on an outdoor track. If you run in spikes check the spike length requirements and style (Pyramid or Christmas Tree) - each stadium has its own preference.

There is no weather generated wind indoors so you will only feel a constant "wind" from your running speed.

Temperature and humidity are also controlled by the air conditioning in the stadium so you can expect near identical ambient conditions each time you compete. It can also be very dry so it is important to hydrate well.

The starting "gun" is often electronic and can be hard to hear in a noisy stadium. Get to the stadium with plenty of spare time and try to get in a position where you can closely observe and listen at the start of races before you have to compete.

At all the tracks we have run at so far, the spectators are very close to the track... the stadium is enclosed so it can get very noisy but this just adds to the excitement!





Indoor Jumping by Wilma Perkins and Janet Naylor

One of the nice things about competing indoors is that one doesn't have to worry about adjusting run ups because of wind conditions. However, the closeness of spectators and other events adds a new dimension.

Long/Triple Jump

Usually long/triple jump pits are a fence line away from the spectators so it is most convenient to have a friend check your foot positions on take off.

When measuring your run up make sure you have a cross-check mark in case your marker is accidentally bumped by another competitor - this can happen very easily in the congested conditions. Often two pits are in operation and the crowd is right next to the athlete area.

For portable tracks that have been erected for the specific competition, the runway is raised to allow for a temporary landing pit. As a result the runway can be bouncy.

Not all officials place a tape out for athletes to measure their run-ups, however many of the Europeans carry their own tapes so you need to be quick to put your markers out when someone has a tape. It is worth chatting in the call room to find out if anyone has a tape measure. Know your run up in imperial measurements in case you use an American's tape!

Vertical Jumps

Starting heights do vary from championship to championship and these are usually calculated from the performances submitted when entering. Older age groups will have smaller increment rises than younger athletes. Starting heights aim to give all athletes the opportunity to have at least a couple of height clearances in the competition.

Pole Vault

A number of poles are supplied for competition. However, these may not be your preferred option. It is a good idea when you register to enquire about early access to the LOC loan poles so that you can check out and decide beforehand what you want to use. If you are lucky, one of the athletes in your event may be willing to share their pole, particularly if you like their pole a whole heap more than the loan poles.

Sometimes, the LOC has a small fee for using one of the loan poles. Wilma had one occasion where she offered and paid the same amount to an athlete for the benefit of using their pole. Details of the poles available are on the LOC website.

High Jump

Usually this event is conducted in the central area of the track so there will be plenty of noise from spectators whilst track events are being conducted at the same time.

Indoor and Winter Throws by Caroline Layt and Terry Gibbs

Indoor competition (Shot Put and Weight Throw)

The throwing circles were smoother and a little faster than Australian outdoor throwing circles. The indoor weight throw cage also has the feeling of 'being on top of you' so it takes a little while to adjust.

An indoor implement is physically bigger in diameter and the weight has a shorter centre of gravity from your hand edge, the change is subtle but real.

Make use of any training times offered.

Outdoor competition (Discus, Hammer and Javelin)

As with any outdoor competition, weather conditions can vary from throwing while it is snowing to a warm sunny day! The temperature can change quickly so best to pack a few layers of clothing.

Race Walks by Heather Carr

For the 3000m walk, the start line is very congested, so be prepared and find a position that suits. The indoor temperature is constant, so hydrate well. Counting your laps on the 200m track can be a problem, so being aware of your time is probably a better indicator to gauge your performance.

The 10km road walk is entirely different from the indoor track walk. Depending on the weather conditions and possible cold temperatures, preparation is crucial. If it is extremely cold, warming up is difficult. The warm up areas can be small with lots of athletes using same space. There is usually a designated area for changing and/or leaving your bag but again this can be congested. It's often best to have clothes that are easy to remove at the start line just before the race and someone to hand them to!

Middle and Long Distance Running by Peter Sandery

Outdoor distance events

Currently, the two running events are an 8k cross country and a half marathon.

The cross country can be a very different event to those Australians normally experience because it is normally conducted in quite cold conditions and you may have to contend with snow and ice. The organisers normally clear most of the fresh snow off the courses, but some invariably drifts back, narrowing the path and forming a variable thickness layer over the surface. Take spikes suitable for cross country or shoes with trail running, grippy soles. You may not need them, but if the weather produces cold, wet and/or snow conditions, you will benefit from having a choice. In sub zero temperatures tights, long sleeve thermal top, gloves, beanie and thicker than normal socks are also useful.

For the half marathon, cold weather clothing is an option to be considered depending on conditions on the day.

Indoor events

Competition tracks usually have 6 lanes, however with the narrower lanes this can make things crowded if competitors are doubled up in preliminary rounds for the 800m and for group starts in 1500m and 3000m races where there will be a rush to move into an inside lane to avoid having to run high on the first bend.

If you are in lane 6 for the start of an 800m race for the first time on a banked track, the slope can be unsettling. If you can get access to the track prior to the championships, it is a good idea to try starting from the stagger mark in lane 6. The first part of the 800m is run in lanes, but these are 200m tracks so if you start in one of the outer lanes, you do a little uphill and downhill running before you reach the crossover point. Under IAAF Rules the cross-over point can be after the first or second bend. If you draw an



inside lane at the start you don't have the same change in inclines, but may have to negotiate two tight bends without much benefit of banking. If possible, try to get a few practice laps in on the track before the championships start.

Passing on the bends can be difficult and the straights are only 40-50m long so passing there requires a greater relative speed than on an outdoor track. On an outdoor track you have clues (running noise, shadows) as to how close other runners are behind you. These are absent indoors because of noise from the spectators and announcements, proximity of athletes in field events and artificial lighting creating multiple shadows.

The 200m track also means that you run twice the number of laps you would normally do on an outdoor 400m track for each race distance. Combined with the tighter bends, this may impact your pace judgment. Work out your 200m split times for each race and do a check on the track-side clock as you complete each lap. Generally, indoor race times on a 200m track are about 0.5 seconds per lap slower than outdoor times.

On an outdoor track, if you are in lane 1, the closest spectators will be 20-30m away. Depending on how the indoor stadium is designed, the nearest spectator may be leaning on the railing of lane 6.

Apart from all of the technical differences, the main thing you will notice when you go to your first indoor championships is how noisy and "in your face" it is compared to outdoor track racing. If this is your first world competition, you will also have to cope with the range of languages from a large number of countries. Whatever your age group, you will be rubbing shoulders with European, British, American etc runners who are age group champions in their countries. Enjoy the experience!

Indoor Sprints/Hurdles by Peter Crombie and Marie Kay

Each indoor track and meet has its own peculiarities which should be learned as early as possible in the meet. If you are able, you should try and get a few runs on the surface, both the 60m and the 200m tracks before you race. You will find them different to your outdoor experiences.

200m and 400m runners should be aware that their times will be slower than running outdoors - about 0.5 seconds per 200m. Indoor tracks are usually banked and that eases the torsion effects when one is running fast around the tight bends.

Do some practice starts on the banked track in case you draw the outside lanes. It is quite a weird sensation being on a slope though once you are up and running, it is running!

60 metres/Hurdles

Australians are now used to the 60 metre sprint as it was introduced at Nationals and other meets with the main aim of conditioning athletes to be used to this event at the World Indoors. The start is just inside the circular track and athletes will run through the diameter of the track with the finish being just shy of the circular track at the other end. There is likely to be a crash mat against the perimeter fence as the faster/younger athletes cannot stop in time. It will be worthwhile for those athletes to run into it a few times to be confident about racing through the finish line.

The races are seeded, similar to the outdoor meets.

200 metres

The track is 200 metres in circumference. That means that the bends will be very tight and in the main, very difficult to navigate. This race will be the most different to what you have ever experienced. It is unlikely that you will be able to match anywhere near your outdoor times as you encounter difficulties with those tight turns.

Try and practice a bit in lane 1 back in Australia a few times. Perhaps you can start your run from the middle of the D (high jump area of the track on the bend) and make a tight curve onto the track and into the straight.

The older and slower you are, the torque difficulties do lessen. Being shorter with shorter strides also has some benefits compared to tall, long striding cousins!

Race seeding is far more important in indoor meets. The best lanes for the circular sprinters are lanes 5 and 6 with lane 4 the next best. Try to avoid lanes 1,2 and 3. Virtually no placegetters in semis or finals ever come from the inside 3 lanes. Unlike the outdoors meets where you can pace yourself through the early rounds, at the indoors you should gun it in every round to ensure that you are placed in a lane as far outside as possible.



400 metres

Some extra difficulty points are to be noted. The race starts in lanes where it is best to have the outer lanes and the cross over is after the 150 metre mark (second bend).

The cross-over is similar to running 800m outdoors where you aim for the straightest line to the next bend. Try and be in front as you cross and hold on!

If in front, a little trick is to keep your opponent/s wide, making it harder for them to pass. If you need to pass, then the place to pass is on the straights as it takes a lot out of your legs to pass on the bends.

4x200m Relay by Janet Naylor

The indoor relay is 4x200m and Australia has had good success in this event since the 2008 Indoor World Championships. The W40 and M50 teams from 2008 both set the inaugural open AA Australian records for this event.

The 4x200m is run like a 4x400m with the first change in lanes and the second runner cutting in after their first bend. The lanes are narrow and a visual 4x400 change of right hand and to left hand is ideal. The out going runner immediately switches the baton to their right hand so that the baton is carried in the right hand round the bends. Outgoing runners need to be facing the infield whilst waiting to receive the baton to reduce their risk of running into other athletes during the changeover.

As you have probably gathered from reading the information on sprints and middle distance events, it is hard to overtake so therefore it is better to run from the front. This means that the running order differs somewhat from outdoor events with the fastest runner often going first. It is strategic.

There are some videos of the W40 team in 2008 and 2010 via the Australian Masters Indoor Facebook group. You will see the importance of running wide and being first into the bend.

AMA Relay Policy

At World Championships the Australian relay teams represent our nation and are chosen to achieve the best overall medal success for Australia. The aim is to place as many athletes as possible into competitive teams.

The final selection of teams will be based upon performances at the championships, current season form and past performances/experience where relevant.

It is important that all athletes who would like to be considered for relays inform team management of their availability via the entry/validation paperwork AND then confirm their availability via the sign up lists placed on the Team noticeboard at TIC during the competition prior to the advertised deadline.

In fairness to other potential relay runners, athletes need to inform team management if injury occurs, or if you simply change your mind.

A draft list of teams will be posted on the Team Facebook and emailed to selected athletes. This is to enable teams to plan their change overs. Should an athlete have any queries regarding the team selections this should be directed to team management by the end of the day (TIC close time) in which the draft teams are on the Team Facebook/emailed.

Team management submits the teams to the LOC according to the schedule set by them. At this time the final teams will be posted on the Team Facebook/emailed and no further discussions will be entered into.

Warming up

Access to warm up areas at World Championships, both outdoor and indoor, is not always what we perceive to be ideal. Often at indoors there is the extra issue of frigid weather conditions!

Some venues we have experienced have had a warm-up track (4-6 lanes of about 60m) on another level in the same building. This can get quite congested. Other venues have used an adjacent sports hall/indoor courts while others have designated outdoor areas.

Check out the warm-up locations prior to race day and ask others what they are planning to do. Be prepared to improvise.

You will need to complete your warm-up and report to a call room* ready to compete some 20-30 minutes before the event start time. You may be able to do a few short sprints when you are led out onto the track for your race, but don't count on that. Field event athletes will be able to sort out run-ups and get some practice jumps/throws.

* The call room schedule is published in the Competitor's Handbook which is a must read once you have collected your registration pack.

Packing

Check the weather forecast for your destination. Some areas are colder than others. If you have not been to the Northern Hemisphere in Winter, some suggestions:

Outdoor clothing:

- * Good quality waterproof/warm coat and then layers such as skins, lined track pants, t-shirt, long sleeve shirt and a fleece
- * Beanie, scarf and gloves
- * Wool socks plus some thick soled shoes/boots as the ground can be cold, snow covered or even ice!

Indoors - comp arena:

- * It is usually hot and dry and definitely warm enough to race in briefs/shorts and crop tops/singlets
- * When not racing, track pants/jeans and long sleeve top/light sweater
- * Menthol type throat sweets and saline nasal spray are really usual in the dry indoor conditions
- * Plenty of fluids - hydration is important

Indoors - social:

Everywhere is centrally heated so jeans and light sweater/t-shirt will probably be comfortable but layer up to go outside.