



Oregon School Activities Association
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March 7, 2009

TO: Athletic Directors and Head Track Coaches
 FROM: Brad Garrett, Assistant Executive Director
 SUBJECT: Wheelchair Track Participants

It is our position that the Americans with Disabilities Act does not require that wheelchair athletes be allowed to compete against runners, because the competition is fundamentally altered by the use of wheelchairs. Even so, permitting athletes in wheelchairs to participate, to the extent that they can do so safely, seems desirable and consistent with current OSAA Board Policy #36, regarding exhibitions. The National Federation advises that participation by athletes in wheelchairs as set out below does not violate any National Federation track and field rules. Please consider the following:

1. Field Events – Wheelchair athletes may be allowed to participate, to be placed and to be scored based upon their performances, as with any other participants.
2. Running Events – Wheelchair athletes may be allowed to participate, but they should be placed separately from the runners, and their scores should not be counted in the meet results. The following guidelines may be considered to help you address safety concerns.
 - a. 100 meters– Wheelchair athletes should be placed in the outside lanes (lanes 1 and 8), and as with all other participants, must maintain these lanes for the entire race.
 - b. 200 and 400 meters – Wheelchair athletes should be assigned the innermost lanes (lane 1 and up, as required), and as with all other participants, placed in the appropriate stagger and by rule maintain these lanes for the entire race.
 - c. Races that exceed 400 meters – Wheelchair athletes should start from the furthest outside lanes in the appropriate stagger outlined below, and once the runners are able to move in (either by rule or because there is sufficient room available), the wheelchair athletes should be permitted to come in no further than lane four (4).

<u>Distance</u>	<u>42" Lane - Stagger</u>
800 M	40 M
1500 M	75 M
3000 M	150 M

3. Liability – OSAA member schools should understand that liability for injuries is the responsibility of the member schools, and that every reasonable precaution should be taken to ensure the safety of all athletes in all events.
4. Safety – Prior to races, especially those involving wheelchair competitors, all competitors should be reminded that safety is of primary concern and that they should be aware of all participants when changing lanes.
5. Resources – World Wheelchair Sports welcomes inquiries for assistance from any student, educator, friend or family member of a student with mobility impairment who might wish to participate in school sports. In addition to equipment, World Wheelchair Sports has handbooks and videos available that will help coaches integrate wheelchair users into their existing programs. For more information please call:

Kevin Hanson – World Wheelchair Sports
 541.485.1860