

2016 NW Zone ASG Selection

I was really happy with how many kids tried out this year. This was the first time in many years that we actually had to choose athletes for all categories. In the past few years, every athlete in some groups who tried out made it, and we even had to add athletes who didn't attend the Trials to fill out the team.

The downside of higher numbers, of course, is that more kids than ever didn't make the team. In some cases, the decision for the 8th, 9th, or 10th spot on the team was really difficult. I attempted to be as fair as possible, but like in any selection process, I'm sure arguments could be made for a different outcome.

Because a few people have asked, here are the details about how the team was chosen:

Constraints

- Athletes had to live in the AB Peace Country
- Team Size - 20 girls and 20 boys – preferably evenly split between Midget and Youth Age athletes (i.e. 10 athletes per age/gender)
- Events – 2 relays, 3 sprints, 2 hurdles, 3 jumps, 4 throws, 3 mid/long distance, 1 multi-event per category

Overall Objectives

- To select athletes who can win medals at the Games
- To select a team who can cover most or all of the events offered in their age group
- To ensure that every athlete selected does at least 2 different events at the Games

Process

- Identify the eligible athletes from the results of the trials meet (i.e. exclude out-of-area athletes who competed at the Trials)
- Identify the obvious choices (e.g. the kids who won 2 or 3 events in the Trials)
- Identify a bare minimum of 1 or 2 throwers, 2 or 3 Sprinters, 1 or 2 hurdlers/jumpers, 1 or 2 mid/long distance runners
- Fill in the remaining spots on the team until you have 10 per category
- Identify two or three alternates per category (i.e. we always have athletes who back out after the initial selection)

Implications

- Even if you win an event or two at the Trials, you may not be selected (e.g. your winning performance may not have been very strong relative to what would win a medal at the Games)
- If you entered only one event at the Trials, you could be selected. (i.e. your performance was particularly good and you'll be added to a related event once the team is selected)
- If you finished 3rd, 4th, or 5th at the Trials you may be selected for that event at the Games
- If you finished 1st or 2nd at an event at the Trials, you may not be selected to do that event at the Games (i.e. everyone must have two events, you may be selected to do the multi-event, etc.)

So there you have it. It's not an easy process, but this is my seventh time through the selection process and based on experience, I think this is what works best.

Bill Corcoran, NW Zone Head Coach