

HASTINGS RUNNERS TRACK RISK ASSESSMENT

Venue: The sessions generally run from 18.15 - 19.30pm on Monday evenings at Ark Alexandra Academy, William Parker Campus, Park Avenue, Hastings TN34 2PG; and need to be pre-booked so that no-one just turns up on the night whilst we are still labouring under the threat of Covid. Generally we have up to 4 groups, all operating independently. Although the track is a Covid - secure environment, which in theory offers us scope to cater for groups much larger than 6, at this stage we are going to limit the group size to a maximum of 10 people. The senior coach on the night provides details of all those who have attended to our coaching group admin secretary Marie Crawford, who maintains Track & Trace records in the event that anyone subsequently tests positive for Covid following a training session.

Risks: These arise from interfaces with other users of the track, the condition of the track and weather conditions. It is the responsibility primarily of coaches to ensure adequate spacing between groups, but also of runners to be aware during warm-ups, for example. Good lane discipline should be followed, with care taken in switching between lanes. Stress in briefing that runners need to be aware of faster runners behind, especially those who have just finished doing their own rep. Instruct all to shout "lane!" when approaching from behind, and ask runners to keep left in their lane when they hear this. In particular where there are large mixed ability groups on the track, it is important that runners of similar pace should start together, and not too far ahead.

Having been resurfaced relatively recently, the track is in excellent condition and is well floodlit during the autumn/winter sessions. However extremes of weather - torrential rain, thunderstorms, lightning, ice, snow etc - can make the track unsafe, particularly on the bends. It is the responsibility of the lead coach to ensure that the track is in a safe condition, and where there is any doubt then the session will be cancelled. Similarly a session may be cancelled in extreme heat conditions, if there is a danger of runners getting sunstroke.

Track hazards: The lighting on the path leading to the track entrance gate is non-existent, and we encourage runners to wear head torches in the autumn/winter. Despite our best endeavours, we have been unable to ascertain whose responsibility it is to maintain the street lights. The steps down to the track itself are quite high, and need to be navigated carefully.

The lead coach is responsible for ensuring that any equipment left out from a previous session, such as hurdles, is cleared away. Runners, especially youngsters, should be reminded that the water jump, long/triple jump, and throwing areas are all “out of bounds” as they pose potential hazards. All runners need to be reminded that the inside plastic running rail is a trip hazard if trying to cross the centre field, as well as the rope fence around the grassy area.

Injury treatment: To mitigate the risks associated with injuries or illnesses that may occur during training sessions, at least one member of each training group should carry a mobile phone, or have one close to hand, in order to contact the emergency services, where necessary. In addition the lead coach should ensure that a first aid kit is available at the main track bench (see below). Runners advised to carry a card with I.C.E contact details and information about allergies or other medical conditions, i.e. diabetes or epilepsy.

Under 16s: These need to be accompanied by their parent/guardian to the track, and must check in with their designated group coach. Should an under 16 sustain an injury during the session, then in order to protect both the child and the adult there will need to be two adults present for checking any injury. At no stage should a coach or another adult be alone with a child.

Covid - 19 precautions: Club members are advised of guidelines and rules. Runners are not permitted to participate if they exhibit symptoms. Lead coach reminds runners of latest guidelines at the start of the session, and carries sanitizer and face mask (packaged and discarded if used) in case needed to administer to a runner or manage other eventualities. Sessions are by pre-booking only to ensure group limits are not exceeded.

The attached Track Protocol Document is emailed beforehand to all track participants, so that they know which group they are in, which Zone within the track they need to check in to, and which lanes they will be running in. The different groups check in to Zones 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 to ensure social distancing. This is where they can store kit, meet for instructions and warm up drills before the session starts.

To mitigate the risk of Covid transmission through contact on surfaces and airborne transmission by an infected person, it is necessary for runners to maintain social distancing throughout the session, and to maintain good hygiene with hand washing where necessary. Runners are asked to socially distance on arrival at the track entrance at the top of the path leading from Park Avenue through to Parkstone Road. We ask runners to hand sanitise before arrival, but there is hand sanitiser available if required on the main bench halfway down the 100m straight. We also ask runners to use the hand sanitiser before leaving the track. With track as opposed to field training, handling of equipment should not be an issue, but where benches are used to place surplus clothing or bikes have to be secured, hand sanitisation is available.

This Covid-19 specific advice is subject to update in the light of changes to Government regulations and new advice from England Athletics.