



Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command
The Royal Canadian Legion

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All Branch Mail Out #39

Date: April 13, 2026

To: NS/NU Branches
NS/NU Executive Council
NS/NU Zone Commanders
NS/NU Past Presidents
NS/NU Command Staff

From: Comrade Harry Jackson
Track & Field Chair
Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command, RCL

Subject: Donation Request for Track & Field

Message:

Each year NSNU Command, with the help of Nova Scotia Athletics, sends 38 athletes and 8 staff from Nova Scotia to the National Legion Track & Field Championship, the only U16 and U18 in Canada.

The try-out for the Nova Scotia athletes takes place in July; the athletes are selected from the try-outs and Athletics Nova Scotia looks after the try-outs for Command. We get participants from across Nova Scotia, such as the following clubs: South-East Athletics, Halifax Road Hammers, Athletics East, Slow Ship Athletics Club, Southwest Nova Athletics, Truro Lions, Pace Athletics, Celtic Athletics C.B., Liverpool Athletics, Valley Athletics, Crown Athletics Windsor, Pictou Country Athletics and Annapolis Country Athletics, there could be a club in our back yard.

Between National and Provincial Command this is made possible, these athletes have gone on to the Canada Games and the Olympics. We, as a community organization, help these athletes achieve their goals.

Because the try-outs are in July and the Nationals are in August, it doesn't give us much time to order uniforms, so we must take a guess at the sizes required.

So, I am reaching out to the Branches in NSNU Command to help with the uniform situation.

Because we have travelled to the same Province two years in row, this year we will be going to a different Province and need to change the uniform up.

For a two-year sponsorship we are asking branches for \$1,000 dollars and in return, we will put your branch name and number on the back of the jacket of the track suit. Depending on how many branches get involved will determine the size of the lettering. With your help Nova Scotia will be the first to achieve this type of support for the athletes and that we stand behind our Youth.

This sponsorship will allow us to bring in more uniforms for the first year to better fit the athletes and then adjust for the second year.

If making the donation; please make payable – Nova Scotia Nunavut Command.

Also attached is the history of the Track & Field

If you have any questions, please reach out to me.

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The Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships are Canada's only track and field championships for the under-16 and under-18 categories. The Royal Canadian Legion is in its 48th year hosting Legion Nationals where over 1000 young athletes compete for Canadian championship medals.

Through our commitment to supporting youth leadership and sports, the Legion is helping strengthen the next generation of leaders. The event will take place in Regina in 2026 and 2027.

History of the National Championships

The Royal Canadian Legion, through the efforts of thousands of Legion volunteers, has been organizing and coordinating the National Youth Track and Field Championships for 45 years in support of Canadian youth and our communities. This national championship, funded by the Legion and generous support from our partners, gives young Canadians 17 and under a chance to compete against the best, develop confidence and better understand the diversity of other sports-minded youth across Canada.

Why does the Legion support youth Track and Field?

The Legion's national youth athletics program has come to be regarded as one of the best in the country. In fact, many of our former participants have gone on to international and Olympic success. Through the success of this program, many youths have been taught the value of leadership, teamwork, and many more skills necessary both on and off the playing field. We have been able to encourage many characteristics that can come from working in a team environment, as well as being exposed to a variety of cultures across Canada. It is through our sports program, youth education programs and other youth initiatives that the Legion helps strengthen the younger generation and the future of Canada.

1950s – It all started with one Branch

The Legion's interest in Track & Field extends back to the early 1950's. During the early years, the Ontario Legion Hydro Branch, No. 277, with the leadership of the late Bob Saunders, chairman, Ontario Hydro, and the late George Duthie, manager of the sports department, Canadian National Exhibition, sponsored the former Canadian Olympic Training plan. The Hydro Branch sponsored a series of projects to provide financing for this program, including invitational track meets and big-name performances. The success of this program prompted the branch to forward a resolution to the 1956 Dominion Convention of the Legion held in Vancouver, requesting, and receiving, the Legion's dominion-wide support of the Olympic Training Plan.

1957 – The Legion begins conducting national athlete's clinics and training camps

In 1957 The Royal Canadian Legion entered the national track and field scene, when it undertook to finance The Canadian Olympic Training Plan. From 1957 to 1961, the Legion conducted national athletes' clinics in Toronto, with each province being invited to send a team of selected athletes and coaches.

For the initial four years, the program was under the direction of coaches Franz Stampfl, Don Canham and Dave Rankin. During that time, more than 700 athletes, and a number of coaches attended the clinics, each culminating with track and field meets at The Canadian National Exhibition.

In 1962, the federal government awarded a grant to the Legion in support of the first Canadian National Clinic for track and field coaches at Guelph, Ontario (this support continued until 1969). The 1962 clinic was under the direction of world-renowned Geoffrey Dyson, former British national coach, with John Disley, John Savidge, Denis Cullum, French coach Jacques Bergougous and nine well-known Canadian coaches assisting.

In addition, four summer and three winter training camps were held, which were attended by a total of 475 young track and field athletes.

At the conclusion of the 1962 coaches' clinic, Geoffrey Dyson accepted the position of the Legion's sports training program coordinator for a 5-year period. During this tenure, more than 1,300 coaches received the benefit of the program, with an additional 2,500 coaches receiving training at provincial and regional clinics.

1963 – The Legion develops some of the first technical periodicals on track and field

In 1963, the Legion recognized the need for Canadian technical periodicals on track and field. As a result, COACHING REVIEW and THE TRACK AND FIELD ANNUAL were produced. This program, made possible by the unique organization and resources of the Legion, combined with the support of the federal government, passed into history in 1969, when the Fitness and Amateur Sport Directorate of the Department of National Health and Welfare advised that, as a result of a study of policies and guidelines relating to grants under the Fitness Act, no further federal financial support would be available.

1975 – The first Canada-wide track and field meet was organized

From then until 1975, the existing track and field programs only went to the provincial level. In 1975, a Canada-wide pilot track and field meet was conducted at Waterloo, Ontario. It was such a resounding success that a second national meet was held in Edmonton, Alberta, in 1976, which also proved to be a great success. The two pilot camps showed that there was a need, and that young Canadians certainly gained from the experience.

1977 – The Legion funds National Track and Field

In keeping with the Legion's commitment to our youth, funds were allocated for National Track and Field camps starting in 1977. Funds are still being allocated, with planning of future camps commencing five years in advance. Since 1977 the Legion has invested millions of dollars to hold national annual track and field camps to provide training and competition at the national level for young track and field athletes. The camps provide these youths opportunities to mix with other athletes, coaches and chaperones from all parts of Canada.

In addition to a national commitment, local Legion Branches, in concert with their Provincial Commands, bid for the right to host this event. The following locations have hosted the event:

- 1977 – Oromocto, NB
- 1978 – Peace Garden, MB
- 1979 – St. John's, NF
- 1980 – Saskatoon, SK
- 1981 – Hamilton, ON
- 1982 – Oromocto, NB
- 1983 – Ottawa, ON
- 1984 – Halifax, NS
- 1985 – Saskatoon, SK
- 1986 – Sudbury, ON
- 1987 – Calgary, AB
- 1988 – Quebec, QC
- 1989 – Victoria, BC
- 1990 – St. John's, NF
- 1991 – Toronto, ON
- 1992 – Calgary, AB
- 1993 – Saskatoon, SK
- 1994 – Ottawa, ON
- 1995 – Winnipeg, MB
- 1996 – Sherbrooke, QC

- 1997 – St. John's, NF
- 1998 – Prince George, BC
- 1999 – Sudbury, ON
- 2000 – Calgary, AB
- 2001 – Sherbrooke, QC
- 2002 – Sherbrooke, QC
- 2003 – Kitchener/Waterloo, ON
- 2004 – Sudbury, ON
- 2005 – Edmonton, AB
- 2006 – Burnaby, BC
- 2007 – Oromocto, NB
- 2008 – Sherbrooke, QC
- 2009 – Sherbrooke, QC
- 2010 – Ottawa, ON
- 2011 – Ottawa, ON
- 2012 – Charlottetown, PE
- 2013 – Langley, BC
- 2014 – Langley, BC
- 2015 – Sainte-Thérèse, QC
- 2016 – Sainte-Thérèse, QC
- 2017 – Brandon, MB
- 2018 – Brandon, MB
- 2019 – Cape Breton, NS
- 2022 – Sherbrooke, QC
- 2023 – Sherbrooke, QC
- 2024 – Calgary, AB
- 2025 – Calgary, AB
- 2026 – Regina, SK
- 2027 – Regina, SK

1985 – Program expands to include coaching certification

With the co-operation of the Canadian Track and Field Association and the Coaching Association of Canada, qualified coaches and clinicians conducted courses and took part in the clinics.

1997 – The Dominion Command Athletic Camp changes its name

The name of the camp was changed to The Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships.

Today – The Legion National Track and Field Championship reaches international merit

In 2010 the Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships became the country's Canadian Championships through the opening of the U16 and U18 age categories.