

Middlesex League Division Plan

Ralph Lord Division - Belmont, Lexington, Wakefield, Reading, Woburn

Robert McIntyre Division - Watertown, Burlington, Melrose, Stoneham, Winchester

Basic Plan – Six dual meets – 4 in division & 2 cross-over meets
plus a final League Championship Meet.

Rationale for Change

- **The nine meet schedule has always been a coaching challenge in regard to a balance between competition and preparation.**
- **The dramatic increase in team size requires more preparation time than in previous years.**
- **The increase in restrictions from academic considerations, exam week, has reduce the available dates in which to schedule meets.**
- **Since the addition of RLTC as a venue there has been a marked increase in state level competitions that benefit Middlesex League competitors. This increase has risen from two twenty years ago to seven at present. These competitions will benefit varsity athletes preparing for state championship meet as long as we can prepare the athletes properly and fit them into our competitive schedule.**
- **Other consistently competitive teams from around the state, generally come from leagues that race 6 or few times in league competition.**
- **An athlete needs an easy day before and after any competition and the reduction from 9 to 6 or seven dates frees 6 to 8 dates for addition training.**
- **Accomplished athletes, on weaker teams, rarely get to race the top athletes from the strong teams as the strong team generally rests or shifts events for these athletes. The championship meet concluding the season will enhance the possibility that this athletes will compete against each other.**
- **The current schedule does not adequately plan for bad weather with alternate dates available in case of snow or lost scheduled dates. We were very fortunate that the 2006-07 winter season did not have a rescheduling problem but the fact is that we did not have reasonable alternate dates built into the schedule.**

Elements of the Division Schedule

- The current Middlesex League will be divided into two divisions of five team each. In subsequent years the Lord Division and McIntrye Division will be organized based on the MIAA enrollment figures assigning schools to a specific division. This will dynamically adjust the divisions based on school enrollment. This data will be gender specific when developing the schedule. Traditional rivals will initially meet in the last meet of the season but as enrollments change and teams switch divisions these rivalries will still occur but not necessarily in the last meet.
- All teams will face each other once during the season. This meeting will be in the championship meet. Division teams will face each other twice in a season. There will be two cross division meets per season per team.

Elements of Division Schedule

- Each division will cross over twice during the dual meet portion of the schedule and will face every team in the other division in the championship meet. In year one the cross over is the meeting of the traditional rivals.
- This provides for six dual meets and one championship meet.
- Initial Lord Division: Belmont, Lexington, Reading, Wakefield, Woburn
- Initial McIntyre Division: Watertown, Burlington, Stoneham, Melrose, Winchester
- Block with a background in this color are the cross over meetings between divisions.

Sample Schedule for year one

(Traditional Rivals in red italics)

Year		Belmont	Burlington	Lexington	Melrose	Reading
1						
Block	1	Wakefield	Melrose	Stoneham	Burlington	Woburn
	2	Woburn	Winchester	Wakefield	Reading	Melrose
	3	Reading	Watertown	Woburn	Stoneham	Belmont
	4	Lexington	Stoneham	Belmont	Winchester	Wakefield
	5	Burlington	Belmont	Reading	Watertown	Lexington
	6	<i>Watertown</i>	<i>Lexington</i>	<i>Burlington</i>	<i>Wakefield</i>	<i>Stoneham</i>

Block		Stoneham	Wakefield	Watertown	Winchester	Woburn
1						
	1	Lexington	Belmont	Winchester	Watertown	Reading
	2	Watertown	Lexington	Stoneham	Burlington	Belmont
	3	Melrose	Winchester	Burlington	Wakefield	Lexington
	4	Burlington	Reading	Woburn	Melrose	Watertown
	5	Winchester	Woburn	Melrose	Stoneham	Wakefield
	6	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Melrose</i>	<i>Belmont</i>	<i>Woburn</i>	<i>Winchester</i>

Illustration Schedule for a year with Belmont and Stoneham switching divisions (Traditional Rivals in red italics)

		Belmont	Burlington	Lexington	Melrose	Reading
Block	1	Lexington	Melrose	Belmont	Burlington	Woburn
	2	<i>Watertown</i>	Winchester	Wakefield	Reading	Melrose
	3	Melrose	Watertown	Woburn	Belmont	<i>Stoneham</i>
	4	Burlington	Belmont	Stoneham	Winchester	Wakefield
	5	Winchester	Stoneham	Reading	Watertown	Lexington
	6	Reading	<i>Lexington</i>	<i>Burlington</i>	<i>Wakefield</i>	Belmont

		Stoneham	Wakefield	Watertown	Winchester	Woburn
Block	1	Wakefield	Stoneham	Winchester	Watertown	Reading
	2	Woburn	Lexington	<i>Belmont</i>	Burlington	Stoneham
	3	<i>Reading</i>	Winchester	Burlington	Wakefield	Lexington
	4	Lexington	Reading	Woburn	Melrose	Watertown
	5	Burlington	Woburn	Melrose	Belmont	Wakefield
	6	Watertown	<i>Melrose</i>	Stoneham	<i>Woburn</i>	<i>Winchester</i>

Keeping Traditional Rivals

- The second slide reflects a team from the Lord Division and a team from the McIntrye Division switching divisions.
- This type of switch will occur when school enrollments shift the composition of the two divisions.
- The traditional rivals will meet each other annually but not necessarily in the last block of meets.

Crowning a Middlesex League Champion

- There will be two levels of Middlesex League Champion. First the team that has the best record against their Division opponents will be the best in that Division.
- Teams with overall 6-0 or identical records after six meets will face each other head to head within the Championship Meet to determine the overall league champion. This can be done by insuring that these teams are paired together in heats of the championship meet and scored separately as a dual meet. These teams would have a minimum of 3 entrants per event.
- This meet will be scored separately as a dual meet.
- The overall Championship Meet will be scored based on six scoring places, 10-8-6-4-2-1. A meet champion will be declared at the end of the meet.

Crowning a Middlesex League Champion

- If there is a clear winner after six meets then that team is the league champion and the championship meet is a ten meet draw.
- If teams have identical records but met each other during the season then the winner of head to head meeting will be the Middlesex League Champion and again the championship meet is a ten team draw.
- Teams with identical records will face each other in the Championship Meet. They will race each other in heats containing only these teams. The remainder of the league will race in heats seed by performance not team.
- My hope is that this meet will be conducted at the RLTC but scheduling restrictions at the RLTC may alter this as this meet must be the last meet of the season should the meet be needed to declare a league champion.

How would the Championship Meet be structured to accomplish this?

- Each team in the league will enter 2 performers per event with additional entrants from that team entered based on the Class D State qualifying standard.
- The current three hour rental time at RLTC restricts us to 24 entrants per running event, 10 teams per relay event, 24 entrants per field event.
- Events – 2 mile, 1 mile, 1000m, 600m, 300m, 55m, 55mH, 4x200m, 4x400m, 4x800m, LJ, HJ and Shot Put.

Holidays 4

Sundays 12

2007-08 Calendar for Season – This is the template that the season must fit.

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	1	2	3

Holidays 4

MSTCA Meet Dates 10

Vaction/Exam Week

Sundays 7

06-07 Meets

2006-07 Schedule of Meets
prepared on the 2007-08 calendar, note
meets crowding Dec 22-Jan 9

Sun.	Mon	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8 Blk 1
9	10	11	12	13	14	15 Blk 2
16	17	18 Snow date	19 JV/snow date	20	21	22 Blk 3
23	24	25	26	27 JV Meet	28	29 Blk 4
30	31	1	2 Blk 5	3 Blk 5	4	5 Auerbach F/S
6 Auerbach F/S	7	8 Blk 6	9 Blk 6	10	11	12 MSTCA Relay
13 MSTCA Relay	14	Exam Week no meets can be planned including snow dates				19 MSTCA Relay
20 MSTCA Relay	21	22 JV Meet	23 Blk 7	24	25	26
27 McIntyre	28	29 Blk 8	30 Blk 8	1	2	3 MSTCA Coaches
4 MSTCA Elite	5	6 Blk 9	7 Blk 9	8	9	10 Snow Date
11	12	13 Snow Date	14 Snow Date	15	16 MIAA	17 MIAA
18 MIAA	19	20	21	22	23 MIAA	24

Holidays 4	MSTCA Meet Dates 10	Vaction/Exam Week
Sundays 7	ML10 Meet Dates Div	06-07 + Meets

2007-08 Division Schedule of Meets compared to 06-07, note no varsity meet between Dec23 – Jan. 7

Sun.	Mon	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8 Blk 1
9	10	11 Blk 2	12 Blk 2	13	14	15 MSTCA WC
16	17	18	19 JV Relay	20	21	22 Blk 3
23	24	25	26	27	28	29 ML10 Relay Carnival
30	31	1	2 Snow	3 Snow	4	5 Auerbach F/S
6 Auerbach F/S	7	8 Blk 4	9 Blk 4	10	11	12 MSTCA Relay
13 MSTCA Relay	14	Exam Week no meets can be planned including snow dates				19 MSTCA Relay
20 MSTCA Relay	21	22 Blk 5	23 Blk 5	24	25	26 JV Meet
27 McIntyre	28	29 Blk 6	30 Blk 6	1	2	3 MSTCA Coaches
4 MSTCA Elite	5	6 Blk 9	7 ML10 Champs	8	9	10 JV Champions Meet + snow makeup for ML10
11	12	13 Snow Date	14 Snow Date	15	16 MIAA	17 MIAA
18 MIAA	19	20	21	22	23 MIAA	24

Characteristics of Current Schedule Compared to Division Schedule

- Four blocks of meets before Jan 1, six blocks before January 11 with the end of nine block dual season coming Feb 6.
- Division Plan - Three blocks of meets before Jan 8, end of six blocks dual meet season on January 30.
- One varsity dual meet mid winter vacation week.
- Division Plan – No varsity meets between Dec 23 and Jan 7.
- Snow dates are few with only planned snow dates canceling a JV Meet.
- Division Plan – Snow dates are placed mid and late season without reducing JV racing dates. One displaces the JV end of season Championship but does not eliminate it.
- Quality practice days are fewer as the season progresses into the competitive ML10 season.
- Division Plan - Even with the reduced number of meets quality practice days are hard to find but the opportunities are vastly improved over the current schedule. The division plan as presented here also allows for participation in the mid December MSTCA Winter Carnival.

Comparison of Division Schedule to Current Schedule

- Few racing dates in league competition creates 7+ more training days over the season.
- Eliminates the crush of meets around the holidays but still provides for meaningful league activity.
- Adds the MSTCA Winter Carnival as a possibility.
- Provides snow dates throughout the season.
- Focuses league competition towards a meaning championship meet as we get ready for the State Championship meets in mid February.

Added Value of the Division System.

- Creates new more attainable competitive goal for the lower enrollment schools by moving their teams to their own division within the league creating a Divisional champion.
- Retains the crowning of an overall Middlesex League Champion.
- Adds true competitive JV competitions between ML10 teams and insures these JV racing opportunities.
- Shift from 6/4 configuration for mid week ML10 meets to 5/5 with a small reduction in the length of these meets.
- Adds an ML10 Championship Meet enhancing preparation for state competition while at the same time reducing racing frequency.
- Improves the prospects of better athletes on weaker teams racing against the best in the Championship Meet.

Sub Varsity Schedule of Meets (JV)

- A relay carnival during the winter break designed to involve maximum number of participants from each team. The idea is to create additional relay events such as gender mixed relays and non standard length relays in addition to the standard events.
- A sub varsity league relay meet with a sub varsity champion crowned exclusive to team members designated sub varsity by their coach. In an effort to support teams with small numbers a standard of performance could be established that categorizes eligibility.
- A mid season sub varsity league wide championship restricted to team members that have not scored in a varsity meet..
- An end of season league wide championship for all team members NOT invited to the League Championship Meet. This will be a mix of some varsity and sub varsity.
- This provided four opportunities for team members to compete in addition to the six scheduled meets for a total of ten competitions.

Unintended Consequences of the division plan with a solutions.

- Teams that do not have indoor track to practice on are denied two dates where these teams get to run, throw and jump on an indoor surface.
- Solutions
- Craft meaningful sub varsity competitions.
- If the schools with track facilities share their facility once per season per team without such a facility then the value to the track poor teams would be as good or better than retaining the current schedule.
- These hosting dates can be coordinated team to team to insure minimum impact on the host schools. This is a small inconvenience for the track rich schools to share a few practice days during the season to better serve the athletes of the track poor teams.
- This sharing has been an integral part of the culture in Woburn for a number of years. The remainder of the league should follow Woburn's lead in this area.

Cost analysis

- 2006-07 ML10 season had 18 varsity blocks and three JV dates totaling 21.
- The 2007-08 division schedule calls for 12 varsity blocks, 1 Championship Meet, a relay carnival date and 3 JV racing dates totaling 17.
- This means that each team needs fewer buses.
- This means that reduced costs for officials and facilities.
- Revenue will be reduced from 8 revenue producing dates to 6.
- However it is likely that the divisional structure will enhance a deeper and more pervasive level of competitive interest throughout the season. We will get our answer by trying the divisional plan for 2007-08

Comments & Contact Information

- I have prepared this schedule and this presentation in an effort to present a mature plan and presentation addressing this topic.
- I want to acknowledge the collaboration of Matt Carr and David Mastro that have helped shape this plan. We met 2/19/07, a Monday afternoon in ongoing efforts to shape this plan. The coaches meeting of 2/20/07 provided numerous suggestions and general acceptance of the concept. This presentation includes all this input which has been considered in crafting this single recommendation.
- We also agreed that this needs to be a near “consensus” decision. By “consensus” we mean that some might have some level of objection to concerns voiced, acknowledged and considered. However in the interest of addressing issues that bother a majority of coaches, we try this for a year. We can always return to the current scheduling program in 2008-09 should there be unanticipated consequences.
- Permanently recommending a change to this system would be contingent on a subsequent vote by a majority of coaches support the continuation of this type of division scheduling plan at the conclusion of the 2007-08 season.
- I also want to acknowledge the conversations that I had with Kevin Norton, Hal Croft, Bill O’Connor and Bobby Powers that gave me pause to consider how this plan should be crafted. The 45 minute discussion that occurred at the 2/20/07 coaches meeting was one of the best group discussions on this topic that I can recollect..
- I will post this presentation in both power point format and pdf format on www.mlxctrack.com/schedule/divisionplan.htm
- Coach Phillip Crosby, Lexington Email: phillipcrosby@yahoo.com 978-772-9424
- This Draft – 2/25/07