

UNIFIED & SPECIAL OLYMPICS TRACK & FIELD

MANDY TAYLOR ~ SUMMER 2023

The good side of sports

I like to ramble in my weekly column, but we're going to let the photos do the talking this week.

I took the snapshots you see alongside this blurb, but let's talk about Joe Burns' favorite part about shooting sports. The ace photographer will tell you he enjoys seeing the faces.

Adam Bannister and Kameron Pringle were all smiles last week at their Fort Calhoun track meet. The two athletes' faces lit up running their Unified Track and Field 100-meter dash. What does Unified mean? Here's what I've written in the past:

"According to the NSAA by-laws, Unified Sports and its parent-arm, Special Olympics, were created and developed to give individuals with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to train and compete in sports activities."

Whatever the definition, look at those faces. It's good to see smiles. It's good to see the good side of sports. I love it.

On Tuesday, both Bannister and Pringle competed at the Nebraska Capitol Conference meet at Platteview. Pringle, running with partner Dillon Dierks, finished the 100 in 16.36. Bannister, running with Kyle Deyen, finished in 20.88.

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ZAM DRIVER
TURNED WRITER

Grant Egger



PHOTOS BY GRANT EGGER | CITIZEN

ABOVE: Adam Bannister finishes the 100-meter dash April 23 at Fort Calhoun High School. BELOW: Kameron Pringle runs the 100-meter dash April 23 at Fort Calhoun High School.



A LITTLE ABOUT ME...

- Education
- Family
- HETRA / Rough 'N Ready Rodeo
- Following Passions
- Teaching & Coaching Experience



TOPICS

❖ Fort Calhoun Track & Field Team Culture

- Truly Unified

❖ Unified Athletes

- Recruiting
- Staffing

❖ Unified Partners

- Right Person/Right Situation

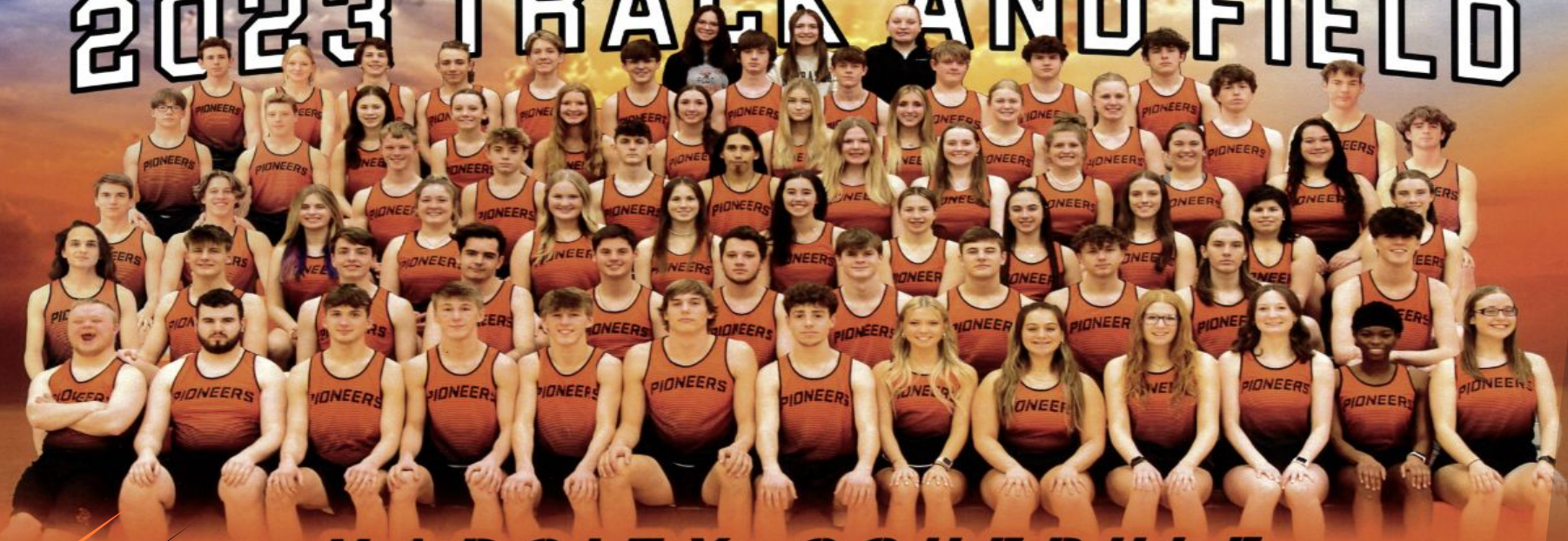
❖ Training

- Sprints
- Long Jump
- Shot Put

❖ Competition

- Unified Meets
- Traditional Meets

FORT CALHOUN PIONEERS 2023 TRACK AND FIELD



VARSITY SCHEDULE

03/16 @ CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
03/24 @ COLLEGE OF ST. MARY'S

04/14 @ WAHOO
04/20 @ LOUISVILLE
04/25 FORT CALHOUN INVITATIONAL
04/28 NCC CONFERENCE @ ARLINGTON

05/05 @ ARLINGTON

THE HIGH SCHOOL

TEAM CULTURE

Fort Calhoun High School Track & Field

- Communication
- Relationships
- Experienced Coaching Staff



CONT...

■ Goal Standards

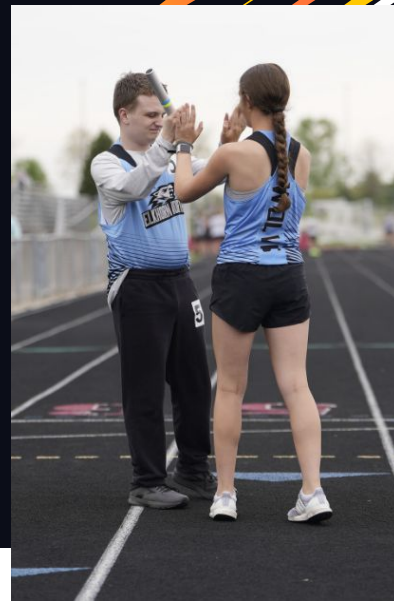
- Goals are different for everyone, but none are less important than another
 - ▶ Improvement
 - ▶ Growth
 - ▶ Compete
- Strength & Conditioning a must

■ Team

- Celebrate
- Be together
- Fun



UNIFIED *ATHLETES*



Purpose of Unified Sports®

Dedicated to promoting social inclusion through shared sports training and competition experiences, Unified Sports® joins people with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team. It was inspired by a simple principle: training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding. Having sport in common is just one more way that preconceptions and false ideas are swept away.

<https://www.nsaahome.org/unified-track/>

Giving All Students an Opportunity to Experience Success!

+ Why Unified Sports®?

Resources

Getting Started:

- [How to Launch Unified Sports®](#)
- [2023-24 Unified Champion Schools Intent Form](#)

Coaching:

- [Coaching Unified Sports® \(NFHS Video\)](#)
- [Recruiting Video](#)

Special Olympics Nebraska:

- [Special Olympics Nebraska Website](#)
- [Special Olympics Unified Sports® Resources](#)

+ Regular Season

+ State Championship

Track and Field, also known as athletics, encourages athletes of all abilities and ages to compete at their optimum level. Through the athletics training program, participants can develop total fitness to compete in any sport. As with all Special Olympics sports, athletics offers athletes the opportunity to learn through skill development and competitive settings and to be involved in large social settings.



This sport offers traditional and unified events!

RULES

Track & Field Rules

Event Description

Unified Team Guidelines

<https://www.sone.org/sports/sports-offered/track-field.html>

NSAA Bylaws & Approved Rulings

- Students must be a bona fide member of an NSAA member school
 - Age (21 years), but with only 4 years of eligibility
- Students must have a recognized disability within 42 U.S.C. Section 12102 (ADA)
 - Intellectual disability... refer to NSAA & Special Olympics guidelines
- Students must have appropriate pre-participation forms completed and on file at member school
 - Determination made by agency, professional, and/or local school



RECRUITING UNIFIED ATHLETES - COMMUNICATION

SPED Staff/Administration

- Working together to ensure
 - Opportunities for all potential athletes
 - Following IEPs and meeting the needs of each athlete

Parents

- Permission
- Strong communication
- Don't be afraid to ask for help
 - Transportation
 - etc...

Coaches

- Open Communication
- Be on the same page
 - Training
 - Expectations
 - Schedule
- Differentiate
 - As needed

SPED STAFF/ADMINISTRATION

- ❖ Administrative Support
- ❖ Work with SPED Staff
 - First line for Recruiting
 - Paperwork
- ❖ Coaching
 - Use entire staff
 - Specified Unified Coach



UNIFIED ATHLETES - RELATIONSHIPS

- Athlete/Partner
- Athlete/Coach
- Coach/Parent
- Team



- Love
- Patience
- Trust
- Teach



TRULY UNIFIED...*PART OF THE TEAM*

Train Together

Everyday.

From warm-ups & team meetings to seasonal training & specialties.

Travel Together

One of the most important times for our team is spent on a bus.



Differentiate when in the Best Interest of the Athlete

Every athlete is different. They can still do all of the things, some just need a different level of training, schedule, & travel plan. It's OK!

EXAMPLE - DIFFERENTIATED SCHEDULE

Traditional Practice Schedule

Mon-Thur ~ 3:30-5:00pm

Fri ~ 2-3:30pm

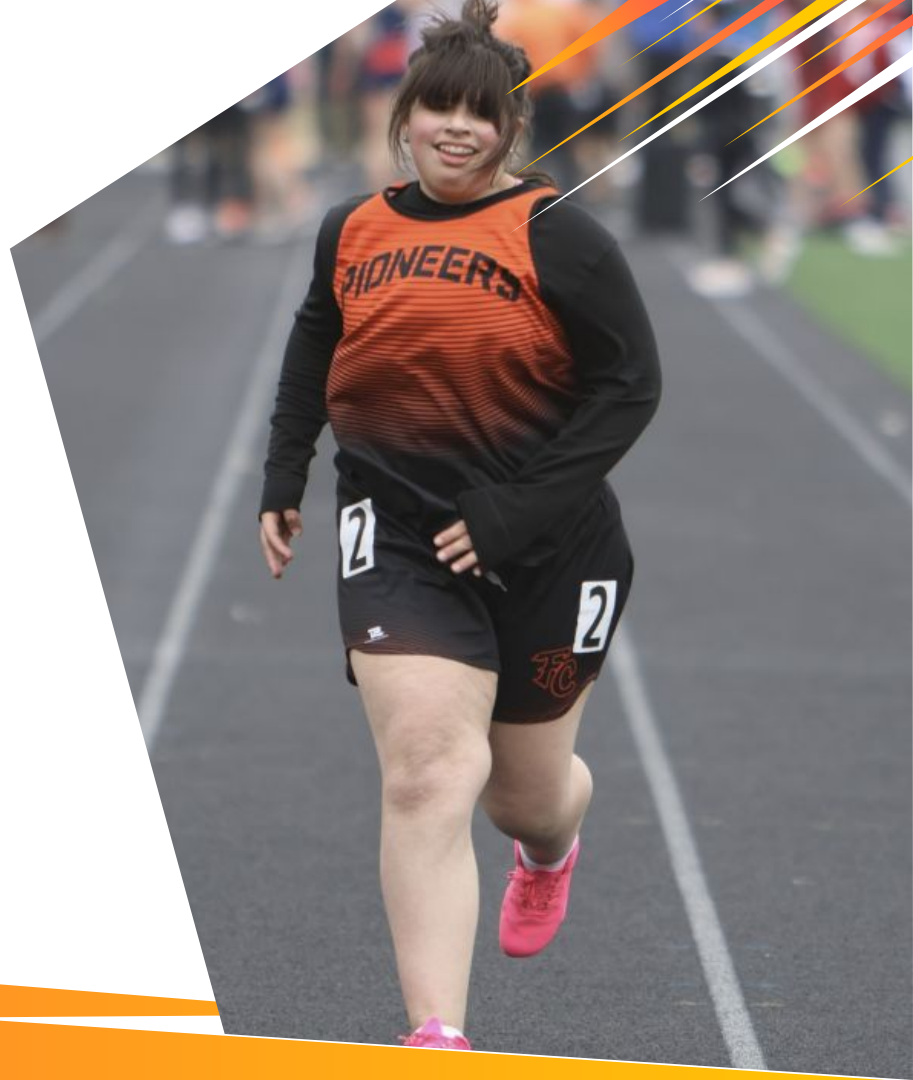
Differentiated Practice Schedule

Mon & Wed ~ 3:30-5:00pm

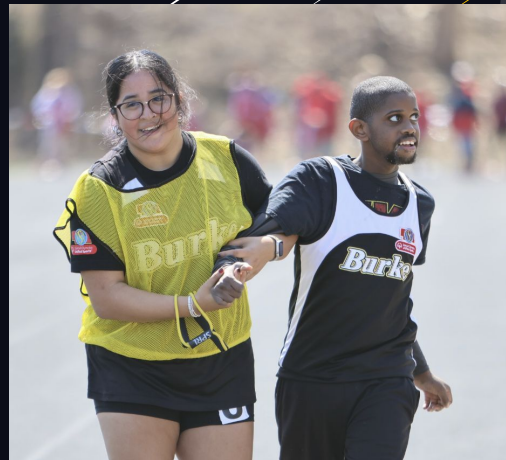
*Keep in mind pit days/specialties & throwing schedule. Need time to appropriately coach long jump & shot put along with sprints.

COMPETITIONS

- Can compete in up to 9 meets with 4 or more teams
- Can compete in unified & existing meets, just not on the same day (dual participation)



UNIFIED *PARTNERS*



RECRUITING UNIFIED PARTNERS

Eligibility

- Non-disabled peer
 - Follow same eligibility requirements as with all NSAA programs

Part of the Team

- If their partner is working, they should too
- Dual participation rules are the same as for unified athletes

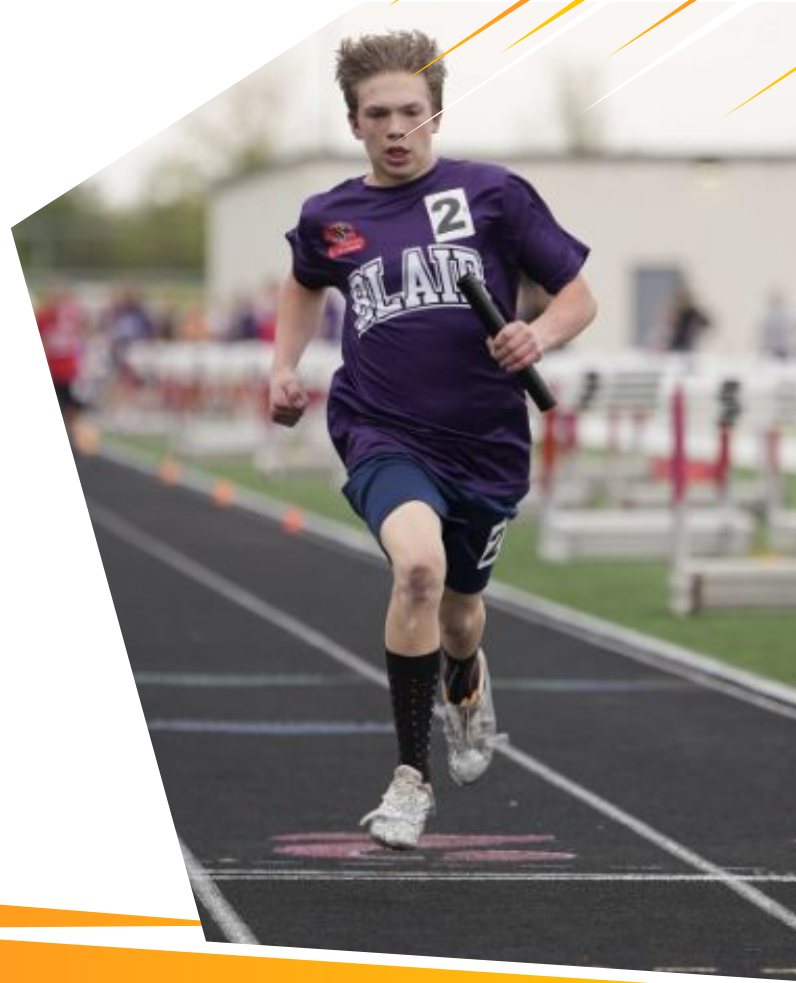
Right Partner/Right Situation

- Heart
- Perspective
- Relationship
- Leader
 - Source of Pride
 - Celebrate
 - Meet their partner where they're at

TRAINING

Let me win.
But if I cannot win,
let me be brave
in the attempt.
- Special Olympics athlete oath

- Sprints
- Long Jump
- Shot Put



SPRINTS - 100M DASH & 4X100M RELAY



- Form work w/the sprinters
- Conditioning w/the sprinters
- Blocks - can use or not use
- Handoffs 4x100m relay - blind or open

TEACH & differentiate as needed.
One size does not fit all.



LONG JUMP

- Approach/Mark
 - Steps will depend on speed/strength of jumper
- Form
 - Standing long jump
 - ▶ Use legs to explode up
 - ▶ Use of arms
 - ▶ Two foot landing
 - Pop-ups
 - ▶ Use plyo box to get comfortable with a little height

TEACH & keep it simple.



SHOT PUT

TEACH, TEACH, TEACH & hold to fundamental expectations

- Safety
 - When to throw/retrieve
 - How to hold the shot
- Ball Progression
 - weighted balls
 - to shot put
 - ▶ Girls - 3kg (6.6 lbs)
 - ▶ Boys - 4kg (8.8 lbs)
- Throwing Progression
 - Standing shot with ~~two hands~~
 - Standing shot with one hand
 - Power
 - ▶ Mirror (wrap, unwrap, snap)
 - ▶ Blocking
 - ▶ Use of legs
 - Glide or Spin if ready
 - ▶ Footwork
 - ▶ Posture

3.2.6.5 The shot shall be put from the shoulder with one hand only. When the competitor takes a stance in the circle to commence a put, the shot shall touch or be in close proximity to the neck or the chin and the hand shall not be dropped below this position during the action of putting. The shot shall not be taken behind the line of the shoulders.

COMPETITION

NSAA Unified Meet
embedded in existing Track & Field meet

- Meet Schedule
- Setting Flights & Heats
- Timing & Measurement



MEET SCHEDULE

❖ NSAA suggested Schedule

<https://nsaa-static.s3.amazonaws.com/textfile/unified/utrsched.pdf>

Track & Field Schedule

Field Events:

1:00 pm girls' pole vault, boys' high jump, boys' long jump, girls' triple jump, boys' discus, girls' shot put

2:30 pm boys' pole vault, girls' high jump, girls' long jump, boys' triple jump, girls' discus, boys' shot put

Running Events:

2:00 pm 3200 meters relay (finals)

2:30 pm 100 girls high hurdles

2:45 pm 110 boys high hurdles

3:00 pm 100 meters

3:20 pm 400 meters (finals)

3:40 pm 3200 meters run (finals)

4:10 pm 200 meters

Break

5:00 pm 100 girls high hurdles

5:15 pm 110 boys high hurdles

5:25 pm 100 meters

5:40 pm 800 meters run

6:00 pm 300 hurdles

6:25 pm 200 meters

6:35 pm 1600 meters run

6:55 pm 400 meters relay

7:10 pm 1600 meters relay

Insert Unified Sports, Track & Field Long Jump "Athlete" & "Partner" flights (2), here or there

Insert Unified Sports, Track & Field 100 M "Athlete" & "Partner" heats (2), here or there

Insert Unified Sports, Track & Field 400 meters relay, here

ALTERNATIVE SCHEDULE

- Keep long jump & shot put as is.
- Unified 4x100m relay at the start of running events
- Unified 100m dash prior to 100m dash



SETTING FLIGHTS & HEATS

100m Dash

Set “partner” heats

Set “athlete” heats

*Mix schools if possible

Long Jump

Set “partner” and “athlete”
flights by school

Shot Put

Set “partner” and “athlete”
flights by school

- “Partner” heat/flight first. Immediately followed by their respective “athlete” heat/flight.
- Flighting long jump & shot put by school, allows you the best use of time for all. Once a school is done with shot put, they can head over and compete in long jump.
- Please don't schedule running events ahead of field events.

FLIGHT/HEAT EXAMPLE

100m Dash	Heat 1	Long Jump	Heat 1	Shot Put	Heat 1
	Partner 1		FCHS Partner 1		Blair Partner 1
	Partner 2		FCHS Partner 2		Blair Partner 2
	Partner 3		FCHS Partner 3		Blair Partner 3
	Partner 4		FCHS Partner 4		Blair Partner 4
	Partner 5		FCHS Athlete 1		Blair Athlete 1
	Partner 6		FCHS Athlete 2		Blair Athlete 2
	Partner 7		FCHS Athlete 3		Blair Athlete 3
	Partner 8		FCHS Athlete 4		Blair Athlete 4
	Heat 2		Heat 2		Heat 2
	Athlete 1		Blair Partner 1		FCHS Partner 1
	Athlete 2		Blair Partner 2		FCHS Partner 2
	Athlete 3		Blair Partner 3		FCHS Partner 3
	Athlete 4		Blair Partner 4		FCHS Partner 4
	Athlete 5		Blair Athlete 1		FCHS Athlete 1
	Athlete 6		Blair Athlete 2		FCHS Athlete 2
	Athlete 7		Blair Athlete 3		FCHS Athlete 3
	Athlete 8		Blair Athlete 4		FCHS Athlete 4

TIMING & MEASUREMENT

- 100m & 4x100m relay
 - Timing System
- Long Jump
 - Remember purpose
 - ▶ Accountability to boards
 - ▶ If board is missed, measure from end of the runway.
 - ▶ Everyone gets a mark. Remember there are competitors too
 - ▶ Be intentional & consistent
- Shot Put
 - Safety!!!
 - Similar to long jump, accountable to the rules, but remember the purpose.





THANK YOU!

Any questions?

Please reach out anytime:

- mtaylor@ftcpioneers.org
- @FCTrack_Field



CREDITS

Special thanks and photo credits:

- “The Good Side of Sports” & various photographs by [Grant Egger ~ Enterprise Sports](#)
- Various photographs by [Prep Running Nerd](#)