



2021 4x800 Meter Relay Start Guidelines/Clarification

The 4x800 Meter Relay has been added to the list of GHSA Track & Field events contested at all State Meet Series Meets (Area/Region, Sectional, State Meet) in GHSA competition for the 2021 T&F season.

The Track & Field Advisory Committee has determined the following Start Guidelines for the 2021 season:

In the 2021 Sectional Meets and State Meets the 4x800 meter will be contested with a one-curve stagger start, with two contestants per lane. Lane assignments will be as follows with seeding based on previous performances from the previous round of State Meet Series competition:

- Lane 1: Seed #1 (inside), Seed #9 (outside)
- Lane 2: Seed #2 (inside), Seed #10 (outside)
- Lane 3: Seed #3 (inside), Seed #11 (outside)
- Lane 4: Seed #4 (inside), Seed #12 (outside)
- Lane 5: Seed #5 (inside), Seed #13 (outside)
- Lane 6: Seed #6 (inside), Seed #14 (outside)
- Lane 7: Seed #7 (inside), Seed #15 (outside)
- Lane 8: Seed #8 (inside), Seed #16 (outside)

The 4x800 lead-off runners will run in their lane through the first turn and may break all the way to Lane 1 AFTER crossing the one-turn stagger break line on the backstretch.

All exchanges will be made in the 20-meter exchange zone that encompasses the Finish line.



Looking ahead to the 2022 Track & Field Season

With the addition of the 4x200 Meter Relay for the 2022 season, the Track & Field Advisory will recommend the following Start protocols for the 4x200 Meter Relay and the 4x800 Meter Relay.

4x200 Meter Relay: four-turn stagger with runners running in their lanes the ENTIRE RACE.

Many (most?) tracks will need to have these start & exchange zone markings added to their tracks for the 2022 season.

4x800 Meter Relay: Area/Region, Sectional, State Meets will revise the start of the 4x800 Relay to a “dual-alley” start, as illustrated below. Since many (most?) tracks will need to add the 4x200 Meter Relay start & exchange zone markings to their tracks in preparation for the 2022 season, they should also add the markings for a “dual-alley” start for the 4x800 Meter relay.

Dual-alley start – A type of start commonly used in large distance races where there are two waterfall starts: One standard, and a second farther down the track that is spread over the outside half of the lanes. Runners in the outside alley may break only to the middle of the track, designated by cones, until completing the first turn, at which time the runners on the outside may break toward the inside lanes where the runners who started from the full waterfall have already moved.

