

OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND: The USOPC Think Tank recommends increased exploration of partnerships across NGBs, the NCAA and the USOPC to collaborate on events/championships and examine options to enhance the athlete experience while growing national interest in each sport. Prompted by dropped programs in men's track and field, the USOPC and USA Track & Field formed a college sustainability roundtable of sport leaders and athletes to enhance the health of the sport and strengthen connectivity across stakeholders. The group examined challenges in the current season structure and championships space and recommend more collaboration to engage youth, college and elite participants and audiences. The USOPC Think Tank recognizes the success of USATF's current college event engagements ("Team USA versus the World" model) and believes such initiatives and event partnerships could be expanded to include the short and long-term ideas outlined below.

CURRENT / SHORT-TERM OPPORTUNITIES

History: USATF has historically supported the collegiate system by infusing Team USA events into existing collegiate invitational meets. *Since 1999, "Team USA versus the World" events have resulted in: (1) shared sponsorship revenue, (2) elevated broadcasting opportunities, (3) sport unification by showcasing youth, college and elite, (4) shared staffing efforts and (5) cross-branding. A similar approach could enhance the student-athlete experience and amplify NCAA Outdoor Championships.

Current USATF/college partnerships: *USATF has conducted "Team USA versus the World" programming at Drake Relays, Oregon Relays, Penn Relays and Mt. SAC Relays. Further, USATF has hosted its own national team events at Prairie View A&M, the University of Oregon and University of Arizona. This allows national team athletes an opportunity to compete, generate revenue and increase awareness.

Potential short-term opportunities: The success of current USATF/college efforts could be replicated with the NCAA DI Outdoor Championships immediately through collaboration in the areas of events, promotions and auxiliary programming.

Event support:

- To drive NCAA championship attendance, USATF can leverage regional associations to promote the event.
- USATF could offer staffing/meet management support.
- Sponsorship inventory may also be cross-leveraged for joint programming.

Promotional support:

- Access to USATF digital platform and national team athlete channels.
- Create NCAA/USATF co-branded signage and/or shared messaging.
- U.S. National Team athlete engagement (e.g., video messaging, autograph opportunities, in-meet recognition, youth activation integration).

Auxiliary efforts:

- Integration of USATF community/youth clinics featuring local USATF elite athletes and/or NCAA student-athletes and coaches.
- Conduct USATF "Learn by Doing" college/youth coaching clinics.

LONG-TERM VISION OF COLLABORATION

Vision: USATF's long-term vision involves collaboration during both the NCAA DI Indoor and Outdoor championships

- *Indoor:* Align the USATF Indoor Championships and the NCAA DI Indoor Championships at the same host/venue location.
- *Outdoor:* Create a festival-style event that brings a USATF youth/junior events to the site of the NCAA DI Championship (e.g., National Junior Olympic Track & Field Championships).

Event operations:

- *Indoor:* A shared event window featuring the top collegiate and domestic competition (events often overlap at different sites restricting athlete options).
- *Outdoor:* A week-long track and field festival in July to engage and celebrate all levels of competition (youth, collegiate and elite)
- Collaboration could involve shared facility costs and staffing/meet management.

Expanded participation/audience [NOTE: Requires management of various calendars]

- *Elite:* Elite engagement can elevate event exposure and strengthen the sport pathway by inspiring youth and college athletes.
- *Youth:* The National Junior Olympic Track & Field competition traditionally features 10,000+ youth participants and 25,000+ attendees; partnering on this event may increase ticket sales and commercial sponsorship interest.

Revenue/promotional opportunities:

- Leverage USATF sponsorship sales infrastructure to generate new revenue for both events in categories traditionally untapped by collegiate markets.
- Create NCAA/USATF co-branded signage and/or shared messaging.
- Seek sponsor support of youth, coaching and/or officiating events.
- Host U.S. national team exhibition events to celebrate athletes' college ties.

Enhancement opportunity:

- Develop a diversity, equity and inclusion award(s)/scholarship(s) and tap into corporate social responsibility avenues for additional support.