

Participation Numbers/shortened season

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Recently many have shared concerns with regards to the number of individual qualifiers moving on to the state finals this Saturday. If you will take a moment to look at the participation numbers I pulled together I think you will find that the "new" system actually allows more runners to participate. Unfortunately in the stronger regionals there are less individuals who qualify.

	1998		1999		2000	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
A	285	277	284	277	D1 246	236
B	282	289	284	279	D2 250	251
C	225	217	215	226	D3 252	256
D	134	127	125	131	D4 246	243
Totals	926	910	908	913	994	986

After hearing a few coaches comment about not having their runners qualify I can't help but respond to this issue. Is it possible that those who may have qualified out of weak regions in the past are no longer getting out? Without a doubt, and one more reason to hold the numbers to those who are medalist. Don't forget, the reason we will have more participants this year than ever is because we have more regions than ever. I don't intend to "stir the pot" here but a dose of reality is what is needed for those who have had it easy in the past. Time to step up or fall by the wayside!

Concerning the issue of the shortened season I agree we should do everything possible to get the week back on one end of the season or the other. Starting a week early will not threaten the health of your runners if they have prepared during the summer. Having coached in Arizona for several years I can tell you that kids can adapt even if they are not your best conditioned athletes. As a member of last year's regulations committee I voted against the shortened season and was completely surprised the proposal passed 13-5. If MITCA can push a new proposal to lengthen the season back to the regulations committee I will do everything I can to lobby for the change.

Good luck to those of you going on to the Michigan Speedway this weekend.

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