

# Track Conversion to Meters Starts With Hurdles

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The conversion to the metric system in track and field will begin this year and be completed on the high school level by 1980.

This year the hurdle events will be in metric distances, with the 100 meter high hurdles and the 300 meter low hurdles replacing the 120 yard highs and 180 lows.

By 1980, the sprints will be measured in 100, 200 and 400 meters, replacing the 100, 220 and 440 yard dashes, while the distances for the long runs are still to be determined. Field events will all be measured in meters instead of feet and inches.

The conversion to the metric system for the Putnam County Meet was complete by 1983 for all running events. Listed below are the various distances for comparing the different races after the conversion.

1 Meter	=	1.093613	Yards	
100 Meters	=	109.3613	Yards	
200 Meters	=	218.7227	Yards	( 220)
300 Meters	=	328.0839	Yards	( 330)
400 Meters	=	437.4453	Yards	( 440)
800 Meters	=	874.8906	Yards	( 880)
1600 Meters	=	1749.781	Yards	(1760)
3200 Meters	=	3499.563	Yards	(3520)

Even though all of the track events were eventually converted from yards to meters, the lengths were adjusted so that they were almost identical. As a result, it was possible to compare times in the earlier years of the PCL Meets to the modern times. For example, Gene Shawber's 22.5 time for the 220 yard dash in 1963 was beaten by Sam Spallinger's 22.1 time for the 200 meter dash in 2009. The only major track event that was retired was the 100 yard dash. It was replaced with the 100 meter dash.

The field events never converted to the metric system. Thus, all events are still measured in feet and inches.