# 2026 Cross Country Team Guide

**Welcome to the team! Here is just about everything you need to know about our program. Runners are required to read the first 14 pages. All are encouraged to read the entire book.**

## Five Things Runners Need for Cross Country

First, notice that we do not say that you need to be in shape or fast. All you need to start is to want to be part of the team. We will help you reach your goals.

1. **School physical** completed and filed before the first official practice.

2. **Running shoes** used only for running with less than 400 miles or one season use.

3. **Running watch.** We prefer Garmin because it works with our workout tracking app. It can be another smartwatch or a simple watch with a timer and lap split feature.

4. **A great attitude!** Show up to practice ready to run and contribute to the team.

5. There are more than five things, but we will let you know about those once you join the team.

## Team Philosophy

The Blue Valley Tigers cross country team has a rich tradition of excellence which includes team and individual state champions. We also foster a welcoming team culture where every runner is valued for their contributions to the program regardless of athletic ability. This unique balance of competitiveness and togetherness means there is a place on our team for you! Although we expect all our runners to set goals and strive to achieve them, you don't need to be fast to join our team. Through this process you'll make new friends, reach new heights, and become part of the Tiger cross country family.

We strive to develop athletes with a whole person approach. Athletically, runners are required to set goals and work to achieve them. Socially, our team works together to build bonds of trust that extend beyond the racecourse. Mentally and emotionally, we equip athletes to deal with the challenges of everyday life. Finally, we use cross country to teach life lessons that will prepare our athletes for both success and failure.

Coaches guide our team, but athletes own the process. As such, what you accomplish is up to you!

# Cross Country Primer

Cross country is a team sport where seven runners compete against other teams in a race of 5000 meters. The course could feature grass, dirt, mud, and even sometimes has obstacles to jump such as haybales or water. The team with the lowest score wins the race. The first-place finisher of the race gets one point. The second-place finisher gets two points…and so on. Only the first five runners on each team count in the points. This makes the lowest possible score 15 (1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 = 15). The sixth and seventh team runners can add points to other teams if they finish in front of the competitions' fifth runner. This is called displacing a runner. As such, every place in a varsity race counts.

The JV and C-team races might include more than seven team runners. Some runners in the JV or C-Team race may not be in the team's scoring top seven. That's ok. Each runner aims to improve upon their previous personal best performance in every race regardless of place. Incremental improvement and being the best you can be when measured against yourself is part of what running is all about.

The race begins with the team at the starting line in the assigned team box. The race could have between 50 to 350 runners depending on the size of the meet. The course will wind throughout the area, giving spectators several chances to see the runners in action. Runners finish at a common finish line which has either electronic scoring or a physical finishing chute that helps meet official count points by funneling the runners through in order of finish.

Spectators should dress for the weather. We encourage everyone to wear BVHSXC gear. You should be ready to move from point to point to see the race. Of course, you could just watch the start and wait at the finish, but you'll see more if you follow the action.

There is an awards ceremony following the race where individuals and teams are given medals and trophies. The depth of the awards given depends on the race. The coaches will also recognize outstandings performances, personal best times, and other individual and team highlights after the race.

## Team Coaches

### Head Coach: Todd Moenster

Coach Moenster was a 1600m and 3200m Missouri high school state champion. He went on to run at the division one level in cross country and track and was the team captain in both sports. After college, he ran at the sub-elite level which included competing in several USATF cross country national championships and running seven marathons. Coach Moenster has experience guiding runners at the youth, high school, and collegiate levels. He is a graduate of the Air Force Academy and has master's degrees from Troy University and Harvard University. Before coaching at Blue Valley High School, he served 23 years in the Air Force as a combat decorated B-2 stealth bomber pilot. He also works at Garmin in business development and is an Adjunct Professor at the Navy War College. He is married to Cherie, and they have one child, Alexander.

- **Something you should know:** There is a place for you on this team! You can be part of the Tiger family and well on your way to reaching your goals. Give it a shot!
- **Favorite running quote:** "*The will to win means nothing without the will to prepare."* —Juma Ikangaa, Olympian and New York Marathon Champion

### Assistant Coach: Tyler Randall

Coach Randall is a BVHS alum. After his time at BV, he went to Baker University to pursue a career in education while running track and cross country collegiately. At Baker U, Coach Randall became an All-American and set four school records. After his college experience, Coach Randall joined the BVHS XC family and has been a coach for six years. He is married to Rebecca, and they have one son, Camden.

- **You should know:** Running has taught me so many life lessons, and if you give it a chance it will do the same for you.
- **Favorite running quote:** "*Practice doesn't make perfect. Practice makes progress, and perfect practice makes perfect."*—Unknown. As a coach, I love to see athletes do what's right when they don't think anyone is looking.

**Assistant Coach: Mackenzie Johnson**

Coach Johnson began teaching English and coaching cross country at Blue Valley High School in 2022. She grew up playing tennis and was involved in theatre, dance, band, and show-choir. But she also really enjoyed running for exercise. She loves supporting the athletes as they learn to build healthy habits and encouraging them to have fun while competing!

- **You should know:** Running is for everyone! I've never considered myself much of an athlete, but I've learned that running really is for every person. It's great for both the mind and body and grows a person's confidence and energy in all other aspects of life. To run is to build endurance. And to run on this team is to build community as well!
- **Favorite running quote:** *"You never know what you can do until you try."* –C.S. Lewis

**Assistant Coach: Lyndi Hoit**

Coach Hoit joined the Blue Valley High School cross country coaching staff in 2026. She also serves as school psychologist at BVHS. She started running in eighth grade because her mom made her, but quickly discovered she loved the sport. She almost didn't return for her freshman season, but is grateful she did. Lyndi went on to run both cross country and track throughout high school, where the discipline, perseverance, and work ethic she developed continue to shape her life today. Many of the friendships she formed as a runner have lasted into adulthood. Coach Hoit enjoys helping athletes grow not only as runners but also as confident, resilient people.

- **What you should know:** You don't have to be the fastest runner to benefit from cross country. The lessons you learn by showing up, working hard, and pushing through difficult days carry over into every part of life. Some of the best friendships and most meaningful growth happen one practice at a time.
- **Favorite running quote:** ""Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other." — Abraham Lincoln

**Volunteer Coach: Laurel Anne Davis**

Coach Davis grew up in Little Rock, Arkansas, where she ran cross country in high school. She was a part of a 4-time state championship girls team! Winning was definitely enjoyable, but the biggest takeaways from her XC experience were the benefits of hard work and the lasting community that comes from like-minded friends. Since then, Coach Davis enjoys running with friends to stay healthy and have fun. She graduated with her master's in teaching from the University of Arkansas and moved to Kansas City with her husband Harrison last year. She teaches 9th grade ELA and Honors 9th grade ELA.

- **What you should know**: You CAN love running! Looking back, this will be one of the best parts of your high school experience, long runs and core workouts included.
- **Favorite running quote**: *"I'd made it this far and refused to give up because all my life I had always finished the race."* -Louis Zamperini. Coach Davis loves this quote because perseverance is valuable in many aspects of life, not just in running.

# Team Principles

It is next to impossible to improve on Coach Wooten's pyramid of success. Rather, these principles represent some of the values and behaviors we think a cross country team needs to succeed.

1. **Respect**—Treat everyone—coaches, staff, teammates, opponents, and fans—with the utmost respect.

2. **Teamwork**—We work together for a common goal. Everyone has a role to play. Be the best teammate possible by supporting one another and doing your job. Serve others before yourself. Mentor less experienced athletes. Carry a bag. Find a way to help the team when help is needed. Leaders serve.

3. **Sportsmanship**—Show your class by observing common sporting courtesies to everyone. Your teammates and competition are there to drive you to be better. You cannot succeed without them, and they need you as well. Treat them as partners in the endeavor.

4. **Compete**—Race to win or improve. Every race is a 100% effort. Every place from first to last matters. Execute the race plan and never give up.

5. **Commitment—**Consistency is the key to improvement. Runners that commit to the program will see the most improvement. Be dedicated to the sport. Cross country is a year-round activity. Embrace the endeavor. Complete what you start.

6. **Accountability**—Do what your coaches and teammates expect. Attend all practices; be on time; have the right gear; be responsible for your actions.

7. **Integrity**—Do the right thing all the time even when no one is looking. Do not cut corners. Report workouts accurately. Be honest. Keep your word.

8. **Excellence**—Always give your best effort. This attitude applies to all aspects of your life including school, workouts, and races.

9. **Discipline**—Do all the little things and do them right. Warm up and cool down correctly. Execute the workouts and races according to the plan. Refuel and hydrate. Get sleep. Be mentally prepared and tough enough to meet challenges.

10. **Attitude—**Have a positive approach to the sport and your team. Expect adversity and persevere. Accept coaching.

# Team guidelines

There are four team rules. These link directly to our team principles.

**R.A.C.E**

1. **Be Respectful**
    - No profanity or rude/lewd behavior during practice, races, or team events
    - Good sportsmanship is always on display
    - Be a positive example to others watching our team
2. **Be Accountable**
    - Show up on time with the right gear and right attitude
    - Complete workouts as instructed to the best of your ability
    - Race at 100% effort and represent yourself, the team, and the school well
    - Communicate any possible absences, tardies, or other concerns to the coaches as soon as you become aware of them
3. **Be Committed**
    - Do not plan anything after school that prevents you from attending events
    - Coach approval **prior to an event** is required for excusal.
    - **These reasons are usually NOT acceptable:** Routine doctor/dentist appt, haircuts, and other appointments that can be made outside of practice time or the season (mid-August to October), family event during normal practice time, regular work shifts.
    - **These reasons are usually acceptable:** Sick and home from school, another school event for which you have prior approval from coach, doctor's appointment for a running injury (PT), acute/emergent dental or doctor's appointment, emergency family event such as a funeral.
    - **A single unexcused absence from a team event removes a runner from good standing** and will result in consequences at the discretion of the head coach to include removal from the next race, team probation (during which time additional unexcused absences or disciplinary issues will result in removal from the team), team suspension, or removal from the team. Do not miss practice or team event without communicating the reason to the coaches. You would not miss school or work without communication. If you have a good reason, you will be excused from practice.
    - **Runners removed from the team for attendance or disciplinary issues may return the following year with head coach approval.**
4. **Be Excellent**
    - Be a great teammate by being positive and supportive
    - Be honest and accurate with workout logs

- Be forthright to coaches regarding injuries and other obstacles
- Follow all school, KSHSAA, local, state, and federal laws
    i. Absolutely no underaged drinking or drug use of any kind
        1. Runners vow to uphold this standard through their registration for cross country in Bound.
- Whatever your role on the team, do it to the best of your ability

## Team Selection

- The head coach will determine the varsity, JV, and C-team rosters for each race.
- The teams may change from race to race based on past performances, injuries/illness, future potential, and the number of entries allowed in the race.
- The top seven runners from the previous race are usually on varsity and the next seven are usually on JV. Some races permit an expanded Varsity or JV roster. The remaining runners are designated as the C-team.
- Runners not in good standing with school or team guidelines may not run in meets until the situation is rectified.
- Varsity is a privilege, not a right based on your race time. Runners that earn varsity status are generally the fastest runners on the team, but they are also required to follow all the R.A.C.E guidelines and set the team standard.

## Lettering Guidelines

- To earn a letter of any kind, runners must be a part of the team for the season and end the cycle in good standing.
- Any one of the following qualifies an athlete for a letter:

- **Varsity**
    - Boys run sub-17:30. Girls run sub-21:00.
    - Compete in three races on the varsity.
    - Compete at the regional or state meet on varsity.
    - Finish in the top five of a single varsity race.
    - Run for BVHS for four years.
    - Head coach discretion
- **Junior Varsity**
    - Boys run sub-20:15. Girls run sub-23:30.
    - Compete in three races on the Junior Varsity
    - Finish in the top seven of any Varsity or Junior Varsity race
    - Head coach discretion
- **C-Team**
    - Run in three meets representing BVHS at any level.
    - Head coach discretion

- **Manager's Letter**
    - Managers will be awarded a manager's letters based on completing all managerial requirements directed by the head coach.
        - All Freshman/Sophomores and any Juniors with just one year of experience are Junior Varsity Managers.
        - Juniors/Seniors with one year previous experience are Varsity Managers.

## Team Structure

- The head coach is ultimately responsible for every facet of the team.
- Assistant coaches have roles and responsibilities based on team needs.
- Team captains and group leaders assist the coaches in a variety of team functions.
- Team managers carry out the administrative and logistics tasks for the team.
- The Finish Line booster club conducts fundraising, provides team equipment and awards, and organizes social events.
- The BV Ambush running club organizes off-site excursions and post-season competitions. BV Ambush is a sub-group of the Finish Line booster club.

## Team Captains

- The head coach selects team captains along with the JV and C-team group leaders with inputs from the athletic director, teachers, assistant coaches, and a team vote.
- Each leadership position is responsible for the performance and conduct of their respective group. These leaders also have administrative roles that could include attendance, mileage logs, split taking, and warm up organization.

## Team Managers

- Team managers play an extremely important role by assisting the coaches with a variety of team functions.
- Managers keep attendance, manage training logs, update the team website, maintain and transport team gear, take photos, and get running split times during practice and races.
- Managers are valued team members. They will take part in all team events and uphold the same standards as the athletes.

## Training Groups

- The head coach will assign each runner a practice training group called apex, gold, black, and white.

- Training groups exist to ensure runners receive the correct training based on their current fitness.
- These groups are selected independently from varsity, JV, and C-team designations and often will not align.
- A C-team senior runner may by on gold, while a varsity freshman might be on white.
- Stay with your training group and build up slowly. Choosing to run above your fitness level, experience, or athleticism could result in injury.

## Team Events

- Team events such as Extravaganza, pre-race team dinners, and the team banquet are usually mandatory. These events are important to our development as a team and our performance on the course.
- Excusal from team events requires head coach approval.
- See event info sheets or weekly updates on the website for instructions.

## The Finish Line Booster Club

- The Finish Line booster club conducts fundraising, provides team equipment and awards, and organizes social events.
- The club is administered by parents for the benefit of the entire team.
- Athletes will pay team dues to the club to cover the pay for team requirements not covered by the school.
- Families may donate additional funds as they see fit.

## BV Ambush

- BV Ambush is the running club side of our team that exists to help runners reach their goals in pre and post season workouts and races.
- The club organizes off-site excursions and out-of-season competition.
- The capstone competition is Nike Cross Regionals/Nationals or another national level race.

## Running Gear

- **Every runner must have running shoes used only for running. Repeat--Only wear running shoes to run.** Limit use to 400-500 miles maximum. Only wear the shoes one season regardless of miles logged. Good shoes help defend against injury.

- **A running watch is required.** The team prefers a Garmin watch because it is compatible with our training apps called Garmin Connect and Garmin Clipboard. A simple running watch with a timer and lap split feature is acceptable.
- All runners will bring a **water bottle** and wear **proper running attire** to practices and races.
- **All varsity runners will wear spikes for races.** JV and C-team runners should strongly consider spikes for races. The team prefers "super spikes" with performance foam and a carbon plate for the simple reason that these shoes make you faster. We cannot leave 10-20 seconds per runner on the course to teams wearing super spikes. Any cross country style spike is acceptable as an alternative to super spikes.
- Additional/optional gear includes: sunglasses, running hat, warm weather running attire, cold weather running attire, foam rollers, and exercise bands.
- Prior to the start of the season, you will get an update on our website with the latest insights on shoes, spikes, watches, and other running gear.

## Team messaging, apps, and social media

- Team website: **www.bvhsxc.com**
    - Team records, meet schedule, meet sheets, and other useful data are kept here for athletes and parents.
- Team Messaging: **Parent Square**
- Workouts and Mileage Log: **Garmin Connect** and **Garmin Clipboard** **(Required)**
    - Workouts are pushed to runners and times/distances are logged by runners using these apps.
    - Sign up for each app using the SAME email.
    - Access code for Garmin Clipboard: **XN0445.** (The 0 is a zero)
- **Strava Running Club**: **BVHS XC** (optional)
- Team **Instagram**: **BVHS XC** (optional) Instagram is maintained by a booster club parent volunteer. Students will not post on the team Instagram.
- Team photo sharing: **Google Photos.** Membership by email or link invitation (optional)
    - Members have permission to share photos of practices, meets, and social events and can download shared photos.

## Uniform

- Runners will race in an official team uniform and follow all KSHAA guidance.
- Each runner will be issued an official team jersey.
- Runners will supply their shorts. Varsity runners might be issued shorts some years.

    - Note: The team can provide shorts upon request. We find nearly all runners want to buy their shorts rather than be issued team stock.
- **All clothing worn under the uniform, such as a T-shirt or running tights, will be black.**
    - Note: KSHSAA rules state anything worn under the uniform is a "foundational garment" and is not subject to color uniformity. As such, our rule is a guideline so that we look good. Runners will not be disqualified for having a different colored undershirt, for example.
- Boys may run in solid black running shorts or black running tights (short or long depending on the weather).
- Girls may run in solid black running shorts, volleyball style shorts, or running tights (short or long depending on the weather).
- A single white logo on shorts or tights is permitted, but it may not exceed 2.25 inches.
- Jewelry is permitted. Coaches and race officials may request jewelry that is hazardous be secured or removed.
- Athletes are responsible for all uniforms and equipment checked out. Payment is required for any lost or damaged items. An office hold will be placed on unreturned items. Expect to be charged upwards of $50 per uniform item lost.
- See KSHAA full uniform rules here: Uniform Rules

## Weather and Traffic Safety

- Practice is never cancelled for weather.
- Outdoor practice will take place in rain, wind, and cold. Dress accordingly.
- Practice will move indoors for lightning within 10 miles.
- Practice schedules and workout may be modified due to heat conditions.
- Runners will follow these rules while running on public streets and sidewalks
    - Use the crossing lights for roundabouts and do not assume cars will stop
    - Use crosswalks for all crossings and wait for the walk sign
    - Run on the sidewalk or running trails whenever possible
    - Run opposite of traffic (left side) in single file when on the road
    - No head phone use while running during official practice

## Team Routines

### Practice

- **Practice starts exactly at 3:10 or as directed by the weekly update. Runners not checked in and ready for warm ups at 3:10 are considered late.**

- Runners should arrive at 3:05 and check in with their team captain or group lead for attendance. Group leads will report attendance to the head coach at practice start time by turning in the attendance sheet.

- Do not plan any after school activity that will keep you from being at practice.

- Report any injuries directly to the head coach. **Injured runners must still attend practice unless excused.** Injured runner will report for practice and then complete a rehab/therapy session with the school's athletic trainers or in the exercise room. Injured athletes can see the trainers before school, during an off period, or during practice depending on the injury.

- Runners that are cross training will report to practice first and depart for cross training after the team meeting.

- **Check out with a coach before you leave practice.**

- Practice will last approximately two to three hours depending on the day. Typically, plan your ride pick up between 5:15-5:30.

- Monday's practice usually begins with a full team meeting at the 500 Hallway Flex Space from 3:00-3:15. The team them moves to the track or baseball field for the workout.

- Friday's practice typically ends with a full team meeting to discuss prerace details or go through race tactics and mental training. Runners should not depart practice prior to the team meeting.

- Weights usually are scheduled twice a week on hard workout days. Depending on roster size, some athletes may not be able to participate in weights. Weights take approximately 30 minutes. The ParentSquare calendar will be updated with weight sessions.

**Typical practice schedule:**
**2:45—**School ends
**2:45-3:05—**Change, hydrate, see the trainer if required
**3:05—**Arrive and report to your team captain or group lead
**3:10—**Attendance reported to head coach
**3:10-3:15—**Team talk
**3:15-3:25—**Warm up
**3:25-4:50—**Work out
**4:50-5:10—**Post run routines
**5:10-5:15—**Wrap up and dismissal

**Cross Country Meets**

- Runners will comply with all instructions and timelines published in the meet information sheet.
- Runners are individually responsible for having all the required gear, water, and nutrition needed to run at a meet. See the race checklist.
- The team is collectively responsible for the tent and other supporting equipment required at a meet.
    - The meet sheet will assign specific team equipment to managers and runners
- Runners will not leave the meet early without approval a coach and signing out on the bus sheet.
- All team members will travel to the meet on the bus. Runners may ride home from the meet with parents but should not leave early unless excused.
    - Approval for other means of transportation requires a formal request from the parent/guardian and approval from the head coach.
    - In such cases, release of the runner must be done in person directly to the parent/guardian with a signature of release.

**Typical meet schedule**
**Bus time – 20:** Coaches, managers, and runners assigned equipment duty arrive to collect team and individual equipment
**Bus time – 15:** Team arrives and signs in at bus. Get equipment on bus.
**Bus time:** Depart for meet, bus team meeting (preview course, weather review, camp assignments)
**Arrival:** Set up team area, initial race instructions, walk course, place distance markers, assign manager split locations and manager duties
**Race – 60:** Race plan review and coach instructions
**Race – 50:** Warm ups begin
**Race – 20:** Final coach instructions, spikes on
**Race – 15:** Report to start line, agilities and strides
**Race**
**Race + 5:** Team cooldown and post run work/roll/ice/etc
**Time TBD: Awards ceremony**
**Time TBD: Bus departs meet**
**Time TBD: Bus arrives at school**
**ASAP: Equipment returned to storage locker**

## Nutrition

- **See nutrition handouts and advice provided through ParentSquare, our trainer, and KU Sports Med.**
- Food is fuel. “Always eat enough. Never eat too little. Sometimes eat too much.”
- Eat a balanced diet. For runners, this is around 60% carbohydrates, 20% proteins, and 20% fats. These targets can vary. Some runners need more protein for recovery. Be sure to eat a lot of fruits and vegetables. The key is eating a variety of foods that are healthy.
    - Runners use a lot of energy and put strain on the body regularly. Be sure to get enough calcium (dairy), iron (leafy greens, red meat, fortified cereal), and vitamin D (fish, eggs).
- **Iron: See ParentSquare “The Iron Post”** Runners should get their ferritin levels checked several times a year. Runners often encounter low iron/ferritin and along with a myriad of other possible heath problems, race performance suffers.
- Extreme carbo-loading prior to a race is not necessary if you are in shape and already eating a balanced diet; however, higher than normal carbohydrate meals are easier to digest and can provide adequate fueling 24-48 hours prior to a race.
- Avoid fried, high fat/protein, and spicy foods one day prior to a race.
- On race day, a normal meal around 3-4 hours prior to the race is typical. Some runners may be able to handle a meal 2.5 hours prior to a race. The pre-race meal should be balanced and easily digestible. Figure out what meals work best for you before a race.
- A top off a carbohydrate-based snack 2 to 1.5 hours prior to a race is advised assuming you have tried this before a workout and know your stomach can handle it.
- A quick carb gel or other very easily digestible snack could help approximately 30 minutes before the race.

## Hydration

- Hydrate upon waking up, throughout the day, and two hours before bed. Always have a water bottle with you.
- Drink water or a sports drink before practice and races. The best window of opportunity is outside of one hour before the workout or race. 16-24 ounces (2-3 cups) of water consumed two hours before a run is usually about right. You can drink water within an hour of a run just be careful not to drink so much that it can’t be absorbed.
- Rehydrate after a run. Drink at least 16 ounces (two cups) of water for every pound of weight lost. Sports drinks and recovery drinks work well to help recovery.
- It is very rare, but it is possible, to drink too much water. This can create a major health hazard. Never drink to discomfort.

## Supplements

- See ParentSquare for advice on performance supplements. Runners should never take a supplement, protein powder, pre-workout drink, sodium bicarbonate, nomio, beetroot, or otherwise without the permission of their parents. Coaches should be informed as to what, if any, supplements a runner is utilizing.

## Sleep

- Athletes require 8-10 hours of sleep. Be in bed around 10:00pm to ensure you are in this range on days when school starts at 7:45am. Plan your sleep prior to race day to insure you get 8-10 hours of sleep before your alarm.
- Lack of sleep will reduce your ability to recover from runs and over time increases the likelihood for injury.
- Good sleep = Good performance

## Injury Prevention

- Injuries are not inevitable in running, but they do happen sometimes. This typically occurs from overuse when the runner increases volume/intensity too fast or does not supplement running with the proper injury prevention exercises. Poor nutrition and inadequate sleep can also contribute to injuries.
- The best injury prevention is to follow the program, get sleep, eat right, stay hydrated, and report any pain or inability to recover to your coaches.
- Report all injuries or pain to the head coach or your doctor and follow medical advice on limiting activity.
    - Rate pain on a scale of 1-10.
    - 1-3 minor annoyance. 4-7 significant problem. 8-10 extremely painful or debilitating.
        - Pain above a 4-5 usually results in a break from running.
        - Pain that gets worse as you run usually results in a break from running.
    - Describe pain as sharp or dull.
    - Describe the injuries effects on your running as
        - Able to run and gets better as I run
        - Able to run and gets worse as I run
        - Able to walk and gets better as I walk
        - Able to walk and gets worse as I walk
        - Not able to walk
        - Hurts only in motion
        - Hurts all the time

- Running workouts as instructed will help prevent injuries. Running too hard in a workout or on a recovery day increases injury risk. Run your assigned pace or in the correct zone by feel.
- Be consistent and committed to the running program. Runners that miss days in the summer or winter then try to jump back into runs after several days or weeks off place themselves at risk to injury.
- Get proper sleep every night.
- Do warm ups and cool downs as instructed.
- Complete barefoot work, plyos, SAM, circuits, or other injury prevention routines consistently and to the best of your ability.
- Attend weight training sessions regularly and lift with the correct form.
- Cross train under the advice of the head coach, doctor, or trainer when needed.
- Complete all trainer or doctor advised rehab exercises.
- Return to running and build up slowly after an injury.

## Training Principles

- We will run a variety of paces and have dozens of different workouts. Here are some simple training principles you need to keep in mind.
- Start with low volume/mileage and low intensity and build up by increasing volume about 10% every two weeks. We will not push you more than your body is ready to handle.
- Be consistent. Attending summer/winter runs puts you in the best position to be successful during the season.
- Run the proper pace for the workout assigned.
    - You may be assigned an exact pace (Run 3 x 1 mile at 5:30 per mile with 3 minutes rest between reps).
    - You may be assigned a run by feel target (Run “easy.” Be able to talk in full sentences the entire time you are running today)
    - You may be assigned a heart rate zone (This is the case for a threshold workout. Keep your heart rates between 85-90% maximum heart rate. When in doubt, threshold pace is between 180-190 for most runners. For girls, threshold may be lower 175-185.)
    - You may be assigned a pacing label. These include base/easy, steady, progressive, threshold, interval, repetition, maximum speed, hard/easy, on/off, build ups, strides, run at 3200/1600/800/400 pace, run at 70%, 80%, 90% speed, etc etc.
        - We will help you identify these paces either by assigning you a pace or telling you how the pace should feel while running.
    - Here are some more details on our five main pacing zones

- **Base/Easy:** Used for recovery or general aerobic fitness. Equal to 70% VO2max or 65-79% Maximum Heart Rate (MHR). By feel, you should be able to run and talk in complete sentences. Example: 30-60 minutes base/easy.
- **Long:** Used for creating efficiency at longer distances and aerobic fitness. Equal to 70% VO2max or 65-75% MHR. Should be between 25-30% of your total weekly mileage. This is tempered for high school runners to roughly 6-15 miles depending on your fitness level. By feel, you should be able to talk in complete sentences. Example: 60-90 minutes long run.
- **Steady:** Used for developing aerobic fitness. The steady run is a general term for a speed faster than the low end of easy but not quite threshold pace. This pace is slower than threshold and could be 10-20 BPM lower as well. Run in the high end of the base/easy run range of 75-80% MHR. A harder stead run could go between 80-85% MHR. By feel, talking can still occur by in short 3-4 word phrases. Example: 2 mile warm up easy, 4 x 1 mile steady with 1 minute between reps, 1 mile cool down.
- **Threshold:** Used for developing a higher lactate threshold. This is the most difficult training pace to accurately run in a workout. Runners struggle to stay in this zone and usually run too fast. Described as a pace you could sustain for a maximum of 30-60 minutes (depending on fitness) if needed. Equal to 86-88% VO2max or 88-92% MHR (High school runners and less development athletes may want to use 85-90% rather than 88-92%). Another measure is 25-30 sec/mi slower than current 5k race pace. Should be 10% of weekly mileage with a maximum of 8 miles. Can be run as cruise intervals with brief recovery periods. Ideally the pace is held between 5-30 minutes. By feel, this is the pace where the conversation ends. You will not be able to talk in full sentences, but don't run much faster than when that point occurs. Example: 15 mins warm up, 4 x 5 min at Threshold pace with 1 min running rest between reps, 15 mins cool down.
- **Critical Velocity:** Used to increase lactate threshold. This pace is faster than threshold but must still be carefully controlled. Sometimes described as 1 minute slower than 1 mile race pace. Equal to 90% VO2max or 93-95% MHR. No more than 10% of weekly mileage. Rest is approximately 20-50% of the interval run (3:1 rest usually works). Described as a pace you could maintain for 30 minutes or 10k race pace. By feel, no conversations but you could still increase speed

readily. Example: 2 miles warm up, 5 x 4 minutes at critical velocity with 1 minute rest, 1 mile cool down.

- **Interval:** Used for increasing VO2max. Is usually equivalent to the pace you could keep for 10-12 minutes or 3000m pace. Equal to VO2max or 97-100% MHR. Should be 8% of weekly mileage with a maximum of 6 miles. Optimum running interval is between 2-5 minutes with equal or slightly negative rest. Example: 2 mile warm up, 5 x 3 minutes at interval pace with 2-3 minutes rest, 1 mile cool down.
- **Repetition:** Used to improve running economy at or near race pace—a "speed" workout. Run at or above VO2max. Best described as 1500m pace or faster. Cross country often relies on hills and fartlek to accomplish these workouts. Should be 5% of weekly mileage with 3-5 miles max. Covers distances from 200-800m. Anything longer typically becomes interval running. Rest for complete recovery from 2x to 4x running time. By feel, this is harder than interval pace but is not maximum speed. Example: 2 mile warm up, 2 x 600, 400, 200, 200 at repetition speed with 3, 3, 1, 1 min rest between reps, 2 mile cool down, or 2 miles warm up, 3 x 30/45/60 sec hill repeats with walk down rest, 1 mile cool down.
- **Maximum speed:** Used to increase maximum speed and overall running economy. Run at your absolute highest effort. Maximum speed can only be sustained for about 30 meters. By feel, this is the fastest you can possibly run. Example: 1 mile warm up, speed warm up, 5 x flying 30/30/30 meters with the middle 30 meters at maximum speed with 4-5 minutes standing/walking rest between reps, walking cool down.

- You can calculate many of these paces using this pacing calculator. Enter your most recent race result then go to the training pace tab. We also have pace charts available and will assign paces or feel/effort levels before each workout.

- **The team guide attempts to cover typical situations for this team. Any situation not covered is up to the discretion of the coaches. Questions or concerns about anything in this team guide or a unique situation that occurs within our team should follow this communication chain: 1) Talk with the runner/student to be sure the situation is understood as clearly as possible 2) Contact the head coach for resolution 3) If needed, then contact the Athletic Director for mediation 4) If needed, contact the school principal/administrator for additional mediation.**