

*Prior Lake*  
***Girls Cross***  
***Country***  
***Running***  
*Guide*

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## INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Prior Lake CC running program is to develop the physical, mental, and social skills of each student-athlete on the team. We are committed to creating the best possible experience for everyone while promoting life-long fitness. We are committed to continuing the tradition and pursuit of championship performances in Conference, Section, and State Competitions.

This booklet is designed to give you an idea of what we the coaching staff expect from you and what you can expect from us. Please read through all pages at least once and then keep it as a guide when you have questions about various topics.

If for any reason a team member, parent or another individual needs to contact Coach Dan Saad, he can be reached at 612-518-7818 by text/call. Please leave a message if he is unavailable. The athletic office number at the high school is 952-226-8690.

Head Coach Dan Saad - [directorulcc@gmail.com](mailto:directorulcc@gmail.com)

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## GENERAL INFORMATION - DAILY ROUTINE

1. Every athlete should report to the meeting area everyday unless he/she has been excused by a Coach.
2. Cross country practice will usually start at 3:20 pm daily (exceptions will be announced). Please be dressed and ready to practice by that time. Dress for weather conditions: September & October: warm-ups, possibly hats, mittens and tights. (See "Running Gear" for more info.)
3. Practice will usually last less than 2 hours. Do not get involved in other activities during this time unless you are supervised or have permission.
4. Athletes will ride the team bus to and from all meets unless other provisions have been made WELL IN ADVANCE.
5. Each athlete is responsible for ALL equipment that you check out. You must return equipment PERSONALLY.
6. Letter requirements: Please see page on Award Policies.
7. No pranks or practical jokes will be tolerated. Since we don't always know the medical records of each person involved, simple pranks could turn into a serious and possibly fatal situation. If you have any problems with team members, please tell the coach, don't take action yourself. Team unity is a vital ingredient to a successful season.

## CROSS COUNTRY RULES & ETIQUETTE

1. **Attitude & Attendance** – All attendance issues need to be reported to Coach Mekala. If you are going to miss practice, you will need to provide a written note or an email from your parent or the adult who is excusing you from practice.
  - a. The note should include:
    - ⇒ The current date
    - ⇒ Your name
    - ⇒ Your reason for missing practice
    - ⇒ The date you will be missing practice
    - ⇒ Parent/adult signature
  - b. For peace of mind, the following rule is in place:
    - ⇒ 1<sup>st</sup> unexcused practice = talk with coach
    - ⇒ 2<sup>nd</sup> unexcused practice = Talk with head coach and could miss the next meet.
    - ⇒ 3<sup>rd</sup> unexcused practice = you may be asked to turn in uniform
  - c. Please note: it is YOUR responsibility to find out what you are missing at practice and to make-up that workout. Missing practice DOES NOT = skipping workouts.
2. Arrive on the course together as a team. Be dressed to compete and be sure ALL equipment is clean. The running shirt should be tucked into the shorts. No one should change out of the uniform and sweats unless Coach Saad okays it. We arrive as a team and leave as a team.
3. While competing, leave equipment in the "team area". No horseplay, loud music, or other distractions should interfere with the "team area".
4. Always pick-up the "team-area", (tape, paper, etc.) before leaving the course.
5. Before or after your race, please be concerned about the performance of your teammates. Give them some words of encouragement. Stay on the course until ALL races are over.
6. Be ready for your event, warm-up with teammates and stretch properly before your race.
7. After your race, stay in the chute until you have been accounted for by an official. Never use profanity or heckle an opponent.
8. Never fall at the end of the race. If you have over exerted yourself, you will recover much quicker standing up, arms over your head. This also stops cramping of muscles.
9. **REMEMBER:** A runner can be disqualified for:

- a. false starting
- b. interfering or cutting off another runner
- c. unsportsmanlike or unacceptable conduct
- d. a teammate or parent or coach aiding you by:
  - ⇒ running along side you
  - ⇒ joining hands during race
- e. not following the course route (always follow the flags)

## RACE DAY INFO

**Girls Varsity/JV Race** = 5k (3.1 miles)

**Boys Varsity/JV Race** = 5k (3.1 miles)

**Jr High or "C" Race** = distances will vary from 1-3.1 miles, depending on the meet

**Please note:** The Rosemount Invitational only runs a 2 miles race for the varsity and jv athletes, boys and girls.

1. No sun tanning, stay in the shade. The sun will zap your energy.
2. Drink water throughout the day of a race. Carry a water bottle with you or keep one in your locker. Sips from a water fountain won't cut it.
3. If you are injured make certain you inform a coach immediately.
4. Please arrive at school at least fifteen (15) minutes before the scheduled departure time.
5. All members of the cross country team should be on the bus before the coach, going to and returning from a meet.
6. Know what race you are in and what race precedes yours so you can warm-up and report on time.
7. Be available during the meet to cheer on your teammates.
8. Do not run along the course while cheering for your teammates. We can be disqualified.
9. Warm-up at least a half hour before your event. You should be sweating at the start of your event.
10. Meet and individual results will be posted as soon as possible the day following the meet. Please do not ask for your times while other races are taking place. If it is convenient, the managers will give your times as soon as possible.
11. Athletes will run a one mile cool-down following their race of the day. This run will be done as a group and will include all non-injured athletes.
12. Please keep the camp area clean. Let's leave the area cleaner than it was when we arrived.
13. Do not put your uniform in the dryer. It will shrink. Wash it and then hang it up to dry.

## GOALS

All cross country runners should have personal goals. These goals should be reasonable, but they should also challenge you to accomplish your greatest potential.

1. Write down your goals and read them everyday.
  - a. Set time limits to when you want to accomplish these goals.
  - b. Have short range (daily) goals and longer term goals.
2. Use positive visualization.
  - a. Picture yourself running each race and how you will react under various circumstances (ie; rain, hills, hot)
  - b. Picture yourself winning and running strong throughout the entire race, not just the kick.
3. List plan of attack (with deadlines) to any problems you may encounter that might keep you from accomplishing your goals.
4. Read and re-read these goals daily. They help remind you of why you are working so hard on a daily basis. Picture the rewards that come with winning.
5. Keep a positive attitude on life. Be happy to have the opportunity to live.
6. **REMEMBER:** Your mind is the one that controls how fast you will become. Train your mind to have no limitations. Tell yourself you can, and you can. Here are some tips:
  - a. Keep a daily reminder (3x5 card) with you all the time. List out by hour of the
  - b. day what you need to accomplish the next day (or two). This will help you
  - c. budget your time and eliminate excess stress. It also will help your running.



## INJURIES/ INHERENT RISKS OF RUNNING

- ⇒ **Always ice the first 72 hours after an injury occurs.**
- ⇒ Never heat an injury.
- ⇒ **Suggested:** Use ice not cold packs or quick freeze packs. Ice as often as possible in 15 minute intervals 2 times per hour. (i.e. 15 minutes on/15 min. off/15 min. on/15 off)

### TIPS

1. Ice directly on skin is best. Gel packs are colder than ice, so if used, please use layer of material. (These gel packs are not recommended).
2. Never sleep w/ice on.
3. Do not use Ace bandages when sleeping, this can cause the circulation to be cut off.
4. Elevate injured area when possible. Elevate means lift above heart level. This will speed recovery.
5. Side stitch prevention - Drink plenty of water (not ice cold), as well as, increased oxygen intake and/or increased physical conditioning will help eliminate the side stitch.

**Inherent risk: As a runner, we often choose routes that cross roads and highways. This is a risk we take everytime we cross a road. We don't want anyone to be hit by a vehicle, so please look out for each other.**

### TIPS

1. Stop before crossing. Look before crossing. Don't follow someone else until you have looked.
2. Listen before you cross the street. Use good judgment and wait for stop signals to turn green and indicate the walk sign.
3. Use the cross walk where ever present. Don't be foolish, be safe.
4. Run with someone else. Under no circumstances should anyone be running alone. In case of injury or other health reasons causing you to stop, make sure someone stays with you, until Coach Saad can get help.
5. As a team, we should look out for each other during practice, meets and everywhere else.

## HEALTH AND NUTRITION OF RUNNERS

Eat well for good health and running performance.

As a runner, your diet is important not only for maintaining good health, but also to promote peak performance. Proper rest, nutrition and hydration can make or break a workout or race, and also greatly affects how runners feel, work and think.

A balanced diet for healthy runners should include these essentials: carbohydrates, protein, fats, vitamins, and minerals. Here are some basic guidelines for a nutritious, healthy balance:

### 1. Carbohydrates

As a runner, carbohydrates should make up about 60 - 65% of your total calorie intake. Without a doubt, carbs are the best source of energy for athletes. Research has shown that for both quick and long-lasting energy, our bodies work more efficiently with carbs than they do with proteins or fats. Whole grain pasta, steamed or boiled rice, potatoes, fruits, starchy vegetables, and whole grain breads are good carb sources.

### 2. Protein

Protein is used for some energy and to repair tissue damaged during training. Protein should make up about 15% - 20% of your daily intake. Runners, especially those running long distances, should consume .5 to .75 grams of protein per pound of body weight. Try to concentrate on protein sources that are low in fat and cholesterol such as lean meats, fish, low-fat dairy products, poultry, whole grains, and beans. More: Sports Nutrition Mistake: Not

### 3. Getting Enough Protein

A high fat diet can quickly pack on the pounds, so try to make sure that no more than 20 - 25% of your total diet comes from fats. Stick to foods low in saturated fats and cholesterol. Foods such as nuts, oils, and cold-water fish provide essential fats called omega-3s, which are vital for good health and can help prevent certain diseases. Most experts recommend getting about 3,000 mg of omega-3 fat a day.

### 4. Vitamins

Runners don't get energy from vitamins, but they are still an important part of their diet. Exercise may produce compounds called free radicals, which can damage cells. Vitamins C, E, and A are antioxidants and can neutralize free radicals. Getting your vitamins from whole foods is preferable to supplementation; there's no strong evidence that taking supplements improves either health or athletic performance.

## 5. Minerals

Calcium: A calcium-rich diet is essential for runners to prevent osteoporosis and stress fractures. Good sources of calcium include low-fat dairy products, calcium-fortified juices, dark leafy vegetables, beans, and eggs. Your goal should be 1,000 to 1,300 mg of calcium per day.

Iron: You need this nutrient to deliver oxygen to your cells. If you have an iron-poor diet, you'll feel weak and fatigued, especially when you run. Men should aim for 8 mg of iron a day, and women need 18 mg. Good natural sources of iron include lean meats, leafy green vegetables, nuts, shrimp, and scallops.

Sodium and other electrolytes: Small amounts of sodium and other electrolytes are lost through sweat during exercise. Usually, electrolytes are replaced if you follow a balanced diet. But if you find yourself craving salty foods, it may be your body's way of telling you to get more sodium. Try drinking a sports drink or eating some pretzels after exercise.

## 6. Rest

And finally, **get at least 8 hours of sleep each night**. This is especially true **two** nights before a race!

## SUGGESTED RUNNING GEAR

1. **Running Shoes** -- Look for comfort and support, not expense when buying training shoes. Roughly \$60 is average. **Run 'n' Fun provides athletic discounts. They have locations in Burnsville and St. Paul.**
2. **Spikes (highly recommended)** -- A good shoe will have a rubber bottom, not hard plastic. The use of spikes will dramatically improve your race time. You will also need 1/4 inch and 3/8 inch pyramid spikes, and a spike wrench. These shoes should cost around \$50.
3. **Tights** -- Navy blue, solid running tights will be a necessity in cold weather. All team members must wear the same color in races, so please buy a plain navy blue pair for race days. Any colors are fine for practice.
4. **Mittens or gloves** may be needed.
5. **Hat or ear muffs or head band.**
6. **Undershirts or Turtle necks** -- White is the color worn under Jersey top during races if needed. Other colors are fine for practices.
7. **Sweats** -- A nylon running suit is always a good idea and alternative to cotton sweats and tights.
8. **Wrist Watch** -- Get a sports watch that has a stopwatch and practice using it. They can be used during races. GPS watches cannot be used in a meet.
9. **Swimsuit**

## **SATURDAY WORKOUTS**

We will practice every Saturday. If you are a varsity and/or 9-12<sup>th</sup> grade runner, you are expected to attend all Saturday practices. Saturday practice is optional for most 7-8<sup>th</sup> grade runners.

## **MORNING WORKOUTS**

These workouts are few and never the day before or the day of a race or on a hard day. The teams that practice in the morning almost always are the teams at State.

Morning practices are always easy 2-3 miles w/stretching before and after.

## PRIOR LAKE AWARD POLICIES

### **The lettering policy for CC is as follows:**

1. A runner needs to accumulate 4 letter points over the course of the season. A runner can only earn one point per meet.
2. The points are awarded by running on the varsity team in a race or having a faster time than a varsity runner that day if running the same course and same distance in a JV or C race.
3. A point can also be earned by beating the following time standards. Girls 5000 meters in 20:55 or faster.
4. If a runner is named as an alternate to the Section team, they will letter without accumulating the 4 points.
5. All seniors that have been on the team more than one season and any runner that has been on the team for four seasons will letter regardless of points accumulated.
6. Senior managers letter if they have been with the team at least two years as a runner and/or manager.
7. Coaches discretion allowed.