



The Bulldog Bark

The Voice of Alhambra Cross Country

Thursday, December 3, 2020



It's Cold Outside

Winter Running Is Different

And when did it get so cold and so dark so soon? The answer is fairly simple . . .

high school cross country training has seldom gone this far in the fall and winter. And yes, the chill sets in dramatically, and the darkness comes swiftly.

Dealing with it

We have to make some accommodations for the season and the weather. Clearly, we can't be running around in shorts and tank tops for hours anymore. And those long runs could easily be finished after sunset if we take a wrong turn

or dawdle too much.

Warm clothing

This is a must. Running tights are a very good thing. Some runners can handle leggings. Long sleeve t-shirts help considerably too. Some runners take to wearing the light gloves as well.

Warming up thoroughly.

This is a must. Just jumping into a serious run with little or no warmup is problematic, and probably just asking for an injury. Cold weather not only stiffens the muscles, it at times even shortens them. Muscle pulls and strains are inevitable if warmups are compromised.

The body will adjust

This is the great miracle of human physiology. The body as a mechanism can adapt to environments and stimuli. After a time, the body will get used to the colder temperatures and it will not seem so drastic. After all, runners in Montana and Minnesota often have to run in the snow, and the survive.

So, let's run

Mileage is good. Running distance is our goal. Learning to run distance faster is our goal. And it takes daily effort to make improvements. And chill and dark are only seasonal events, not impediments to running.



Clearances !!!

Full Athletic Clearances Now Required For Participation

It is now a requirement that athletes currently in training "camps" will shift into fully official athletic status. This means the permission forms and the physician's examination form need to be turned in to the Athletic Department.

All on line

This process is now done completely on line. Papers handed to the coach no longer work. Please go to the Alhambra Athletic Site for the process:

<https://ahs-martinez-ca.schoolloop.com/file/1530581990245/1500707823667/6576613431550379097.pdf>

Grades count

And we have to be aware of grades. With finals coming up rapidly, it is a good time to catch up on homework, and make sure we all have the that minimum 2.0 grade point average we need to stay athletically eligible.



Let's see what we got . . .

Time Trials to close out 2020

As tests of fitness, we are scheduling two more time trials to see just where our team is at this point. Two weeks ago we had the Hidden Valley 2.0 mile course trial, with encouraging results.

This week we will return to Hidden Valley to do 2.0 and 3.0 time trials. And two weeks later, right before the winter break, we will have a 2 mile and 5K time trial on the track. Gives us a snapshot

Hopefully these two time trials will give the coaches a fairly accurate measure of the team's fitness level.

Is There A New Normal ?

We Still Don't Know

In what has become the standard in this chaotic sports season, there is no certainty about even the near future. December 7th has been calendared for the opening of sports across the state, but . . .

Decisions delayed

The recent spike in Covid cases caused enough alarm for the State Officials to delay the release of their long-awaited sports guidelines. This manuscript was to have extensive guidelines on all sports.

However, no further word has come down the pike. The start date is still on the calendars. Training camps are still allowed, but now changed from "Summer Rules" to regular athletic clearance procedures.

So?

The Covid surge continues to accelerate. Officials are distracted by other more immediate concerns. National and state wide response to restrictions is widely divergent, and often contentious.

Other counties have shut down athletics completely. The North Coast Section has delayed the official start of the season until January. The California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) has canceled the State Meet, to allow for a longer regular season.

Well?

At least we can still meet and train. That's always a plus. We're all getting into better shape, and there has been a sharp bump in confidence as runners see their improvement.

But . . .

No competitions on the horizon. No incoming freshmen. Strict limits on training group size. Sigh. We all wait and see, and try to see the long view.

Every weekday at 2:00 p.m.

Homework Club Still Meets

We still have a small group meeting an hour before our regular workouts to get a head start on homework, help each other out, maybe ask Coach Brewer a few questions about literature, et cetera.

We would like to see more kids here, as supervised study groups often do help.

Grades still matter.