



# The Bulldog Bark

The Voice of Alhambra Cross Country  
"Where Lunacy Has Permanent Residence"

Vol. 10: Sunday, August, 2020



## What's Next? Locusts?

# And Just When You Thought It Couldn't Get Any Worse

### We've all been hit hard

The San Francisco Bay Area locally, California regionally, the US nationally, and the world globally have been hit hard with a series of closely-sequenced events that have had major impact. Every aspect of life, even our little cross country corner, has been affected tremendously.

### Gotta Stay Focused !

Still, our task as runners and coaches, is to find ways to continue as best we can with conditioning and getting ready for our upcoming competitive season, no matter how far of it is.

### What to do?

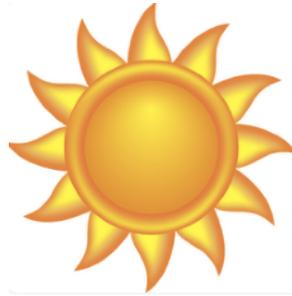
How do we go about trying to fit in accommodations, changes, restrictions, confusions, and all the rest in our attempts to just get some running in? Great question, and I'm glad you asked. Not that any of us have any answers, but the fact that people are still trying to wrestle with all the dramatic sudden changes in life is a good thing.

## Troubles, Disasters,

## Catastrophes, Apocalypses

With all of the various changes we have to deal with, as far as it comes to running, there really isn't any thought spent on our sport in particular by any authorities. This means that we have to continue to responsibly come up with working models to do our best to work with and around these multitudinous calamities that have so far afflicted us.

To the best of the ability of your loving coaches, here are our (and everyone else's) major concerns and comments about the various contributing factors that are in effect.



### Issue # 1: The Sun Is Not Your Friend

## Temperature

Heat is one of the great enemies of distance running. We normally endure summer and early fall high temperatures in Contra Costa County, but this year has brought on an extended heat wave that has kept the temperatures well into the 100° range for some time, and is predicted to do so for some time to come.

### Recommendations:

At over 100° F running is not recommended. For those who insist, the caution is to run near water, with as much shade as possible, and don't worry about pace.

### Ameliorations:

Try to run when it is not so hot - - early morning is best. This means getting out of bed at 5:30 to be out the door at 6:00 a.m.

If you have a treadmill or an exercise bike, you can do indoor aerobic training. It's a lot more boring, but a lot more cooler.

Stay hydrated at all times. It is very difficult to drink too much water, and very easy to drink too little.



### Issue # 2: Air Quality

## Fire and Smoke

Air quality is another nemesis of the distance runner. It doesn't do endurance runners much good to inhale toxic gasses and particulate matter with each breath while on an hour run.

The rare (25 year cycle) lightning strikes came on last week and suddenly the entire Bay Area was enveloped in a ring of fire and a cloud of smoke again . . . for the third time in four years.

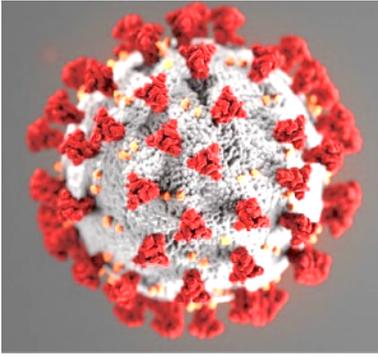
On top of the obvious health detriments of running in very bad air, this is compounded by the accompanying high temperatures that the fire brings. And we are already in a heat wave.

### Recommendations:

Air Quality Index (AQI) Readings over 150 are the accepted thresholds of exercise parameters. This is easily found for any spot in this country on [purpleair.com](http://purpleair.com). If in doubt, check it out.

### Ameliorations:

Sometimes people wear wet face kerchiefs to block out the smoke. Again, early mornings might find cooler and less toxic air. Indoor aerobic activities (exercise bikes, treadmills, jogging around the coffee table) are highly encouraged.



### Issue # 3: Covid-19

## It Ain't Going Away

This is the single biggest, and single most important, of all the issues. This is global, it is pervasive, it hasn't been cured, and in country, has not even been hemmed in.

All aspects of life have been affected, and the responses from the American public have not been consistent. The net effect is that there had been a remarkably scambled national response which has resulted in prolonging the effect this virus is having on our society.

And on our sport.

### Recommendations:

As a sport we need to observe the strictest of protocols. We need to mask up when in contact with the general public. We need to keep respectful distances, even from our teammates, at all times. We need to model the socially responsible behaviors we want all society to observe so that we can all the sooner turn the corner and save lives.

And save our season.

### Amelioration:

Always have a mask on your face or around your neck when running. Masks for when you are in a group, or running by citizens, and around your neck to have ready when you do encounter citizens.

Always keep a responsible distance from others, even teammates, even on runs. We know how we like to cuddle up on runs, but we need to overcome the teenage mind that scoffs at adult suggestions and take it to heart that our running behavior is an example, and it should be the best possible example.



### Issue # 4: Social Divides

## A Nation On Edge

As if we didn't have enough trouble with weather and climate - - dual hurricanes, crumbling Arctic ice shelves, record drought and flood - - we also have a deluge of social issues flooding our country. Me Too and BLM and antifa and QAnon have become common flashpoints. The upcoming national election has created social chasms that will be hard to bridge.

Political polemics have become extreme, and viewpoints on the virus, on the economy, on the climate, and on the nature of governing itself, have become postures that impact people's responses to the Covid-19 contagion.

And those mindsets then affect how people view social restrictions and behavior changes - - and this affects us as runners since those mindsets often are the ones that make the decisions that shape the direction of our sport.

### Recommendations:

Focus on the running. What we can do on a national scene as per our viewpoint is one thing, but carving out a portion of our passion for our sport is important too. Distractions are distractions.

### Ameliorations:

Try to run as many days as possible. If weather, temperature, national environment disaster get in the way, then we can't run. But we can still stay focused and be ready to run when we can.



### Issue # 5: Uneven Responses

## Who's In Charge?

With all the uneasiness, and lack of a clear top-down national set of guidelines or considerations, it has been left up to local authorities to have frameworks for dealing with the social impact of the Covid-19 virus.

### Hierarchy of Athletic Recommendations:

State government: Currently, at Ahambra High, we fall under the guidance of the California Public Health Department. They have issued a set of guidelines that each county health department may adopt.

<https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-youth-sports--en.pdf>

This then is the set of suggestions that each school district may adopt. Furthermore, it is up to each school site administrator and athletic director to adopt or adapt (or not) these suggestions as are related to high school sports conditioning programs.

State Sports: As far as competitive schedules, Alhambra and all other California high schools, belong to the state sports organization - - California Interscholastic Federation (CIF). We belong to the regional North Coast Section part of CIF. They have issued a revamping of the 2021 schedules which have been delayed and compressed, in the hope that sufficient progress will have been made in stemming the spread of Covid-19 by that time.

The CIF has issued a statement to articulate their decisions.

<https://cifstate.org/mediacenter/releases/2019-20/>

[PR-34\\_7.20.20\\_CIF\\_Statement\\_2020-21\\_Sports\\_Calendar\\_Final.pdf](https://cifstate.org/mediacenter/releases/2019-20/PR-34_7.20.20_CIF_Statement_2020-21_Sports_Calendar_Final.pdf)

But the final decision rests with the individual district and school. We have been told that all sports conditioning programs are on hiatus until Martinez Unified gets a new superintendent. At that point we will have more direct and specific guidance, and until then there can be no official school physical presence or contact concerning school sports.



**Issue # 6: Uncertainty**

**Schools, Sports, Society**

This is perhaps a segment of history where the accumulation of events has never been more eventful. And one of the greatest consequences has been the forshortening of anticipation - - we just don't know what's going to happen next.

This anxiety is palpable. People are restless. Folks are irritable. Futures are uncertain. We just don't know, and that goes for the very near future, not just some "oh, later" time span.

**Social "Opening" - - or not**

For society in general, we have the closedowns, and shelter-in-places, and the social distancing . . . for how long? Others are more negatively impacted through unemployment, evictions, business failures. Politicians scramble and argue. People complain and protest. Are school going to be in person, or only by distane? And we still just don't know.

**And high school sports?**

For runners, this is especially so. We don't know when we will be allowed to have regular workouts together (well, as regular as Covid restrictions will allow). We don't know how long distance learning will take place. We don't even know how a competitive season will look if we have restricted numbers of athletes in competitions.

**Recommendations:**

Take a deep breath. Time will pass, Things will pass. Keep on running. Make the workouts a daily routine to keep some regularity in your schedule.

**Ameliorations:**

Stay in contact with your teammates. Be aware that you are still a part of a team. In time things will stabilize a bit, and we can relax a smidgen.



**Issue # 7: Run, run run  
Some Things Don't Change;  
Coaches Want Effort**

You've heard this all before. It bears repeating.

**Shoes:**

If you have any foot twinges or pains, it is a 90% chance that you need new shoes. Running shoes wear out quickly, and need to be replaced to avoid injury. Please do not skimp on this very important aspect of training.

**Hydration & Nutrition:**

If you eat well and frequently, and drink lots of water, you will have fewer problems. Stay away from grease, fried foods, sugars, and processed food. Red meat is not a sin. Avoid sodas and energy drinks. Athletes in training should eat 6 times a day.

**Watches:**

Runners need to have a watch to time their runs. It doesn't need to be an expensive sports watch, since all the coaches are interested in is time and distance. Without a watch, runners are at a disadvantage in monitoring their own workouts.

**Motivation & Consistency**

Running is hard in that each workout takes a level of discomfort (we call that pain) to accomplish. It is also hard in that it takes so long to see improvement, often years. And there are always temptations to not do the workouts, especially since currently we don't have any gathered sessions to be accountable to.

**ZOOM Time**

**Weekly Check-ins**

By this time you all should have gotten the Remind notifications about our upcoming schedule of ZOOM sessions. We are going to convene via the internet video conferencing regularly to provide the best framework we can as coaches given the fact that we cannot meet physically with you until so allowed by District policy.

Here is the schedule of sessions. These are every Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.

Sept 2, 2020	7:00 PM
Sept 9, 2020	7:00 PM
Setp 16, 2020	7:00 PM
Sept 23, 2020	7:00 PM
Sept 30, 2020	7:00 PM

These sessions are only 40 minutes long, so we need to be efficient in our check-ins. It would help if each participant signed in with his or her actual name, and turned on the camera. Since all of you have classes by video, you certainly can be visible during these sessions.

**And the workouts for Weeks 9 & 10 of The Summer of Covid:**

**Week 9 - - 8/23 - 8/29**

Sun	OYO - long distance	easy
Mon	long distance	easy
Tues	medium distance	hard
Wed	Track: short internals	by pace
Thur	medium distance	easy
Fri	Track: long intervals	by pace
	- OR - time trial	all out
Sat	OYO - medium distance	easy

**Week 10 - - 8/23 - 8/29**

repeat week 9

For paces, refer to the charts below.

Group Assignments:

- A - - regular runner
- B - - occasional runner
- C - - new or just coming back runner

Paces - - based on mile PR						
Mile PR	Distance easy	Distance Hard	200	400	800	1000
	min/mile	min/mile	target/secs	target/secs	target time	target time
4:45	7:25	6:20	35	72	2:35	3:30
5:00	7:40	6:30	36	75	2:45	3:40
5:30	8:20	7:00	41	84	2:55	4:00
6:00	9:00	7:30	44	88	3:20	4:25
6:30	9:40	8:00	48	95	3:35	4:45
7:00	10:00	8:30	51	100	4:00	4:55
7:30	10:45	9:00	54	105	4:25	5:20

Distance Runs: 4 days a week					
A - - 60-75 minutes or 5-8 miles					
B - - 45-60 minutes or 4-6 miles					
C - - 30-45 minutes or 3-4 miles					
Interval/Track Workouts: 2 days a week					
Threshold	Strides	Sprint		Tempo/	
	(Every day)	200	400	800	1000
A - -	x 6-8	x 10-16	x 8-12	x 4-6	x 3-5
B - -	x 6	x 8-12	x 6-10	x 3-5	x 2-4
C - -	x 4	x 6-10	x 6-8	x 3-4	x 2-3