



# The Bulldog Bark

The voice of Alhambra High School  
Cross —CC-> Country  
Saturday, September 8, 2018



## Ed Sias Invite

### Bulldogs Improve; Place "Above The Fold"

The mighty Bulldogs came into the first meet of the season with a set of expectations and a list of goals. The Ed Sias Invitational matches many of the area teams as well as some excellent squads outside the immediate area in a great early-season competition.

We got a chance to run against not only some of the best teams in our league, but also in our area, in the North Coast Section, and in the entire State. And for what we set out to achieve, our brave little team did quite well.

#### Team goals -- Above the Fold

We set out some simple objectives before the race. As teams, we wanted to finish "above the fold," that is, in the top half of the race. As for individuals, it was to chase improvements and possibly a spot on the All-Time top 10 list for their division. Finishing "above the fold" individually was also a target.

#### Goals met, and more !

Of the 25 athletes on the team, 18 made it to the starting line today. And of those, 12 runners ran to a PR (Personal Best). Two of the three complete teams did finish in the top half of their races. Colby Thompson earned a medal for a top-10 individual finish in the freshman boys race. And two athletes notched a spot on our all-time lists. Not a bad haul at all for the squad.



The team area is empty at 6:45 a.m.

• = earned medal

### Boys' Frosh-Soph

Team placing: 5th of 15 complete teams  
(163 finishers)

1.	Liam Alexander (Vintage)	11:38	
• 7.	Colby Thompson	12:27	PR :19
	# 8 All-Time B Frosh		
10.	Sam Dibetta	12:39	PR :55
11.	Sam Rogers	12:41	PR :31
40.	Nolin Searls	13:34	
117.	Ali sobhy	15:45	

did not run

Aaron Manning -- soccer

Jared Lipman -- injured

Cristian Ruiz -- ?

Joaquin HInkins -- ?



The Sams are blurs as they sprint to the finish.

It was entirely possible, pre-race, that this might just be the feature race of the day for us. This proved to be true as we put 3 boys in the top 11, grabbed an individual medal, and finished 5th overall in the very strong top-10 B Frosh list for this course.

It was a cautious start for the boys, but as the race headed into the mile mark, our top three were already in contention. They held on to the end and had great sprints to the finish. Colby edged ahead of the Sams and our team position looked very good early on.



Colby and his medal are all smiles.

Nolin ran above his conditioning, given his limited workouts due to knee soreness. And Ali had to rely on a furious finish sprint to help us grab that top team spot. And the 5th place finish (just out of team medal consideration) was excellent.

We had a few defections of athletes who did not run. Hopefully we can eliminate this in the future. Saturday races are not optional. Kudos to Jared who showed up to help support the troops even while injured



For having a head full of allergies, Carson was still able to eke out a PR and lead our troops well.

### Boys' Varsity — Small Schools

Team placings: 12th of 18 complete teams  
(130 finishers)

1.	Teddy Buckley (Campo)	10:18	
28.	Carson Edwards	11:34	PR :04
45.	Graham Manning	12:01	
74.	Sidney Keuhn	12:55	PR :31
96.	Del Roderick	13:38	PR :40
100.	Deen Sobhy	13:59	

Carson was held back by his allergies filling his sinuses with phlegm. Graham is still worried about his shins. Sidney and Del are entirely new to this weird world of varsity where everyone sprints and no one slows down. Deen was the emergency promotion to cover a defection, and we felt we had to hustle just not to be an embarrassment.



Graham and Del blast off at the start of the race.

But lo! with all these events conspiring to subdue our varsity performance, we still managed to beat Concord, our rival in the DAL-Valley division, and also beat Benicia (our other rival) on team time as they ran in the large school race.

Carson was able to improve even while ill. Graham showed some serious race determination. Sidney and Del survived the varsity experience and improved considerably.

Deen was not quite sure if he was up to the challenge, but was able to muster a strong finish help close up our scoring.



The BJV pose menacingly at the start.

## Boys' JV

Team placing: 9th of 19 complete teams (139 finishers)

1.	Nile Desta (Dublin)	11:06	
36.	Ben Smyers	13:15	PR 1:01
# 8 All-Time BJV			
42.	Billy Skinner	13:27	PR 1:15
46.	Ryan McCauley	13:31	PR :28
94.	Chris Cota	14:40	PR 1:16
120.	Josh Flores	16:29	PR 2:45
121.	Topher Skinner	16:29	PR :45

did not run:

Andres Alvarez - - injured  
Riley DeGeroge - - injured



Great grouping: Billy, Ben, Ryan scamper up the last hill in a fine team effort.

This was clearly the biggest surprise of the meet. We had combined the rest of the boys, older and younger, into one race to make sure we had a complete team. We did not really expect everyone to run a strong PR. Getting the "above the fold" team finish was another bonus. And having Ben pop out with a top-10 BJV All-Time race was a complete astonishment.

Ben had to work to pull ahead of Billy and Ryan in the last 400 meters. Chris and Josh showed off the results of strong workouts, and Topher bulled his way to a PR.



Clara holds her own mid-race.

## Girls' Junior Varsity

Team placing: incomplete (105 finishers)

1.	Grace Harrison (St. Francis-SAC)	13:37
53.	Clara Duran	17:22 PR :24
68.	Pearla Lopez-Cardinale	18:13

It's always lonely in the later races, and with only two girls, the incentives sometimes droop. Nonetheless, Clara met both goals with a PR and an "above the fold" individual finish. Pearla has been in a bit of a slump this week, and could not muster her full competitive effort today.

## And our comparisons:

### Alhambra v. Concord v. Benicia

We are in the Valley division of the Diablo Athletic League, which is comprised of the 6 teams in the league that are left over after the top 7 programs have been placed in the Foothill division. So, in all honesty, we are in the slower league division.

### League Champions? Possibly

By pre-season comparisons, it looks like our boys' varsity just could well be league champions. Today was a chance to run straight up against Concord and Benicia and see just what was what.

### Looks good right now

Each team did not run its best on varsity, so a little digging had to be done to put together the best 5 times for each school to see just how we would do head-to-head. At this juncture, we are just about 10-12 seconds per runner faster than both Concord and Benicia. This means that all three teams are just about the same level of excellence right now.

### Lots of work still to do

This gives us some specific focus for the rest of the season. Our BV has a very good shot at taking home a league championship this season. That would be a very good thing, and it looks like right now we have a bit of an edge over the other two schools. Time will tell, but for now it looks good. Expect works to have a strong purpose

## Next Up - - Santa Rosa

### Viking Opener Invite

We go off to Santa Rosa this coming Saturday to do might battle with the schools of the north part of the North Coast Section. The meet is hosted by Montgomery High and held at a Spring Lake in Santa Rosa. This is a new race for the Bulldogs this year.

### Early departure

Since the meet is a ways up the road, and the first race is at 8:30, the coaches advise an early departure time. It takes at least 75 minutes to get to Santa Rosa, so leaving at 6:30 is perhaps the best bet on making sure each vehicle has time to fight traffic, get lost, find parking, and still get to the race on time.

### Northern competition

Alhambra competes in Division IV, which is comprised of fairly small schools. When we get to the NCS championship race, we will see many of these team then. It is always a good idea to scope out possible competition ahead of time. We hope to get a bead on the teams from Analy, Cardinal Newman, Lower Lake, Plner, San Rafael, Sonoma Valley & Terra Linda.

### Logistics, Parking, Team Area

We will be posting and handing out maps and directions. The general idea is that we set up our team camp right by the finish line chute. Parking is limited, and the big lot is on the other side of the lake which requires about 1/3 mile hike.

### Small Team Friendly

This meet features age group races (seniors, juniors, sophomores, et cetera) as well as having teams only requiring three runners to score, instead of 5. This allows us to put even more complete teams on the line to show off our talent.

### More Photos At:

<https://alhambtrack.shutterstock.com/pictures>

and on Facebook:

Alhambra Cross Country Team

## Snack Table Quite the Show

Our first meet was our opportunity to show off our family support for the team via our snack table. And the Bulldog team families came through big time - - the three tables groaned under the burden of watermelon, bananas, strawberries, bagels (with peanut butter & cream cheese), muffins (cinnamon and blueberry), crackers, granola bars, and jugs of Gatorade and water.

At one point the health inspector, after reviewing the meet concessions stands, strolled on by and made some suggestions about how we had the food organized. I guess we looked like a satellite snack bar. The real compliment came when some of the Berkeley athletes mistook our snack table for an aide station and refilled their water bottles out of our jugs.

Great job, folks. Let's do it again this coming Saturday

