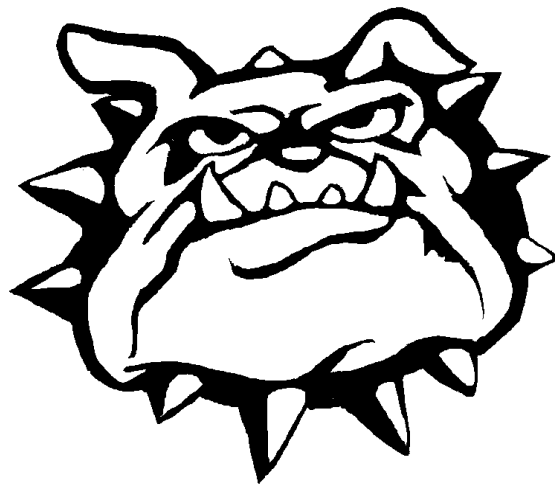


Brighton High School Cross Country



Participation Guide

In compliance with Titles VI & VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, and Colorado law, School District 27J does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, age, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, disability or need for special education services in admissions, access to, treatment, or employment in educational programs or activities which it operates and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. A lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to participation or admission.

En cumplimiento a los Derechos Civiles de la ley de 1964, bajo los Títulos VI y VII, la Enmienda Educativa de 1972, bajo el Título IX, la ley de Rehabilitación de 1973, Sección 504, la ley contra la discriminación de empleo establecida en 1967, el estatuto de Americanos con Incapacidades, la ley anti-discriminatoria por Información Genética de 2008 y la ley de Colorado, el Distrito Escolar 27J no discrimina ilegalmente en base a la raza, color, sexo, religión, origen de nacionalidad, ascendencia, credo, edad, estado civil, orientación sexual, infamación genética, admisión por discapacidad o necesidades de servicios de educación especial, acceso, tratamiento o empleo en programas o actividades educativas que operan y proporcionan acceso de igualdad a grupos juveniles incluyendo los Boy Scouts. El desconocimiento del idioma de inglés no es una barrera para la participación o admisión.

Head Coach: Karen Smidt ksmidt@sd27j.net

Assistant Coach:

Aby Smidt-Krage

303-655-4209 during school / 303-621-4540 after 4:30 (I don't often answer my cell during practice)

www.bulldogdistance.com

COACHING

COACHES

Head Coach **Karen Smidt**

I have been a Teacher in the Brighton School District for 23 years and have coached Cross Country and Track at BHS for 17 of those years. I have coached numerous teams to League Championships and earned over 15 EMAC Coach of the Year Honors in both Cross Country and Track for both Boy's and Girl's teams. I am a USATF Level 1 Certified Coach, a qualified CHSSA Track and XC Official, and a long standing member of the Colorado High School Coaches Association. I have volunteered at several running camps, including co-directing Camp Isaiah, a Christian running camp at the CSU Mountain Campus.

I have been running and racing year-round since I was 10 and joined my first competitive team at my high school in California where I was part of my Cross Country and Track teams. I ran for the All-Navy Track & Field Team while enlisted in the United States Navy and then for the University of Northern Colorado as a full scholarship Cross Country and Track & Field athlete. I earned three NCAA National All-American titles: 7th in the nation in the 10,000 meter in Track and 2x top 25 placings in Cross Country. After college, I transitioned to the marathon where I missed qualifying for the Olympic Trials by less than 2 minutes. I currently train for Ultra-Distance Trail races, finished several 100 mile races (including Leadville 100 and Western States 100), and am ranked among the top 50 women in the US in the 100k.

Assistant Coach **Aby Smidt-Krage**

Aby works for Runners Roost in Golden and has been a Substitute Teacher in the Brighton School District for a few years. She has coached Cross Country and Track at BHS for 5 years and is a graduate of Metro State University where she ran Cross Country and Track on scholarship. She also volunteers at Camp Isaiah and has been running for nearly 20 years. She is the current school record holder at BHS in the 4x800m and 4x400m relays, but I am sure she would love to coach one of her athletes into taking those records down!

COACHING PHILOSOPHY

I feel it is our responsibility to teach each athlete that running is a lifelong sport and can serve as a metaphor to life. Balancing hard work with fun is the most important aspect of obtaining success on our team. During an athlete's time on the team, we will strive to instill life learning lessons such as responsibility, character, respect, confidence, leadership and discipline. If all of these aspects are applied, the wins, medals and personal records will come naturally on their own. Creating a fun & positive experience while in a competitive environment is our main goal.

While not every athlete will win a race, every athlete has the opportunity to set a realistic goal and achieve it. We commonly have individuals who have never run competitively in their lives who enjoy the steady progress they make throughout the season. Some set goals to medal at League Finals while others just hope to finish their first 5K without walking any part of the course. Anyone who makes a realistic goal in the sport, and who follows through with achieving that goal, will most certainly be successful.

Participation in sports provides opportunities for athletes to grow physically, mentally and socially in positive ways. We encourage all students who join our program to make the most of the experience that can come from participation. Our team is made up of competitors who will get the best training available to succeed in competitive situations and participants who will get the best training available to enjoy and grow from their sporting experience. I hope that our participants will one day be our state competitors.

"Cross Country taught me so much about working together as a team and the concept of Family. I am so glad I ran all 4 years because it gave me tons of memories and earned me an athletic scholarship!"

~Polliard 2015

The Cross Country program emphasizes:

- 1) the development of **individual** abilities to their maximum potential;
- 2) the importance of working together as a **team**;
- 3) fitness for **life**.

To that end:

- 1) We implement workouts that meet the needs of each individual regardless of ability;
- 2) We encourage athletes to be competitive, but we understand all athletes have different goals;
- 3) We teach participants about proper nutrition, healthy living, and maintaining balance in life.

TEN GUARANTEES ALL COACHES OWE EVERY HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETE (CHSSA)

1. Some individual time.
2. Encouragement – regardless of the athlete's level of ability.
3. A reasonable opportunity to compete.
4. TOP NOTCH ROLE MODELING – from grooming and dress to behavior and ethics in general.
5. The absence of foul language.
6. Assistance and guidance with personal problems that arise in every young person's life.
7. A well-structured athletic environment, from practices to actual competition days.
8. Recognition for the contributions each athlete has made to the team.
9. DISCIPLINE! FAIR, FIRM, AND CONSISTENT.
10. The right to have a high school career not consumed by the "year round" single sport mentality.

CHSAA MISSION STATEMENT

"Seeking Excellence in Academics, Activities, and Athletics"

In pursuit of excellence, the Colorado High School Activities Association strives to create a positive and equitable environment in which all qualified student participants are challenged and inspired to meet their highest potential.

• Our Core Values •

**Participation is a Privilege *Athletics and Activities Programs are Education-based *Participation in Athletics and Activities Teach Life Skills *Appropriate Perspective is Taught Through Participation *Fun is Primary Reason for a Student's Participation *Participation Supports the Academic Mission of the school *Participation Supports the Development of Positive Character*

BHS POSITIVE COACHING ALLIANCE

ELM Tree of Mastery:

E is for Effort. We'll give our best effort in every practice and game. It's more important to me that we try our hardest than if we win. If we win without giving it our best effort, that win doesn't mean much. But if we play a strong team and try our hardest and lose, I'll still be proud of our team.

L is for Learning. Let's continue learning and improving every time we come out here. If we continue to learn, we will get better. Getting better than we are now is more important than whether or not we are better than some other team. We can also think of this as competing with ourselves; if we get better than we used to be, then we are winning that competition.

M is for Mistakes. Nobody likes to make mistakes, but mistakes are part of learning. You can't learn without making mistakes, because to learn you have to try things that are new and challenging, so of course you are going to make mistakes. On our team, it is okay to make mistakes.

(www.positivecoach.org)

COMMUNICATION

All upcoming meet information, updates, results, and general information will be posted via the REMIND APP and on our website which is located on the BHS athletics page or www.bulldogdistance.com. To sign up for Reminds: text 81010 and type @e141ef in the body of the text. You will get a text back confirming your sign up. Please use your name to confirm so I know who is signed up. Results and Ranking may also be found on <http://co.milesplit.com> or www.maxpreps.com

Social Media Accounts

Instagram: bulldogdistancexc / Facebook: Brighton Distance RunNerds / Twitter: @SmidtCoach

If you have any concerns about your athlete or the program, please follow the chain of communication:

PARTICIPANT/PARENT ➡ COACH /SPONSOR ➡ ATHLETIC DIRECTOR ➡ PRINCIPAL

ATHLETE CONDUCT

ATHLETE CONDUCT

❖ ELIGIBILITY

All student athletes must be passing 3 or more classes per quarter (Advisory Counts as a class) to be eligible for competition and fail no more than 2 classes in a semester (2 Ds equal an F). Eligibility is run every Thursday for the following week starting Monday. Appeal Forms MUST be turned in before noon Friday.

❖ ATTITUDE

➤ **Rules**

Every athlete is expected to behave according to BHS school rules and all CHSAA Rules.

➤ **Bullying**

Bullying and/or taunting will not be tolerated—this includes bullying on and off the practice field (an athlete is responsible for their Facebook and other social media use). On the first offense, the student athlete will be given one documented warning by a coach. On the second offense, the student athlete will meet with the coach and the Athletic Director. The third offense will result in a loss of eligibility for competition.

➤ **Respect**

Every athlete is expected to treat other athletes and adults with respect. The Golden Rule works best: treat others as you wish to be treated. Captains, Coaches, and Officials should be held in the same respect.

Brighton High School promotes good sportsmanship by student-athletes, coaches, cheerleaders, and spectators. We request your cooperation by supporting the participants and officials in a positive manner. Profanity, racial or sexist comments, or other intimidating actions directed at officials, student-athletes, spectators, coaches or team representatives will not be tolerated and are grounds for removal. Please join Brighton High School and the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA) in our efforts to uphold good sportsmanship.

CHEER FOR YOUR TEAM AND NOT AGAINST YOUR OPPONENT
TEAM: Teach, Enforce, Advocate, & Model Positive Sporting Behavior

TEAM CAPTAINS

Captains are team leaders chosen by the coaches based on their **integrity, character, and charisma**. Being a captain is a great honor, but it will not always be a fun job. Captains should ALWAYS set good examples in the classroom, on the field, and at home. Captains must be student athletes who are respected and supported by their teammates, who in turn respect and support their teammates at all times. Captains must never put themselves above the team. Captains must understand that they are subject to the same rules and consequences as every other member of the team. Furthermore, captains must be on the same page with the coaching staff. Captains should believe in the coach's philosophy and support it in front of their teammates at all times. These are a few of the characteristics the coaching staff will look for when choosing team leaders.

❖ Experience

- The best individuals understand our coaching styles, personalities and expectations. They must also know how to teach new teammates the routine at practices and meets.

❖ Maturity

- Captains are role models not just at practice but outside of practice, as well. Prior season behavior in and out of practice is considered.

❖ Initiative

- Captains are virtually our assistant coaches. Our staff should not have to constantly remind our captains (or even potential ones) to do their job. Showing initiative in recognizing a situation requiring their help or guidance is essential to a captain's role.

❖ Motivation

- A negative attitude is dangerously influential on any team. Our captains should possess a consistent positive outlook while motivating their teammates.

VARSITY & JUNIOR VARSITY REQUIREMENTS

There are no "cuts" and everyone has the opportunity to run at least 11 Meets. There are no bench warmers in our sport, and hard work plus dedication will guarantee success toward achieving the goal to which the athlete sets.

The Varsity Team will consist of 7 participants, which will be determined by the coaches prior to each meet. The top 7 varsity members may change from week to week. For the league, regional, and state meet, varsity runners will be chosen based on the most consistent race results and/or consistent practice participation (THIS INCLUDES ATTITUDE). We are a competitive team, so it will be our goal to choose athletes who can be the most competitive in these high-stakes meets.

LETTERING

Lettering is primarily based on objective data (times, placings, points) and partly on subjective data (attitude & participation), but it is ultimately at the discretion of the coaching staff. To be **considered** for a letter, the athlete must...

- Not miss more than 10% of the season's practice days, including both "excused" and "unexcused" absences.
- Be available to participate in ALL SCHEDULED MEETS, unless "excused" by the HEAD COACH.
- Adhere to the BHS Athletic Code of Ethics.
- Participate as a team member at all practices and meets, which entails encouraging teammates, helping during meets, inspiring others through positive actions, and maintaining a mature and responsible attitude.
- Earn 20 Lettering Points.

POINTS

Time Qualification:

Men Sub 17:30 = 15 points, 17:31 – 18:30 = 10 points, 18:31 - 19:00 = 5 points, 19:01 - 19:30 = 1 point

Women Sub 19:30 = 15 points, 19:31 – 20:30 = 10 points, 20:31 - 21:00 = 5 points, 21:01 – 21:30 = 1 point

Captain OR 4 Year XC Athlete = 10 points

Compete in at least 4 meets as a varsity member = 10 points.

Top 20% in any varsity meet = 10 points

Top 3 in any JV meet = 5 points

Volunteer at: races we don't host, Back2School, other XC related stuff = 5 points each

PRACTICE

Think Before You Pack!!!

Over the years, many of our athletes have *not* come to practice adequately prepared to train in the varying weather conditions. Athletes need to realize that although temperatures may seem warm during the school day, they may change drastically by the time practice starts (this is Colorado, after alksmidt@sd27j.org!).

****Parents: please help your athletes to be prepared for all situations.**

What your bag should look like before leaving for school:

- Running Shoes & running socks
- Running pants/spandex, shorts
- **DIGITAL WATCH! All athletes are expected to bring a watch every day. I have watches I can check out, but athletes and parents need to be aware that the replacement cost for loss of the watch is \$100 and the charger is \$25**
- Long sleeve shirt, t-shirt, (sweatshirt or jacket)
- You will sweat; pack a dry shirt to change into after your workout!!!!!!
- A Water Bottle and snack or energy bar for after practice

Practice Time

All cross country participants will report between 4:50 - 5:00pm @ Benedict Park (off of Southern) every day for practice. Athletes can change at the Track (southwest gate) but we leave the track between 4:30-4:50 to head to Benedict. Practice typically lasts two hours (7:00) but athletes may be released earlier. Expect to practice at 7:00 a.m. on Mondays and on Saturdays when no meet is scheduled, unless told otherwise.

Absences & Tardies

All absences must be approved by the Head Coach. If the absence is for academic reasons, the **teacher** must email Coach Smidt. **Parents must call or email (303-621-4540 or ksmidt@sd27j.net) to report any missed practice due to illness or appointments.** Please avoid making appointments during practice times. Unexcused absences are not tolerated and may result in being pulled from the next meet. It is understood by the coaching staff that when a student signs up for a varsity

sport, a level of responsibility and commitment exists. Athletes who consistently miss all or part of practice due to employment will be ineligible for varsity status but will be allowed to participate on the JV team. Unexcused absences include: employment, vacations, camping, social events (including birthday parties), etc.

Running During Practice

For all of our practice runs, I ask athletes to pair up so no one runs alone. I will have several managers on bikes to monitor groups, and they will have a cell phone for emergencies. Occasionally during the school week, we will run at Barr Lake, Adams County Fairgrounds, or other locations in Brighton. We will carpool for these runs, so parents need to let me know if they do not want their athlete to ride with other athletes. On some Mondays/Saturdays, we try to get out of Brighton and run the front range trails (Boulder, Golden, Ft. Collins, etc). We do need help carpooling to those runs, and I welcome parents who would like to hike the same trails and bring up the rear.

Weather Protocol

We WILL run in rain, snow (at a specific temp), and heat. If lightning is within **10 miles**, we will evacuate to an indoor location or shelter. **The Coaches are equipped with the WeatherBug App to determine the safety of your athletes.** As is the nature of Cross Country training, we may get caught in a storm. Athletes are instructed to seek shelter and stay put until the storm has rolled over. Recently, we have been affected by poor air quality and will limit our runs based on the index. If your athlete uses an inhaler, please make sure they carry it with them during practices.

INJURIES

Injuries may happen. Most of our injuries come from doing too much too soon, despite our best intentions to individualize our training programs. **Cross Country practice WILL make you sore and tired!** We'll be running every day and often run on the roads anywhere from 20 to 60 miles a week (depending on the individual). You shouldn't anticipate an easy transition if you've been on the couch all summer! If any athlete experiences an injury that 1) lasts longer than one week or 2) causes a significant change in their gait (limping, etc), they MUST report this to the coaches immediately. Our first course of action is always the trainer, but we may recommend an athlete visit a doctor to rule out any major injury.

Trainer: Olivia Marston 949-525-7601

OFF SEASON CONDITIONING

Distance & mid-distance runners are expected to follow their cross country summer training program and are to do as many runs in groups as possible. We want all our athletes to stay conditioned over the other seasons. Summer and winter conditioning and weight training guides will be available, along with captain-held practices. Attending a summer camp with teammates is strongly suggested! Taking advantage of these opportunities is your choice, but when the season starts and you're out of shape, life will be miserable - there's your warning.

CROSS COUNTRY MEETS

How Cross Country Meets Work

The length of our races can be anywhere from 3.2 kilometers (2 miles) to 5 kilometers (3.1 miles). The official Cross Country school season runs from the 2nd week of August to the end of October (state meet).

A team consists of 7 athletes with only the top 5 athletes scoring for each team. The remaining two athletes are able to knock back the opponents from scoring, so they are extremely important to the team score. A runner is given the same number of points as they have finished the race. For example, if a runner finished the race in fourth place, he is given 4 points, which is assigned to the team. The **lowest total team score** wins the meet/invitational. A team that finished all of its runners in the following order, 1-2-3-4-5 (6-7) would score a perfect score of 15. JV scores the same way in their own separate race.

Participation

Athletes are only allowed to compete in 11 meets per season excluding Regionals and State. If an athlete starts a meet, that will count as one of their eleven. (All athletes must have **5 practices** before competing in their first meet.)

Traveling to Meets

- **Uniforms/warm-ups MUST be worn during the entire meet, including the bus ride to the meet. PRIDE!**
- **TRANSPORTATION:**

District 27J does not *typically* provide busing within ten miles of the school and/or on Saturdays. The exception will be when we leave school during school hours--we will provide a bus TO the meet but not FROM the meet. Carpooling is our best option for returning from meets, and while I cannot arrange rides, I will always make sure athletes have transportation. When we take a bus, we will always load & unload the bus from the southwest track gate (between softball field & stadium snackbar).

As this is a team sport, we highly encourage athletes to ride the bus to meets unless there is an academic reason they cannot leave school early. Travel time on the bus is often used as a pre-team meeting. Athletes should expect to remain at the meets for ALL races (2 Varsity, 2 JV and sometimes 2 Open--each appx 30 min). Athletes should support their teammates when they are not racing themselves.

Weekday Meets

During the week we will compete against other schools in our league and region as well as schools outside our competition base. These meets typically begin between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. and will last until 5:00 or 6:00. The Athletic Secretary will excuse all athletes in Infinite Campus prior to the meet. Occasionally, an athlete will get missed in the excuse list. Please be patient and wait at least 48 hours before calling her to inquire about an absence that was not marked correctly (303-655-4155). I have included student release & bus departure times on the schedule. It is up to athletes to let their teachers know the days leading up to a meet that they will be gone and get classwork prior to their absence. The athlete should also let their teacher know as they arrive for class that they will be leaving midway through class, and the athlete should pay attention to the time.

Championship Meets

Leagues

There will be JV and Varsity races at the League Championships; therefore, all athletes will have a chance to compete at this Championship level.

We participate in the EMAC League for the 21-22 Season. Teams in the league include: Adams City, Westminster, Brighton, Hinkley, Prairie View, Gateway, Rangeview, and Northglenn, Vista Peak.

Regionals

Only Varsity runners may compete at the Regional level.

Nine athletes will be permitted to compete during the regional meet, but only the top 5 will be scored. All 9 athletes are eligible for the top 15 individual places to advance to state. Region #4: Adams City, Brighton, Ft. Collins, Fossil Ridge, Greeley West, Horizon, Loveland, Mountain Range, Northglenn, Poudre, Prairie View, Rocky Mountain, Westminster.

State

The top 15 athletes and the top 50% of teams from each region will continue to State Finals the last Sat in October.

Post Season Optional National Meet

We always schedule at least one OPTIONAL trip to either Nike or AAU Nationals. This trip is funded entirely by the athlete and is a fun opportunity for athletes to compete with others at the National Level. I will include information as the season progresses.

What to pack for a meet:

- UNIFORM
- Training shoes, socks, racing flats, water bottle, snacks, Digital Watch for planning your warm-up (I usually recommend that athletes not wear a watch during competition).
- DRESS WARMER than it looks: running pants, long sleeve & short sleeve shirt, sweat shirt (your BHS gear)
- Cash (commemorative t-shirts and snack bars at some invitational meets)
- Blanket and pillow

- SCHOOL WORK

***Cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, or other **electronic devices are prohibited during competitions according to CHSAA rules**. We cannot be responsible for any valuables brought to practice or to meets, so please leave all valuables at home!

EQUIPMENT

SCHOOL ISSUED UNIFORMS

Once an athlete is issued a school uniform he/she is fully responsible for returning the same uniform that was issued at the beginning of the season. Every athlete will be issued a shirt & jacket (shorts will be purchased by athlete to keep) and must be returned no later than the banquet date. Place the uniform and a slip of paper WITH NAME PRINTED NEATLY in the bag provided or a sealed grocery bag. This is mandatory. NO EXCEPTIONS! *All athletes who fail to return the uniform will have a fee placed on their student bill.*

Running equipment is simple. Dress warm (visit local running specialty stores for the best clothing advice. Cotton is not the best way to go). Investing in the correct training shoes will save you money on doctor appointments if you do it right the first time! Running store associates will examine your feet and place you in the right shoes for you!

SHOES

Training Shoes

Running shoes are vital to the health and well-being of each athlete! Street shoes, basketball shoes, and aged running shoes *will* cause injuries. Keep your athlete's feet healthy and purchase a new pair of running shoes at least every 300 miles. **We will schedule a Spike Night at both Runners Roost in Golden and Road Runner Sports in Westminster.** You do not need to purchase your shoes from these stores, but we like you to attend because our team will receive cash back when you purchase something. If you cannot make it, we highly recommend that you go to a running store rather than a general sporting good store at the mall or Dick's because the specialized running store will fit the athlete with the correct shoe. Runners Roost, Bolder Running Company, and Road Runner's Sports offer free gait analysis and discounts to high school students—just mention that you are running cross country for Brighton High.

Racing Flats or Spikes (not cleats)

Spikes or flats are a must for anyone looking to improve their times (varsity or JV). Spikes are available for cross country and may be used during the track season as well. If you genuinely care to see improvement in competitions this is a necessary investment.

PARENTS

We need your help making XC the best experience possible. Please sign up for one or more of the following:

RACE VOLUNTEER We need volunteers for our home meets (Jack & Jill @Barr Lake Aug 19 and Mercury Invite @Adams County Fairgrounds Sep 16). The times vary, so please let me know what you can do.

Course set-up, Check In, Lead Bike, Course Marshal, Music, Finish Line, Awards

SPAGHETTI DINNERS We try to have a spaghetti dinner every night before a meet (with a few exceptions). The dates are listed on the race calendar. I assign all grade levels a food item to bring for the dinner, which they bring to the dinner. The family that hosts will cook the spaghetti, prepare the food, and open their house (or backyard) to the team. We usually meet at a park closest to the house and do a short pre-meet run before eating. The dinner is always held during practice time, so the spaghetti would need to be ready anytime between 5:45-6:30. MOST dinners end by 7:30 and I ask that parents pick kids up NLT than 7:45 (UNLESS a fun activity has been pre-planned, such as movie, game, etc).

SCHOOL WIDE BOOSTER Represent Cross Country on the BHS Umbrella Booster Club. The Umbrella Boosters are a collective group of voting representatives from all sports (two representatives per sport) who raise money for the whole athletic department. Each representative serves for at least two years or as long as their athlete is a participant on a BHS team. The Boosters meet once per month all year and approve fundraising efforts as well as

funding requests from individual sports. Parent Boosters who attend 80% of the Booster Meetings, which are held on the 2nd Monday of every month from 6-7pm in the Library, can waive the BHS Athletic Fee for their athlete (one season per year).

CURRENT REPS: XC BOYS: *Stephen Federocko, Jenn McTarsney* XC GIRLS: **WE NEED 2 REPS!**

BANQUET End of the year banquet Committee. The committee will decide all things related to the banquet (the venue, date, food, entertainment, etc) and will set up

OTHER

END OF SEASON BANQUET

ATHLETE AWARDS

Decided by coaches based on:

- Lowest average points per class—freshman, sophomore, junior, senior.
 - Cross country is scored on the amount of points earned per meet—the lower the better.
- All EMAC League and state qualifiers
- Most Improved
 - Male / Female athletes who have made the largest improvement over the course of the season
- Most Inspirational
 - Male / Female athletes who consistently encourage others and who have performed in such a way as to inspire others to reach the same level of athleticism, maturity, integrity, and character.
- Most Courageous
 - Male / Female athletes who have shown courage in competition and/or practice.
- Bulldog
 - Male / Female athletes who demonstrate true Bulldog Spirit when in competition and/or practice.
- M.V.P.
 - Male / Female athletes who have performed above and beyond the coaches' expectations. They are typically the points leaders of the team.
- Outstanding Freshman
 - Male / Female freshmen athletes who have performed above and beyond the coaches' expectations. They are typically the points leaders of the team.

NUTRITION

45 BEST FOODS FOR RUNNERS

Great choices to fuel your running and keep you healthy and energized to go the distance

By Marc Bloom of Runners World

Is there any health issue more confusing these days than your daily meal plan? From fad diets to carbo-bashing to the debate over how much fat is good for you, it's getting harder to isolate the best foods—those that fuel your running and taste great too—to keep on your wish list each day.

Wading through often conflicting advice, we runners have a dietary edge over the inactive. It's not that we burn so much energy that we can eat whatever we want. We got over that misconception long ago. But the energy we burn on the roads makes us crave the very foods that are good for us, with complex carbohydrates and whole grains and fresh fruits and vegetables leading the pack.

Still, we're so busy getting through the day it's not always convenient to search for all the right foods. To help you determine your best choices and save you time on the run, I consulted leading dieticians, many of whom run themselves, offering their "greatest hits" for tasty, nutrient-dense, heart-healthy fare. Foods are listed by type and in random order.

Grains: More Filling, Tastes Great

1. Oatmeal: A serving of oats gives you plenty of carbohydrate and has a low glycemic index, providing sustained release of energy into the bloodstream, important for runners. Oatmeal is excellent for breakfast or an anytime meal. Add skim milk and sweeten with dried fruit like bananas or apricots for a nutritional bounty. Instant oatmeal offers much the same benefits as rolled oats. Avoid pre-sweetened brands which have high sugar content. Oatmeal also helps lower cholesterol in your body.

2. Dark bread: Breads dark in color like pumpernickel and rye have more fiber and whole grain than lighter breads. This holds true for bagels--go for dark choices.

3. Quinoa: This product is similar to rice but more delicate and flavorful and cooks in half the time. "It's a great alternative," says Chris Rosenbloom, Ph.D, associate professor of nutrition at Georgia State University in Atlanta. "It's a newer grain, providing a carbo-boost in place of rice or pasta." A 6-ounce serving of quinoa contains 132 calories, 23 grams of carbohydrate, 4 grams of protein and 2 grams of unsaturated fat.

4. Buckwheat pasta: Also known as soba noodles, they are a more whole grain noodle and higher in carbs than regular pasta. Add to soup or use in a veggie stir fry, suggests Rosenbloom.

5. Whole wheat pasta : This pasta has a heartier flavor and more whole grain and about three times the fiber as regular pasta. To boost your fiber intake and enjoy more textured flavor, combine whole wheat with regular pasta. All pasta raises your blood sugar level while maintaining it for a long time, making it essential fuel for all the miles you put in.

6. Regular pasta : Basic, no-frills noodles with marinara or meat sauce is excellent; for a lighter sauce, go for garlic and parmesan. It's the portion size that causes trouble. For runners, up to 6 ounces of pasta (a standard package is 16 ounces) is plenty. Restaurants tend to supersize pasta dishes; if so, take home a doggy bag.

Fish: Sensational Salmon

7. Shrimp : Don't worry about the high cholesterol content. It's cholesterol from plant origins that are not well absorbed by the body, says Rosenbloom. Shrimp is high in muscle-building protein and low in saturated fat. Have your shrimp boiled or in a stir fry with pasta for a complete meal.

8. Crab : Like shrimp, it is rich in protein and has a benign form of cholesterol that is not readily absorbed. Have crab meat or claws. Crabcakes are an excellent dinner selection when you're eating out.

9. Salmon : Every dietitian's favorite, salmon is a PR food that should be eaten regularly and can be enjoyed in numerous ways: salmon steaks or filets, baked or grilled, in pasta or salads, as sandwiches or burgers, chowder or gumbo. Even canned salmon is good for you, advises *Runner's World* nutrition columnist Liz Applegate of Davis, California. "You obtain calcium from the small bones. I tell people who are too busy to cook to get canned salmon for salads, sandwiches and chowder." While salmon is an excellent protein source, the big bonus is omega-3 fats, which contribute to healthy cell membranes and are associated with reduced risk of heart disease.

10. Mackerel : Like salmon, mackerel is an excellent fish with omega-3 fats.

11. Sardines : Also has omega-3 fats and is versatile for salads and sandwiches.

12. Cod : "For people who are not fish eaters," says Rosenbloom, "cod is mild, not as strongly flavored." Cod is high in protein and low in fat. And it's easy to make. Take out a frozen filet. Add cornmeal batter for flavor.

13. Tuna : Treat yourself to the handy, portable tuna that now comes in pouches where you find canned tuna. You don't have to drain it. Pouch tuna is a quick protein meal. It tastes fresher than canned tuna, say the experts, and has omega-3 fats. When you're on the go, grab a tuna pouch, pita bread and some veggies and you've got a quick, nutritious lunch.

Fruit: Refreshing Fuel

14. Bananas : They're wrapped and convenient. They're versatile and ideal with cereal. Bananas have carbs and potassium, which runners lose through sweating and help regulate muscle contraction. "And when bananas are rotten," suggests Nancy Clark, author of *The Sports Nutrition Guidebook*, "cut them into chunks, put in the freezer, then blend with skim milk. It tastes like banana ice cream--you'd think it was Haagen Daz."

15. Oranges : One orange gives you all the vitamin C you need for a day. If peeling one is too messy for you, cut in sections and throw into a baggy for post-workout. Vitamin C helps heal the "micro-injuries" you get on every run. Orange juice (8 oz.) also does the job but an orange is better.

16. Strawberries : Have them fresh or frozen depending on the season. Rich in vitamin C, low in calories, taste great. Versatile as snacks, with cereal, on salad. Use frozen berries to make delicious, nutrient-rich smoothies.

17. Canteloupe : Half a melon provides a day's worth of vitamin C. Melons are filling; just 100 calories will satisfy you. Melons are rich in beta-carotene, an anti-oxidant vitamin associated with lower risk of heart disease and cancer. Great post-run snack or, with cottage cheese, a light lunch.

18. Mangoes : Plenty of vitamin A and beta-carotene.

19. Kiwi : Supplies vitamin C and potassium. Low in calories.

20. Fruit kabob : Put a row of fruit, fresh or canned, on a skewer and have with a non-fat plain yogurt dip, suggests dietitian Lisa Dorfman of Miami, author of *Vegetarian Sports Nutrition Guide* . Add naturally-sweetened jam for additional flavor.

Vegetables: Bean Bonanza

21. Beans : The consensus favorite, beans are the salmon of the veggie world. Cooked dry beans like pinto, lentil, garbanzo and split pea are high in protein and fiber, a plant source of iron and low in fat. Beans are a great accompaniment to soup and stew. Rice-and-beans is a complete meal with carbs and protein.

22. Baby Carrots : The same multitude of benefits as regular carrots-vitamin A, fiber, low-fat and beta-carotene-but with the convenience of a handy snack, says Alysun Deckert, of the food and nutrition department at the University of Washington Medical Center in Seattle.

23. Broccoli : While Pres. Bush I was known for his avoidance of this vitamin-enriched food, Pres. Bush II the runner would certainly benefit from broccoli's potassium content after one of his 5-k efforts. Steam your broccoli or sauté in garlic and oil (but make sure it's still crunchy indicating the nutrient content is not lost).

24. Cauliflower: For time-saving convenience, get ready-to-eat bags of cauliflower, and also broccoli, and munch raw as snacks or add to salads.

25. Asparagus: As with broccoli and cauliflower, munch asparagus raw as a snack, add to salads or steam for a source of vitamin A and potassium.

26. Lettuce : Dark-leaf lettuce has vitamin C, vitamin A, fiber and iron.

27. Sweet potato : Though potatoes are technically a starch, they are permitted into the veggie family on a waiver. The orangey sweet potatoes have carbs and vitamin A and with toppings are big enough to be a meal unto itself, says Ellen Coleman, author of *Eating For Endurance* and nutritional consultant for The Sports Clinic in Riverside, California. As the name says, these potatoes are sweet; add a pinch of margarine or butter and you're good to go.

Dairy: Get a Milk Moustache

28. Skim milk : Provides protein, carbs, calcium and potassium. Milk protein is absorbed well, says Penn State dietitian Christine Clark, adding, "No one over the age of 2 needs anything but skim."

29. Low-fat yogurt : Any kind, plain or with fruit, provides calcium, protein, carbs. Grab-and-go food.

30. Low-fat cheeses . Versatile choices like provolone, mozzarella and feta cheese are excellent for salads, sandwiches and snacking. Provides protein and carbs.

31. Frozen yogurt : Great fruity dessert or instead you can have lower-fat ice cream, within limits. (Normal ice cream portion size is a cup-and-a-half. Sorry, you can't eat the whole container.)

32. Milk-based soups : Add skim-milk to soup, advises Christine Clark, to increase protein intake. Excellent for broccoli and tomato soup. These soups are considered "volumetric"-they fill you up on fewer calories.

Meat/Fowl: Darker is Better

33. Lean roast beef: With an abundance of vitamin B, iron and zinc (which aids in healing), lean roast beef is the most nutrient-dense red meat, says Nancy Clark. As in bread and lettuce, the darker the meat, the more nutrients it contains (and the added iron is especially important for women). Have a roast beef sandwich (dark bread, of course) for a power-packed lunch.

34. Top round ground beef : The top cuts of beef and sirloin are leanest and provide needed protein. Have as part of a meal-an accompaniment-for portion control. Add to a stir fry or burrito, says iz Applegate.

35. Chicken : Have baked, grilled, or broiled but not fried. Lean protein but not as much iron as red meat.

36. Turkey : Similar to chicken. Have turkey sandwiches with tomato and dark-leaf lettuce for a nutrient-dense lunch.

37. Lamb : You'll get protein, iron and zinc in roast lamb but make sure you trim away the fat after cooking.

Protein Alternatives: Go Nuts

38. Soy milk : It's fortified with calcium and vitamin E. Also for those who are lactose intolerant.

39. Tofu : Made of soybean curd, tofu contains protein, important for bone health and neuromuscular function, says Samantha Heller, Ph.D, senior clinical nutritionist at New York University Medical Center, and an exercise physiologist. Get ready-made soy burgers, suggests Applegate, and crumble into pasta sauce. One patty has about 70 calories and no fat and plenty of potassium along with protein. Tofu is rich in phyto-chemicals associated with reduced risk of heart disease and cancer.

40. Nuts : Have nuts, like almonds or walnuts, several times a week, urges Applegate. Nuts contain heart-healthy fat. Add to dried fruit like cranberries for a mini-trail mix.

41. Peanut butter : Get the natural kind with oil on the top and no added ingredients. Though high in fat (about 16 grams per serving), it's the good fat and there's no cholesterol. Peanut butter on whole grain or multi-grain bread makes a great breakfast, says Heller.

Snacks: The 200 Calorie Dessert

42. Rice crackers : Crunchy, thin, digested well, give you energy, says Dorfman.

43. Organic brownie : Not as tasty as the real kind but only about 1 gram of saturated fat per serving and you get a good amount of carbos.

44. Baked chips : If chips are baked, not fried, there are only 110 calories per 1-ounce serving and no saturated fat. We said *one* serving.

45. Chocolate : "I eat chocolate every day," says Applegate. "Everyone is allowed up to 200 calories of their favorite treat daily." For example, 55 M&Ms, 20 peanut M&Ms or one Hostess cupcake (180 calories, which means you can also have 5 M&Ms).

Sidebar One: Quick Bites

*The darker the color of certain foods, like red meat, bread and lettuce, the more nutrients it contains.

*A healthy diet may include 2 to 4 portions of lean red meat per week.

*Red meat has roughly the same amount of cholesterol as in chicken or fish. Choose lean cuts to reduce *fat* content.

*Use the 80-20 approach to healthy eating: If 80 percent of your diet is nutrient-dense (a lot of nutrients per number of calories), then 20 percent can be lower in nutrient amounts.

*Studies show that eating fish one a week can reduce heart attack risk by about one-third.

*Protein is more important for runners than once believed. A 118-pound runner should take in 64 to 86 grams of protein per day.

*Apples are good for you but many other fruits have more nutrients. Says Nancy Clark, "An orange a day helps keep the doctor away."

Sidebar Two: Nutritional No-Nos

- *Pre-sweetened cereals: few nutrients and too much sugar.
- *Fish-and-chips: high in fat and wastes your fish choice.
- *Pure cream like whipped cream or sour cream (so have your baked potato with salt, pepper and parmesan): too much fat.
- *Spare ribs: high in saturated fat.
- *Iceberg lettuce: little nutritional value compared to other lettuce.

Sidebar Three: Steps To Improve Your Diet

Madelyn Fernstrom, Ph.D, director of the Weight Management Center at the UPMC Health System in Pittsburgh, suggests the following steps to improve your diet:

- *Make small dietary changes because they'll last. Radical changes don't.
- *Have 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day. Any combination is okay. Canned fruit is acceptable. Choose foods of many colors: orange, green, red. A cup of salad counts as one vegetable. Corn, peas and potatoes are "starchy carbo" and don't count. You don't need enormous variety and don't have to like everything.
- *Go to the market once a week and buy produce that's not going to rot quickly so they will be convenient to eat all week long. Keep a bag of apples in your place of work.
- *Consider portable food like liquid protein shakes and energy bars when you're on the go. It's better than skipping a meal. Don't rely on fruit alone as a meal because you'll go hungry.
- *Think before you eat. Avoid mindless eating. Acknowledge that you can choose to eat certain foods and not others. One study showed that the more food put in front of you, the more you eat. Don't eat "just because it's there."

FUN STUFF

YOU KNOW YOU'RE A RUNNER IF...

- you know what it means to hit the wall
- you know that tempo has nothing to do with music
- you know exactly how to explain tangents to a non-runner
- there's no such thing as too much pasta (or too many spaghetti dinners!)
- you suck if you don't show up to practice with a watch
- you spit
- you have been spit on, and not cared
- you spit on yourself, and you don't care
- you have been spiked
- tapering is heaven
- you know carbs are good
- you don't laugh when coach says "fartlek"
- you know how much time it takes for you to digest food before you run
- you know what PR's are
- you own more running shoes than regular shoes
- you enjoy running in the rain
- you can remember a time from a race 4 years ago, but you can't remember your friend's birthdays
- when you walk, you stick your hands in your pocket to feel your muscles flex.
- you are not embarrassed to show someone where your hamstring "really" hurts.
- you not only know how you did in a race, but you know exactly how every other runner finished
- you drive by a golf course, trail, or other open space and think what a nice place it would be to run
- you know splits are something that not only cheerleaders care about
- you get up earlier to run on the weekends than you do for school/work
- you have hundreds of safety pins scattered around your house or stuck to your jersey
- you think of distances in terms of mile repeats

- you own more than 50 t-shirts
- you can convert miles to km and back in your head in a second but only if it pertains to your race
- people think you are crazy
- you wear multicolored socks for no reason
- when someone asks you what you did today, you respond with a number
- you dream about running
- you run 2 miles during practice and tell your coach that was a nice warm-up
- you've mastered the evil eye to give to all competitors before a big race
- you enjoy racing your shadow
- your "nice" shoes are your new running shoes
- you come home with cuts and scrapes on your legs, and don't realize it until someone asks you what happened
- your water "bottle" is an old milk jug
- your friends get mad at you for constantly having to go to the bathroom because you drink so much water
- you have a regular clothes section and a running clothes section in your closet
- you don't blink an eye at \$100 for running shoes, but you have to think about \$100 for any other shoes
- you watch tv with bags of frozen peas strapped to your shin
- you have had at least one ice burn during the season
- you look at other people's running shoes to see if they really run
- you bring your dog out for a run and the dog has to stop and rest
- You run so you can eat donuts
- You hate running, but you love how it feels to finish a run