

Running 101

A guide to Walton High School's
Cross Country program



A publication of the
Walton Cinder Club

Welcome to Walton High School's 2008-2009 Cross Country season!

The purpose of this mini-guidebook is to help familiarize incoming 9th grade parents and others new to Walton running with some great information. It will also be useful to those already involved in the program.

Walton High School has had a very successful cross country and track program for many years. With an experienced coaching staff, committed athletes and involved parents, the program continues to build on each year's successes.

We are glad you are part of this year's cross country program and hope that you will join the Walton Cinder Club (see information about the organization in this booklet).

We look forward to your involvement and another exciting season!

Michael Smith
Walton Cinder Club President 2008-2009

Walton Cinder Club

The Walton Cinder Club is a 501c3 nonprofit organization created to support Walton's running programs. The Cobb County School System provides only a fraction of the financial resources needed for the athletes and coaches in a program as large as Walton. The Cinder Club supports our program through fundraising and volunteer coordination.

The Cinder Club is managed by an elected board of 12 parent volunteers who help ensure the club operates effectively. Board members, who must be paid members of the Cinder Club, are elected at the organization's annual meeting each May and serve a one-year term. The club is operated according to the organization's bylaws. Board meetings are typically held the second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. in WHS' media center.

Membership dues and fundraising activities help defray the cost of team T-shirts, transportation to meets, meet entry fees, team trips, coaching supplements, hospitality for athletes at the meets, awards and much more.

All parents are encouraged to join the Cinder Club and participate in its fundraising events. Dues are \$275 for the cross country season. If for any reason these costs present a financial hardship, please contact the club president or membership chair. In the past, extended payment plans have been provided to meet families' needs.

How can you get involved? Support our program by joining and participating in the Walton Cinder Club!

Walton Cinder Club programs/functions

Cinder Club hosts, coordinates, and pays for numerous functions and initiatives throughout the school year for athletes and their parents. For specific details about each of these, please see www.waltonfxc.com. These initiatives include:

Athlete pool party - A fun get-together held on a weekday evening in August prior to the start of school at a neighborhood pool. Chaperones are parent volunteers. Minimal charge.

Parent social - Another fun get-together held on a weekend night every August prior to the start of school. This is a great opportunity for athletes' parents to meet other parents and ask questions of them and the team's coaches. Minimal charge.

Potluck Dinner/Cross Country season kick-off meeting - Typically held one evening the first week of school in the Walton Commons. All athletes and parents are invited to attend. Each family is asked to bring a covered dish to share with other participants. Drinks and paper products are provided. At this meeting, parents may also pay their Cinder Club dues, sign up for volunteer opportunities, order team sweats, meet coaches and athletes, etc., and learn more about the upcoming season. Athletes who ran and turned in their summer mileage to Coach Williams are also recognized with a special mileage T-shirt.

Team T-shirts - Each athlete will receive a cotton, team T-shirt (compliments of the Cinder Club) at the potluck dinner/meeting. Seniors typically design this shirt that is worn by the athletes throughout the season.

Summer Mileage T-shirts - Runners who train a minimum of 200 miles during the summer will receive a special cotton, short-sleeve mileage T-shirt containing their total mileage (in increments of 200, 300, 400, etc.) These shirts will be awarded at the potluck dinner/meeting. See fundraising section below for more information about summer mileage.

Big Peach special time for WHS XC athletes- Each year in August and January, Big Peach - a local running apparel/shoe store on Johnson Ferry - will host the team's athletes on a special day/night just for them to purchase any needed running apparel at a discount. Look/listen for announcements about the date/time.

Athlete apparel – (See Athlete apparel section for more info)

Parent apparel- Parents may also purchase apparel that reflects team spirit at the fall potluck dinner/meeting. These items may be worn to meets to show team pride.

Hospitality – After-race snacks are provided for athletes at selected meets. Parents will receive communications throughout the season regarding volunteering to bring a snack to a meet. These snacks include bananas, grapes, bagels, etc.

Team photos – Team and individual pictures are taken each season at Walton. Information about ordering and paying for pictures should come home with each athlete about one week prior to the photo session. Money is due at the time of ordering. The photos are taken in Walton's stadium and are typically available for pick-up at the banquet. Athletes must wear their team uniforms in the photos. Smile!

Team trip - Each season the cross country team travels overnight by coach bus to a selected destination in the Southeast for a race. Following the race, the team will picnic or participate in a special planned activity before returning home. The destination typically is changed annually. The Cinder Club pays for a portion of the trip's cost, and athletes' families are responsible for the remainder. Parent volunteers are requested to assist coaches as chaperones on this trip. A ratio of no greater than one parent/coach to 15 athletes will provide supervision on each trip. Every effort is also made to ensure all persons' safety. This trip is a great opportunity for athletes to build camaraderie with each other and the coaches.

Volunteer opportunities (see Volunteer section for more info)

Athlete/Team Apparel

- Uniforms** The team uniform consists of a singlet and a pair of running shorts. These can be purchased at the Big Peach store on Johnson Ferry Road in Marietta. All athletes must wear the team's uniform to participate in all races. **Each athlete is responsible for purchasing his/her own uniform.**
- Sweats** Each team member is **required** to have a team sweat shirt and sweat pants to wear to meets. These can be ordered at the mandatory parents' meeting/potluck dinner the first week of school. Please order by the deadline to ensure delivery before the first meet. Contact the club's sweats coordinator with questions.
- Shoes** Your feet are important! Make sure you have proper running shoes and socks. A general rule of thumb for running shoes is they last about 400 miles or one cross country season. For proper fitting, go to a running store and ask for assistance. If you tell the local running store you run for Walton, most give a discount.
- Watch** Runners will often need to keep track of both their times on distance runs and in specific workouts. It is very important for each runner to have a running watch and to wear it to practice each day. There are many inexpensive running watches that have everything you need on them to time your runs.
- Team bag** If desired, athletes may also order a team bag personalized with their last name. These may be ordered at the potluck dinner/kick-off meeting. Athletes use these to carry their team apparel and other personal items to the meets.
- Spikes** Spiked shoes can also be purchased to wear when competing. Since most races are held on grass and dirt, spiked shoes can help with traction and speed. A spiked shoe has five to seven metal spikes inserted into small holes on the forward part of the shoe. When buying spiked shoes, make sure to purchase a distance running or cross country pair. This shoe should have a medium to thick-cushioned heel.

If no changes are made, your uniform and sweats can last the four years you are in high school! Write your name on each piece!

Fundraisers -

Stage Races - Walton Cinder Club coordinates this annual meet held in August. The two-mile races are conducted in “stages.” Each athlete on the team is selected by the head coach to run in one of five stage races that morning. Parent volunteers are needed to assist with the race.

Walton Raider Chase - Each year the club sponsors a 5K race and one-mile fun run the first Saturday in February to kick off the spring track season. Proceeds are used to benefit the Walton running program, including improvements to the school’s track & field venue. Parent volunteers are needed in many capacities, including sponsorship, race-day check in, race course monitors, etc. In addition, a social/silent auction is held the night before the race and is also open to the public. If you or your business would like to be a race sponsor, please contact Michael Smith at: “mikesmith@ideallc.com”. All contributions are tax-deductible and are greatly appreciated.

Team banquet- Following the conclusion of the fall season, all athletes and their families, and coaches are invited to participate in the annual banquet. This event is held to recognize the athletes’ and team’s accomplishments during the season.

Senior gifts - Each senior athlete will receive a special gift to commemorate his/her involvement in Walton’s running program. These gifts are distributed at the banquet at the end of the season.

Coach gifts - Because the Cobb County School System provides limited funding to each school’s coaches for cross country and track, Cinder Club dues and monetary contributions from parents are used to award our coaches for the countless hours they have worked with our athletes during practices and at meets. This is an acceptable standard practice for sports programs at Walton.

Cross Country

What is cross country?

Cross country is a team sport of long distance running. Practices and races are usually held on an open terrain consisting of woods, fields, and hills. Terrains differ for each race.

What distances are normally run?

Most of our races will be 5Ks. The National Federation of High School Associations has set a minimum of distance of 2.5 kilometers (**a little less than 1.5 miles**) and a maximum of 5K (3.1 miles).

How is cross country scored?

- Cross country is different from most sports because the lowest score wins. The boys race is separate from the girl's race. Varsity races are separate from JV races. Varsity events are run with a maximum of seven athletes per team. Some JV events are open and allow more runners.
- As each athlete finishes the race, he/she is given a place card while in the chutes. Each athlete should give this card to his/her coach as soon as possible after the race; the coach then turns the team's cards into the meet scorer.
- The places of the first five athletes on each team are added together to determine the team score. The sixth and seventh runners contribute by finishing ahead of other teams' top five runners and increasing their scores.
- In the event of a tie with another team, the sixth athlete's places are compared to determine the winner (some states will compare the fifth runner.)
- It is important for the team to finish as close together as possible. For example, a finish of 1,3,4,6 and 83, (a score of 97) will lose to a team finishing 16, 17, 19, 21, and 23 (with a score of 96).

WHS Cross Country Team Mission Statement & Rules

Each season all athletes and their parents will be asked to review the team's mission statement and team policies and sign a statement agreeing to abide by these rules. The policy is printed beginning on the next page.

Mission Statement

The Walton Cross Country team is conducted in the understanding that high school athletics primarily serves to prepare young people for the next level of life. It is the goal of the coaches and staff to have participation in cross country act as a unique and positive force in the lives of our young people and their community. To accomplish this, the focus will be on promoting the ideals of school spirit, teamwork, hard work, discipline, personal sacrifice, leadership and sportsmanship. Decisions will be made in this context, and will not be overridden by the wishes of an individual team member or made with a "win at all costs" mentality.

With this mission in mind, certain ground rules must be applied to all individuals on the cross country team. These rules are designed with the intent of creating an environment where the ideals of Walton Cross country are reflected in each participant's day-to-day activities.

Policy for Athletes and Parents

1. First and foremost is the issue of attendance. This is a junior varsity and varsity level sport, and we expect your attendance each and every day. We will be taking attendance each afternoon throughout the season, and we expect team members to arrive at practice on time (4 p.m.) and to remain at practice until a coach excuses them. Practices are usually completed by 5:45 p.m., and you should plan to be at the river until that time. If you have an after-school job, inform your employer you will not be able to arrive at work until well after 6 p.m. If you have an emergency or an excused absence and simply cannot attend practice (excused absences include prearranged doctor visits & agreed upon school functions), be sure to contact your coach and let them know that you will not be at practice and why. Do not give the responsibility of contacting your coach to someone else. You and only you may contact your coach.

2. Should you fail to comply with the above attendance policy you will be held out of the next scheduled meet. Three unexcused attendance offenses are grounds for dismissal from the team.

3. Athletes are required to attend practice the day before a meet, for this is when important information on the meet is passed to the athletes. Failure to do so, without arrangements made directly with a coach, will result in being left off the roster for that respective meet.

4. We expect each athlete to have a team uniform and to wear the required uniform on competition days. Each athlete must also conform to all GHSA rules regarding competition uniforms.

5. Athletes will follow the coaches' instructions and directions at practices and meets. This is for the athletes' safety. Coaches can also monitor individual and group progress. Consequences for failure to comply to coaches' instructions and directions are as follows:

- First offense – verbal warning

- Second offense – suspension from practice as well as all team activities

- Third offense – suspension for three practices and all team activities plus one meet

- Fourth offense – suspension for an indefinite period of time or dismissal from the team.

6. Individual athletes will not have a private coach during the team season (defined as the first practice until the last meet in which an athlete participates). Or participate in races/competitions that are not part of the Walton Cross Country team's schedule, without knowledge and consent of the Walton coaching staff. This is necessary so the coaches can design the best program possible for each athlete.

7. We expect you to treat your teammates, coaches and competitors with respect. Violation of this rule will result in the same consequences as stated in rule five above.

Failure to comply with these policies will result in the disciplinary action and/or dismissal from the team as outlined above.

Cross Country Meets

Meets are normally scheduled on Saturday mornings. Meets may last a few hours or all day, depending on the organization and number of entries. All athletes are encouraged to watch and cheer on their teammates run in other races before or after their race. Athletes are typically requested by the head coach to arrive at meets at least **one hour** prior to their race so they have time to warm up. See the meet schedule each week for specific information. Directions to the races may be found on the team's website.

Most meets will have four races, usually 30 minutes apart. The four races are varsity boys and girls and JV boys and girls.

According to the Georgia High School Athletic Association, varsity athletes may only compete in 10 races during the season and junior varsity athletes may compete in seven races. The head coach will select which athletes will run each week in which races mostly based on their performance from the last race(s). Athletes selected to run in the varsity races at the region and state meets are those athletes who have typically shown the most consistency throughout the season.

What to Bring?

Pack your bag the night before a meet! You will leave too early the morning of a meet to pack then. Wear your Walton singlet and shorts under your sweat pants and sweat shirt. Be sure to pack your running shoes, an extra pair of shoes for after the race, extra socks, watch, dry clothes, a drink, etc.

Transportation to/from meets

Transportation for athletes to/from meets is typically the parents' responsibility. Other than the out-of-town team bus trip, parents usually drive athletes to most meets. Runners are not permitted to drive themselves to these meets. If an athlete needs a ride to a race, parents may contact a Cinder Club member who is assisting in coordinating rides to that particular race. He/she will strive to place your athlete with a parent who has room in his/her vehicle for extra riders.

Post-race

Runners will stretch and do a “cool down” run with their teammates shortly after finishing the race and turning in their finish cards. They can change into dry clothes at this time if necessary. Runners are encouraged to stay for the awards session upon the conclusion of the race, too. It’s fun for our team to be rewarded after training well!

Lettering

Lettering standards are available on the team’s website. Each grade and sex has different standards to achieve to earn a letter for the season. Those athletes who earn more than one letter in the sport each year they participate will receive a bar (pin). See the website for the standards.

Spectators

- Cross country is not the typical spectator sport because spectators cannot see the entire race from one location.
- Spectators may want to pick their spot(s) prior to the race start for best viewing of the race.
- Spectators are encouraged to help cheer on **all** Walton athletes.
- Come dressed in Walton apparel to identify yourself as a WHS supporter and show your school spirit!
- Parents may also want to bring a comfortable chair to sit in while waiting for the races to begin. Look for the WHS team tent or flag to identify the team’s staging area.
- Bring your camera. Photos of all athletes are compiled in a slide show for the banquet, and volunteer photographers are always needed to assist.
- Abide by parent code of conduct included in this handbook.

General information

Physicals

Prior to participating in any Walton athletic program, each athlete must have his/her physician complete the Cobb County athletic physical, insurance and consent form. This form is available in WHS' front office. The form is valid for the entire school year so no additional form will be needed if your athlete chooses to participate in track & field in the spring. Physicals are offered at WHS one Saturday morning in May each year. Cost is \$25, and all athletes may participate.

Running Camp

Many of the athletes participate in U.S. Sports Camps' cross country running program at the University of North Carolina in Asheville one week in mid-July. While the camp is optional, it is a great opportunity for team members to train and socialize with other high school runners. Contact www.USSportsCamps.com for more information. Sign-up information is typically available on this website beginning each January.

Diet

A proper diet is critical to the success of each runner. It is important that you provide your body with the proper type of fuel it will need. Some good foods are fruits (bananas!), bagels, red meat (to avoid anemia), pasta, and vegetables. Water and sports drinks are great! Try to avoid soft drinks, candy, junk food, and fried foods. Detailed nutritional requirements for athletes can be obtained from the coaches related to specific areas (such as pre-race meals), but generally common sense prevails. A good balanced diet will help an athlete run better and avoid injury.

Training

For runners who pass the time trial in early August, practices are held each weekday (unless communicated otherwise by the head coach) after school at the Chattahoochee River Park on Columns Drive beginning the first day of school. Prior to the start of school, practices are held at the river in the mornings. Remaining runners will practice at the WHS stadium each weekday after school until they pass the time trial. Coaches will supervise practices at both locations.

Practice runs are comprised of conditioning drills and runs of different distances. If an athlete has not been training on a regular basis, he/she will probably experience muscle soreness and various aches and pains. This is not necessarily a sign of injury, but is usually a normal adaptation of the body to this new stress.

On the first day of school, go by the locker room at Walton and choose a locker so you will have a place to put your practice clothes (buy a lock!). Athletes typically wear shorts, a T-shirt and running shoes to practice. On cool days, please bring your sweats to put on immediately after practice. In addition, athletes may also want to bring water or a sports drink for after their run.

Injuries

Athletes should discuss any aches or pains with a member of the coaching staff so that adjustments can possibly be made to the training schedule to prevent injuries or stop injuries before they become disabling. When an injured athlete informs the coaching staff about a problem, the staff can make a recommendation about treatment.

Summer practices

These practices are typically held each weekday morning at the river and are led by rising senior athletes. Athletes are encouraged to train with other team members during the summer. Pre-season workouts are essential to build a fitness base for intensive workouts and races during the season. Most athletes typically train 200 to 400 miles during the summer to prepare for the season.

Qualifying standards

Time trials for **all** prospective team members are held at WHS's track one evening in early August. All 10th, 11th, and 12th grade athletes must meet the minimum number of laps for their grade level to be able to participate in Walton cross country. Rising 9th graders will earn the opportunity to train at the river or the track based on the 12-minute run. No freshmen will be cut from the team, but competition standards must be achieved before competing. All athletes must pass the time trial to practice at the river. Runners will be given three opportunities to pass the time trial. See the team's website for more information about dates and times. The time trials will be conducted by the coaching staff.

Transportation to/from practices

The Cobb County School System does not provide transportation to athletic events off campus except for authorized competitions where the Cinder Club pays the cost of transportation. Each parent is responsible for providing transportation for his/her own athlete to/from practices. Parents may transport their athletes or find carpools with other parents. In addition, upper classmen historically provide transportation to younger athletes to the river since they have parking privileges at school. At the parents' social and potluck dinner, ask around for phone numbers and rides if needed.

At the beginning of the season, parents will be asked to sign a hold harmless agreement that acknowledges parental consent and waives the right to file suit in the event of injury caused by an accident.

For parents or athletes wanting to park at the river on a regular basis, you will want to purchase an annual parking pass for \$25 from the Chattahoochee Recreational Area; otherwise, parking is \$3 per vehicle per day. Information about parking should be available at the river at the Columns Drive parking area.

Inclement weather

Athletes run in all types of weather and should come dressed or be prepared accordingly for practices and meets. Practices are typically only cancelled when it is lightning or when after-school activities are cancelled by the Cobb County School System. During hot training days the coaching staff uses a “wet bulb” thermometer and measures at the practice location, and is very diligent about following the county guidelines. Athletes should listen to WHS’s afternoon announcements regarding any possible cancellations before heading to practice. Meet cancellation notices will be emailed to parents on the team’s distribution group list or communicated on the team’s website.

Race and practice schedules

During the season, Coach Williams will provide each athlete with a two-week practice schedule. Your athlete should **bring this home** from practice about every two weeks. If you don’t see it, ask him/her about it. Detailed information about upcoming meets, including specifics about what races your athlete will be participating in, is also given to each athlete at practice to bring home to parents!

Coaching staff

Walton’s coaching staff is led by Tom Williams, who is entering his 18th season as head coach. (Read more information about him on the team’s website.) In addition, assistant coaches, including community coaches, work tirelessly with our athletes. Regardless of whether your son or daughter has the opportunity to compete in all of the meets, every athlete benefits from more than 150 hours of coaching from a qualified team of coaches.

Walton Cinder Club Parent Code of Conduct

Because the Walton Cinder Club recognizes the important role that cross country/track& field plays in the lives of our teams' athletes, the board has adopted a parent code of conduct for all athletes' parents to follow, effective Jan. 10, 2006.

Participate in my child's team activities in accordance with the following rules:

- Promote sportsmanship, teamwork, and a competitive spirit for players and spectators in a positive manner.
- Don't question the judgment call of an official.
- Support my child's team and coaching staff and resolve to allow the coaches to manage the team as they feel best benefits the entire team.

Because we, as Cinder Club parents, are role models for our child(ren) as well as others, personal conduct at meets, practices and other team events must be above reproach and representative of the highest standards of morality and sportsmanship. Therefore, all parents shall:

- Exhibit exemplary behavior for athletes, other parents, and spectators at all meets and practices.
- Be in control of emotions and considerate of the team's collective emotions.
- Not make disparaging remarks of any type with regard to officials, opposing team members, or coaches, or publicly criticize or demean them in the course of any event.

Failure to abide by any of these rules may result in the Cinder Club filing a concern with the school's administration for possible action.

Any questions regarding program or issues: Please feel free to contact the president/vice president or any member of the board should you have any questions or concerns with the athletic program. There is a wealth of parental experience within the club and organization to help parents familiarize with the program.

Running Terms

5K	3.1 miles (typical distance for high school races)
PR	Personal record – your fastest race time for a specific distance.
Strides	Gradual acceleration to a sprint then a deceleration.
Spikes	A shoe that will have five to seven spikes inserted into small holes on the forward part of the shoe, which helps with traction and speed. Used to run in races.
Workout	A run specifically designed by the coaches to mimic or prepare an athlete for races that are usually more exhausting than other easier runs during the week. Workouts generally occur on Mondays and Wednesdays during the week.
Easy run	Athlete can run at a conversational pace.
Splits	The accumulated time at various intervals during a race (usually each mile) showing an athlete's progress. Coaches will provide athletes with information about their splits after the race to help make sure they are pacing themselves properly.
Hydration	Ensuring the athlete's body has enough water to perform at his/her maximum potential.

Advice for Successful Summer Training

Coach Williams has provided the following information for successful summer training.

- Prior to beginning any running or exercise program, make sure your physician approves.
- Athletes should never run in the woods alone at the river.
- Many running injuries occur as a result of deterioration of the athlete's running shoes. Shoes that have deteriorated may cause the runner to suffer shin splints, stress fractures and other leg, ankle and/or foot ailments.
- One of the most common injuries in sports is a stress fracture. A stress fracture is an overuse injury that occurs when muscles become fatigued and are unable to absorb added shock. Eventually, the fatigued muscle transfers the overload of stress to the bone causing a tiny crack called a stress fracture. Stress fractures often are the result of increasing the amount or intensity of an activity too rapidly. They can also be caused by the impact of an unfamiliar surface or improper equipment (shoes). Many times a runner who does not run during the summer is injured by increasing his/her training too rapidly in the fall. The likelihood of a stress fracture increases as bone mass decreases. Therefore, all runners should eat three regular meals, snacks and maintain a healthy diet. If a runner believes he/she has a stress fracture, he/she should see a doctor as soon as possible. Usually the best treatment is rest. Please follow your doctor's instructions.
- Anemia has also been a problem that runners need to be aware of. Anemia causes a decrease in the number of circulating red blood cells or insufficient hemoglobin. Anemia will negatively interfere with a runner's athletic performance. Some signs of anemia are: decreased performance when running at a maximum pace; tiredness; weakness; and paleness. Maintaining an adequate iron intake can help prevent anemia that is related to exercise. Please consult with a doctor if you believe you might be suffering from anemia. The athlete's ferritin level should be tested as well as his/her hemoglobin level. Ferritin levels give a truer indication of a person's iron levels. Follow the doctor's instructions.

- Summers in Georgia are usually hot and humid. Avoid training during the middle of the day. Drink plenty of fluids before, during and immediately after you finish training. **The most important hydration time is the day before the meet.** A muscular athlete is mostly water. Avoid drinks with caffeine or carbonation.
- Get between eight to ten hours of sleep each night.
 - o **A determined and scheduled bed-time each night is imperative to the well trained athlete's success.**
- Year-round training consistency is important also.

Strategy checklist for Cross Country (or winning techniques on the race course)

The start

- To avoid being jostled, boxed-in, or forced to use a very short stride (all of which are energy wasters), get away from the line quickly and assume a natural running stride as soon as possible.
- When starting, use a semi-upright type of stance, weight on the front foot, body coiled with the center of gravity well forward and low. Drive from the front foot and move the rear foot out quickly.

Pace

- By the time you run your first race, you will have some knowledge (through drills and practices) of what pace you can run. In the race, avoid beating yourself by expending too much energy early and having nothing left for the finish or going too slowly and having too much left at the end.
- Give your all! Distribute all of your energy equally over the entire course so that 10 yards past the finish line you feel as if you cannot run another step (because you shouldn't be able to).

Check out

- If you feel yourself tiring, "check out" (lift your knees more and increase your stride) and you will feel less tired due to the change in pace and you will not slow your pace, which loses races.

Think

- Races can be lost by runners going to sleep mentally. Stay alert at all times and keep thinking of the race and change tactics according to conditions when necessary and only when necessary.

After the race

- Thinking continues after the race is over. Review your tactics while they are still fresh in your mind so you can profit from any mistakes you might have made, or any tactics that worked particularly well.

Know your opponent

- By knowing your opponent's strengths and weaknesses, you will be better able to run a race designed to beat them. Study all possible reports about opposing teams and use information to your advantage.

Know the course

- The better you know a course, the better race you will run. If practical, always practice on the course you will run the race on. If this is impractical, walk or warm up on the course if possible.

Single file areas

- Know where the single file areas are—just before them is a good place to pass your opponent. Never let your opponent pass you before going into one of these areas.

Avoid getting boxed in

- Know situations where getting boxed in is possible. If one comes up, simply run on the outside shoulder of the runner in front of you.

Passing

- Whenever you pass, do it quickly and smoothly giving the impression of being fresh. Do not settle back in stride too quickly, you may be re-passed.

Passing on hills

- One of the best places to pass an opponent is when going uphill. Many times you have them “beat” right there. Remember, however; don’t expend too much energy. Only pass when you are sure you have “enough.”

Blind turns

- Just after you have made a blind turn is a good time to increase your speed. It is disheartening for your opponent to come around the turn and find you have increased your lead. By the same token, as soon as your opponent takes a blind turn, increase your speed so you can hold your ground or pick up on them.

Group running

- In group running, two or more runners of about the same ability stay together during the majority of the race. If the slower runner can keep “glued” to the faster runner (and they usually will) your team will finish better.

The Finish

- At the finish, you are no longer a distance runner - you become a sprinter. Make the necessary changes in your form and run through the finish line. If you run as if the finish line is 10 yards past the actual line, you will never get caught at the wire.

Volunteer Opportunities

Many volunteer opportunities exist for parents throughout the season. All parents are encouraged to participate in some way. It is a fun way to meet other parents and athletes! See opportunities listed below.

Hospitality - assist by bringing fruit or baked goods to races for after-race snacks. Contact hospitality chair to assist.

Stage Races - assist in a variety of roles as the Cinder Club co-coordinates this event at Gainesville College with Peachtree Ridge High School each August. Watch for communications for requests for volunteers.

Photographers - Always needed! Take pictures of athletes running and socializing at races. These photos will be compiled into a slide show to be shown at the banquet. Amateur photographers are great; you don't have to be a professional photographer to volunteer.

Photo editor - Assist in selecting one to two photos each week to be used on the team's website. Combine photos taken by others into a slide show for the banquet.

Team photo coordinator - Schedule team photo day with pre-selected local photographer. Help to organize athletes into group photos on photo day. Bring photos to the banquet and coordinate distribution.

Team overnight trip chaperone - Chaperones, particularly female parents, are typically needed for this annual team trip. Chaperones will ride the team bus to/from school, assist the coaches, and help oversee the safety of all athletes to ensure a fun trip for all.

Banquet - assist with set-up and/or clean-up at annual banquet. Contact hospitality chair to assist.

Senior gifts - Order senior gifts, wrap and bring to the banquet.

Cinder Club Board 2008-2009

Name	Responsibility	Home	Email
Michael Smith	President	404-516-4830	mikesmith@ideallc.com
Chris Harper	VP/Volunteers	770-598-9938	harper.c@comcast.net
Roger Hefflefinger	Treasurer		rhfin@bellsouth.net
Susan Jenkins	Membership		swoodskey@aol.com
Kathy Womack	Travel		kathylwomack1@aol.com
Charlie Bunn	Communications		charles.h.bunn@lmco.com
Vivian Jackson	Hospitality		vivianmjackson@bellsouth.net
Chris Riley	Raider Chase Chair		Chris.Riley@cbre.com
Mark Rayfield	Raider Chase		mar3@CDC.GOV
Wendy English	Purchasing		wendy.c.english@gmail.com
Dave Laskey	Volunteers		dlaskey08@aol.com

Communications

Team website: Find lots of information, including race results and photos, directions to races, upcoming event info, and membership and order forms on this website. Please access this website frequently throughout the season for up-to-date information.

Walton Cross Country and Track & Field website address is:

www.waltonfxc.com

Email communications: By providing your home, work, or both email addresses at the beginning of the season to the Cinder Club, you will be able to be part of our club's email distribution group and receive important information throughout the season. Please provide both parents' email addresses if both parents wish to receive these emails.

Any questions regarding program or issues: Please feel free to contact the president/vice president or any member of the board should you have any questions or concerns with the athletic program. There is a wealth of parental experience within the club and organization to help parents familiarize with the program.

Coach's handouts: Your athlete will bring home a handout weekly or every two weeks. This handout provides practice and meet information, directions to races, etc. Ask your athlete to see this important handout regularly!

Walton Running 101 handbook: Published by the Cinder Club, this new booklet should answer many questions for parents and athletes about the Cinder Club, training, racing, apparel, etc.