



**Lawrence Central High School**  
**Cross Country**  
**2017 Team Manual**

*Created and compiled by Coach Jon Kowalczyk – Updated 5/17/17*

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## Coach Kowalczyk's Coaching Philosophy

Coach Kowalczyk's Coaching Philosophy is as follows. Running and competing must be enjoyable in order for the athletes and coaching staff to experience success. Athletes will not always find enjoyment in running unless they are able to have success. Cross Country success can be defined in various ways including, but not limited to:

- Attaining a new personal best time
  - For your career
  - For the season
  - On that specific course
- Beating a competitor for the first time
- Achieving an award or accolade such as All-Conference
- Achieving a team success such as winning a meet
- Achieving a certain, measureable amount of fitness
- The attainment of new skills and/or discovery of new talents
- The steadfast knowledge that every effort was given and nothing was left in the tank!

**“If you do what we ask you to do, the victories will belong to you, and the losses to me.”**

**Coach Dean Smith**

The head coach is responsible for creating and implementing a pre-designed plan that creates an opportunity for all athletes to attain the goals and successes that they want to accomplish. The athlete is responsible for putting in the work and following the plan laid out by the coaching staff in order to attain their goals. As success is achieved, athletes and coaches will find more and more enjoyment in Cross Country.

In order for both the coaching staff and the athletes to do their parts in attaining success, the following will be expected out of all our XC athletes this season:

**Bring a positive attitude and motivation to compete** in every practice and meet. Sports are supposed to be fun, but they are also meant to be competitive. The coaching staff is confident that athletes will get more out of every moment in Cross Country if they are positive and they are able to motivate and push each other.

**Bring consistency and focus** to every practice and meet. While Cross Country is supposed to be fun, it is all important to realize that Cross Country at LCHS is not all about fun and games. LCXC is also about competing and trying to gain as much team and individual success as possible. In order to do that, ALL athletes must be consistent and focused about everything we do.

**Don't let your teammates down.** This phrase has been a part of LC running for over 30 years. Whether they are in the classroom, walking LC's halls, running at practice, or competing at a meet, athletes are expected to do the best they can in all facets of high school life. While not everyone is perfect, the LCXC Coaching staff believes if all athletes live out this simple phrase, then we will see success explode out on the course.

**Trust the coaches and the training plan.** They have studied the sport and they are continually learning more and more as time goes on. Ask questions and communicate, but trust the decisions of the coaching staff.

**Get better each and every day.** Every time you come to a workout, whether it is a morning run or a tough workout after school, you need to do everything you can to be better than you were the day before. Make sure your drills are crisp, finish your runs faster and stronger than the day before, continue to find new ways to push yourself and others...these are all ways to get better. Getting better, can also extend to the hallways, the classrooms, and even at home. Let's get better every day in every way.

These five components will help each and every athlete (and coach!) achieve success while a part of the LCXC family.



## The Lawrence Central Distance Training Program

At Lawrence Central, distance runners will very rarely have an easy day. All days are mainly medium to hard in workload. The goal of our training is for our athletes to achieve consistency and to improve in everything they do. Every workout has a purpose and every day is an opportunity for athletes to get better.

Cross Country is an endurance sport. All athletes are trained to endure various temperatures (hot or cold), rain or snow, mental exhaustion, muscle fatigue, and even personal limits of endurance. This cannot be achieved in the matter of a few months. In order to be successful at running Cross Country, all athletes must put in the time and the work.

**Summer Conditioning (Phase I)** – During this phase of training, athletes run to gain a solid aerobic base for the actual Cross Country season. Athletes will learn about the different types of running (Maintenance Runs, Lactic Threshold Runs, Tempo Runs, etc.) as well as how to run during those particular workouts. It is during this phase that bonds and relationships are created (or strengthened) between the runners and the coaches. Traditions are both started and renewed (Summer Camp, Skits, nicknames, day trips, etc.). While summer conditioning is not mandatory, it is highly encouraged and expected, especially for those athletes planning on running at the Varsity level. Our summer conditioning program is important and your participation in it can and most likely will directly affect how your teammates and coaches view you as an athlete.

**The Regular Season (Phase II)** – This phase begins on the first official day of XC practice (Monday July 31<sup>st</sup>). All athletes are expected to attend practices and meets regularly (see attendance policy). Those athletes who did the summer conditioning will find that all of their hard work pays off as the practice regime is amped up (increased mileage based on the athlete, workouts are focused to specific parts of a runner's race, race strategies are discussed and developed, etc.) and athletes are prepared for the various XC meets/invites. Athletes begin the routine of regular after school practices as well as Saturday meets (there are a few meets that take place during the week).



**The Championship Season (Phase III)** – This phase begins the week of the MIC Championship Meet and continues until the end of our XC season. Training is narrowed down to focus even more on specific elements that an athlete needs to improve in order to find success in the IHSAA tournament. Athletes will notice that the workload diminishes while the intensity of practice increases.

**The Offseason (Phase IV)** – After the Cross Country season comes to a close, many of our athletes will be exhausted and even glad that the daily grind has come to an end. But, like all competitors, athletes will not want to sit around and let their aerobic base disappear. Studies prove that distance runners need to continue to run on a regular basis in order to maintain their level of fitness and be able to compete in the future. The coaching staff will ensure that practice days will be decreased along with the workload and intensity of those workouts. This phase is dedicated to maintaining an athlete's level of fitness while also ensuring that they do not burn themselves out. It is also important to point out that, while not required, all Cross Country runners are expected to run track & field in the spring. Several of our athletes who have found moderate success on the cross country course have found even more success out on the track, running events that may be more tailored to their specific running style and ability. It is important to note that every one of LC's historically great distance runners have participated in both Cross Country and Track & Field. During this phase, the coaching staff will also look for additional race opportunities so athletes can continue to hone their competitive skills.

## Team Expectations

The following is a list of expectations for all runners in the LCXC program.

- 1) Being successful academically is a student-athlete's first priority. **It is important for each athlete to manage their time and school work in such a way as not to have to miss practice or competitions.** If a problem does develop, athletes must be sure to work closely with their teachers, their parents, and their coaches to resolve the issue.
  - a. Coach K will be regularly checking each student's web grades. If a student-athlete has an "F" in one class the week of a meet, then he/she will not run as a varsity athlete at that meet. They will still be allowed to run in the JV race (with the permission of their parents). IF they have two or more "F's" they will sit out meets until grades improve.
- 2) All athletes will be expected to follow LCHS guidelines and policies. If a problem or incident is discovered or brought to the attention of the head coach, actions may be taken to help deter future problems (sitting out of meets or another form of appropriate & approved consequence).
- 3) Each athlete is expected to represent themselves in a positive and adult-like manner at all practices and meets. Disrespect to opponents, officials, teammates, or coaches will not be tolerated and is subject to disciplinary action.
- 4) Attendance at practices and meets is mandatory. **Excused absences must be arranged in advance with the head coach.** Once school is in session, athletes will be expected to be ready to practice no later than 3:55pm. Tardiness will not be tolerated. Practice will usually last no more than 2 to 2.5 hours. **Our attendance policy will be used to help ensure proper commitment and attendance.**
- 5) Profanity, drinking, smoking, and drug use are prohibited. Athletes will be subject to Lawrence Central policies. Attending parties or events where illegal activities are taking place (even if the athlete is not participating in a specific illegal activity) could result in team disciplinary action.
- 6) All athletes will be required to purchase the fees and practice package (in a timely fashion). **In cases of financial hardship, athletes are expected to contact the Head Coach. Wearing the issued uniforms and clothing to all meets is required.**
- 7) **All athletes are required to travel to and from all events in school-approved vehicles. Exceptions need to be submitted by email by the parent to the Head Coach in advance.** Athletes will only be allowed to leave events with a parent or legal guardian.

## 2017 LCXC ALL IN Running Camp

The LCXC program will be heading out to Whitewater Memorial State Park for our annual summer running camp. We will leave on Tuesday July 11th through Saturday July 15<sup>th</sup>. At camp we will be able to step up our training while also taking various opportunities to grow closer as a team. Our goal is to take athletes who are ALL IN and who are in shape, ready for the focused rigors of our training. This is our running camp to jump-start the season. To be considered for the trip to camp, runners must do the following:

1. Consistently show up to practice throughout the summer and show a desire to help our program succeed.
2. Show that you want and desire to become stronger and faster for the upcoming season.

If the coaches feel you have not put in the right effort in showing that you are ALL IN, you will not be attending camp. Athletes chosen must also fill out the Camp Permission slip and pay their \$75 for camp.

## Attendance Policy

1. Arrive to practice on time (unless coming from MCC or LN). Late = 50 push-ups.
2. No call/no show to a mandatory practice = No Meet
3. Illness & Injury are the only reasons to not run in a practice/meet.
  - If you are sick, go home. If you are hurt see the trainers and then a coach.
  - You are exempt from a running in a practice with trainer approval, but you are expected to bike or complete an athletic trainer approved workout.
  - Competing in a meet will be at the coach's discretion, even if trainer says you are healthy to run.
4. Mon.-Thu. PM and Fri. AM practices are mandatory.
  - The earliest you can leave is 5:30pm (once a week) (or 8am on a Friday morning).
  - Clubs, Jobs, & Tutoring (unless you have a D+ or lower) are not excuses for missing or leaving earlier than 5:30pm (or 8am).
  - You get one "FREE" miss for this rule, but you are expected to get your run in on your own.
  - The coaches have discretion on allowing an athlete to get a run in at a different time and not be affected by this policy.
5. An athlete can earn up to one, additional "FREE PASS" by attending specific events identified by the LCXC Coaching Staff.

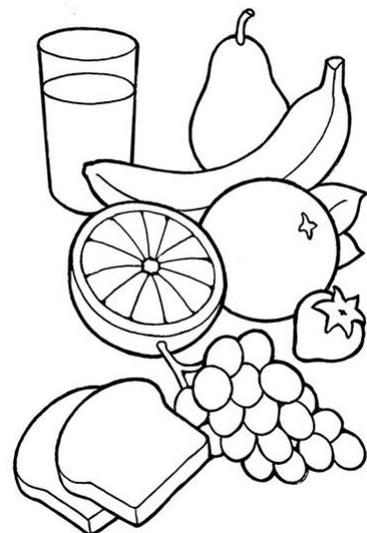
## Nutritional Information

With a sport as demanding as Cross Country it is important for all athletes to take care of their bodies. The following are bits of information that will help athletes be better prepared for their Cross Country season.

**Nutrition** - Proper nutrition forms the base of an athlete's physical performance. Supplements and other aids are not a substitute for a proper diet. If an athlete is able to receive carbs within 30 minutes of a workout, their body will be better equipped to recover and be prepared for the next day's workout. It is also important for athletes to be hydrated before, during, and after practice. Water is the best beverage for hydration. Stay away from sodas and other carbonated beverages. One easy way for an athlete to monitor their hydration level is to check the color of their urine (clear—good, dark yellow—bad).

**Eating Disorders** - It is also important to be aware that eating disorders are unfortunately common in any type of endurance sport. This is a problem for both males and females. Proper diligence and communication is vital to its detection and treatment.

**Proper Rest** – While it is important to monitor an athlete's diet, it is also important to maintain proper sleeping habits. With the busy lives that student-athletes have today, it is important to find a proper balance between school work, sports, social time, family time, and sleep. It is suggested that athletes set a consistent time for



going to bed each night. If a schedule is set and consistently maintained, an athlete will find that they are better rested and prepared for training and competitions. 6-8 hours is an adequate amount of time for a person to sleep. It is important that all athletes figure out what that perfect amount of sleep time is.

**Illness Prevention** – A proper diet and proper sleep will definitely help in preventing illnesses. In addition to these two factors, it is important that all athletes prescribe to the following:

- Good hand-washing.
- Appropriate immunizations.
- Staying away from sick people.

## **LCXC Team Covenant: ALL IN**

A covenant is a written agreement or promise between two or more parties for the performance of some action.

LCXC's Team Covenant is the team's agreement to do what is right and necessary for our program to achieve our program's various goals. The Team Covenant is not just some motto for the 2017 XC Season, it is what we are and what we will be for years to come. This team manual covers many different elements of our program as well as various expectations for our student-athletes. The LCXC Team Covenant serves as a summary of what is expected for all of our LCXC Runners.

After much thought, Coach Kowalczyk has chosen to change our covenant into something more simple and focused: ALL IN. We only want athletes who are ALL IN to join our program. What does this mean? Once again, the Team Covenant is a summary of what is expected out of each and every athlete that joins our program.



## **LCXC Lettering Policy**

In order to receive a varsity letter in Cross Country and athlete must have done the following:

- (1) An athlete must abide by all of the team rules and expectations.

AND

- (2) An athlete must be academically eligible and in good standing at the end of the season.

AND

- (3) Be on the IHSAA Team Sectional Roster.

OR

- (4) Earn All-County, All-Conference, All-Sectional, All-Regional, All-Semi-State, or All-State Honors.

OR

- (5) Run under 17:30 (guys) or 20:30 (ladies) in any 5K competition.

OR

- (6) Be a four-year participant in good standing.

BUT

- (7) The Head Coach's discretion may be used when a candidate does or does not meet the standards as set above.

## 2017 LCXC Checklist

In order to make the lives of both athletes and their parents easier, the following is a checklist of things that need to be done in order to run Cross Country. It is the hope and expectation of the LCXC Coaching Staff that all athletes have accomplished all of these tasks before going to our first Cross Country meet on August 12<sup>th</sup>. If for any reason an athlete cannot accomplish these tasks, it is important that they contact Coach Kowalczyk as soon as possible (especially if there is financial hardship).

\_\_\_\_\_ **IHSAA Athletic Physical (this can be found on the LC Athletic Website). This must be turned in before an athlete can condition.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **LC Blue Form/Insurance Form (this can be found on the left side of the screen at LC Athletic Website; it is an insurance form). This must be turned in before an athlete can compete at a meet.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **LC Team Fee of \$125.00 (LC Transportation Fee, Adidas Gear, Friday breakfasts, & meet snacks). Hold off paying this fee until Coach K gives the go-ahead.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **LCXC ALL IN Camp Permission Slip and \$75 payment. See Coach K about payment instructions.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Running Shoes (also known as running flats): athletes may need to purchase new shoes every 3-4 months of running.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Competition Spikes (shoes for running in a meet).**

\_\_\_\_\_ **A sports wrist watch (it mainly needs to have a basic stopwatch feature). Athletes must have this item in order to properly train.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **A water bottle.**

