



THE RUNNING WARRIOR



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From the Editor – The fall cross country season has wrapped up and now we are getting ready for the indoor track & field season. In this issue you will find a wrap up of the cross country season, as well as a preview of the track & field season.

This summer for the third consecutive year we will be taking a group of the cross country team (it's the girls' turn in 2017) to the Nike Smokey Mountain Running Camp in Asheville, NC. Several other athletes also join us for the camp. This is a great opportunity for the athletes to bond and have some fun, as well as get some mileage in during the summer on some fantastic trails.

In November, I was a USATF official for the NCAA Division III Cross Country Championships at E.P. "Tom" Sawyer Park in Louisville. I had been an official at two previous Div. I Championships. However, this was the first time for Div. III. Division III schools are academically focused and consequently give no athletic scholarships (i.e. you are there to study and then run – *in that order*). The many schools represented are some of the top academic institutions in the country (Centre, Rhodes, Williams, Colby, Brandeis, NYU, Emory, Washington and Lee, etc.). It would be fantastic if more of our

great scholar athletes considered a Division III school. We have had three alumni compete at Division III schools: Glenda Tutt '16 – Oglethorpe, Maegann Stafford '15 - Brandeis, and Shane Conton '14 Carnegie-Mellon.



The men turn for home (500 meters to go) at the NCAA Div. III Cross Country Championships in Louisville on Nov. 19th.



Sophomore Sidi Abdoulaye of St. Lawrence (715) battles with Garrett Davis (705) of RPI at the mid-way point of the NCAA Div. III 8K course at Tom Sawyer Park. Sam Kuhlmann (818) of Wisconsin-Eau Claire eventually finished ahead of both of these two.

Besides officiating the NCAA cross country meet, I attended a combined USATF / IAAF Level III Coaches Clinic in Florida in early Dec. USATF realizes that we need more expertise in the youth

coaching ranks. Carl Lewis who is an assistant coach at the University of Houston and has won more Olympic gold medals than any athlete in track and field history recently said, "Poor coaching is systemic in America. When I get kids in college I have to fix so much about their running it is amazing to me. Kids are being taught things that are completely incorrect."

Only 28 high school and college coaches were accepted to this clinic and I was lucky to be one of them. The IAAF is the world governing body for track and field (International Amateur Athletics Foundation – to the rest of the world track is simply referred to as "Athletics").



The objective of the clinic was to develop coaching that is:

1. Athlete centered
2. Scientific based
3. Coach driven



Level III is the highest coaching certification in the profession. By August, I will turn in my report on

an athlete (what training methods worked, what didn't) to get the Level III Youth Specialization certification.

In cross country this year, we developed a new award – The Hard Hat Award. It was given to the boy and girl that had worked the hardest during the week.



The *Running Warrior* Hard Hat Award was received with much aplomb in the fall.

I believe that a lot of insight can come from church sermons. When reflecting upon 2016, I recall one sermon that outlined three key qualities of a person. I believe that this is especially true of top athletes. You have to ask yourself three questions:

1. Are you real?
2. What is your history (i.e. who's life did you change)?
3. Are you passionate?

Cross Country Finishes Out on Strong Note

The cross country team finished up the season with typical top finishes at the APS Championships. The boys won the APS Champs in Oct. and the girls came in second, both for the second consecutive year.

Senior Jackson Pearce won the boys individual APS title for an unprecedented third consecutive year. No boy or girl had ever won the APS Cross Country Championship for three consecutive years. In only her

third competitive 5K ever, sophomore Ellie Hankin won the girls APS title, breaking Madeline Pearce's ('16) meet record by five seconds.



APS Individual XC Champions Ellie Hankin and Jackson Pearce.



APS Top 10 Girls finishers pose with APS Assistant Athletic Director Kandice Mitchell (standing, far left). Warriors in the Top 10 include Rebekah Hetzel (standing 2nd from left), Kate Breeden (standing in middle), Ellie Hankin (standing far right) and Sarah Hetzel (seated far left).



Warriors (L to R) Matthew Self, Mac Bloodworth, and Matthew Aspinwall led the North boys to victory in the APS Championships. Here they battle nemesis junior Aiden Goldston (474) of Grady.

Next the Warriors ran in the tough 5A Region 7 meet. The meet director could not secure Garrard Landing Park for the meet. So, with a month to go, the Running Warriors led from the front and

offered up Grant Park, home of the APS Series meets and Championships.

The girls placed seventh in the toughest region (any classification) in the state. Ellie Hankin (4th) was the highest finishing Warrior, earning a trip to the State Meet.

The boys finished fifth, only eight points and one place away from qualifying for State. Jackson Pearce had never lost at Grant Park during the last three years and the Regional Meet on Oct. 26th was no exception. Pearce won his first regional cross country title in the third fastest time at Grant Park, qualifying him for State.

At the State 5A Meet on Nov. 5th, Ellie Hankin (34th) recorded the second best finish in North history in only her fifth competitive 5K. Jackson Pearce made the podium with an eighth place finish. He is only the third Warrior to make the podium at State (top 10).



Hankin at the start of the State Meet in Carrollton on Nov. 5th.



Jackson Pearce (third from right) atop the podium at State.

All in all, we had two top individual State Meet finishes and the boys broke the team time school record twice.



One reason the girls ran the fourth fastest team time in school history was our "Sistah Power." North was unique to all high school sports teams in Georgia with four sets of sisters (L to R) Vuicich, Hetzels, Millers, and Riefs.

Track & Field Preview

Even though the track and field team graduated several APS and regional scorers (Glenda Tutt 800, Graham Palmer 110/300 hurdles, Jack Tribou 1600/3200, Julious Washington 400, and Hunter Riggall 800/1600), it still returns many regional scorers Kyla Lestagez (100), Amenawon Momodu (HJ), Jackson Pearce (state scorer in 800 & 1600 and multiple time APS champ), Matthew Self (800), and Matthew Aspinwall (3200). Seniors Rebekah Hetzel (1600 & 3200) and Toren Stafford (sprints, hurdles, and jumps) will add leadership and experience. Also, there are some potential new freshmen who could see some action: Alexia Todd (400) and APS M.S. 800 champs Dalen Saunders and Brian Bird, as well as NAHS school record holder (XC team time) Alden Sweatman.



The Warriors will need to find a replacement for State Meet "high sticks" and 300 meter hurdle qualifier Graham

Palmer ('16).



Ricky Waddell ('14) was a State Meet scorer in the 300 hurdles. He now hurdles for NCAA Div. III Bard College in New York. Over the last seven years North has had much success in the hurdles with five State Meet qualifiers, four State scorers and three hurdling in college.



Senior Matthew Self, shown here winning last year's Buckhead Inv. 800 at North, helps give the Warriors one of the strongest and deepest 800m corps in 5A.



One of North's objectives is to put the "Oomph" back into track & field (track, cross country, field, race walking, road racing and ultra-racing) – indeed a rare objective for a high school! One of the things that helped accomplish this was the DiscBot! This was a joint project between the NAHS Robotics Team and *the Running Warriors*. It was the first automatic retrieval of discuses at the high school level in the country! Click on [DiscBot](#) to

see it in action at the 2016 Buckhead Invitational.

Running Courses in Buckhead

There are many great places to run in Buckhead: Chastain Park, Memorial Park, Piedmont Park, the Belt Line, Tanyard Creek Park, and the NAHS Campus Loop and Warpath in the Warrior Woods. However, the April 2016 edition of the Atlanta Track Club's magazine *Wingfoot*, highlighted the Paul Koshewa Trail at Westminster. It is a 1.9 mile trail that runs around the Westminster campus (at West Paces and Northside).

You can park in the visitors lots on the Westminster campus (the one by the tennis courts is close to the trail) to access the trail. Or you can park in the retail shop (ACE Hardware and West Stride) parking lot across Northside and jog over to Westminster. The trail is named for famed Coach Paul Koshewa, who led the track and field and cross country teams at Westminster from 1955 to 1990, coaching runners to numerous team and countless individual state titles. The trail is comprised mainly of compacted limestone so it's softer than running on pavement. The trail has hills to challenge you, as well as a tree cover to shade the hot summer sun.



MLK Day 5K Jan. 16th

Just a reminder, the Martin Luther King Day 5K will be held on Monday (it was Sat. last yr.), Jan. 16 in Piedmont Park. This is a

fund raiser for your *Running Warrior Booster Club* (cross country and track and field teams). This will be the sixth year that NAHS has participated in this event. All athletes are encouraged to participate in our fund raiser and get their family and friends to sign up too! **For each entrant we sign up under the Running Warriors team, the Running Warrior Booster Club receives \$5.** To register go to: <http://mlkday5k.com/registration-valarias-challenge>

Get all of your classmates participating in a spring sport to register too (they are running now to get in shape for their spring sport). The race starts on the 10th street side of Piedmont Park at 8:45AM. Bib numbers can be picked up at the Park Tavern. ***Just remember to register folks under the "North Atlanta HS Running Warriors" team name.*** Note: there will be a prize for the student getting the most team sign-ups (minimum of 10) – just let Coach S. know who you sign up.

When is Stretching Most Beneficial? (From the April 2016 edition of Wingfoot magazine)

Have you noticed that when you don't stretch for prolonged periods, you become clumsier, your body more painful and even unable to do mundane tasks?

Always Warm Up: You should never stretch cold muscles. Just like a rubber band, a muscle is more pliable when it is at a higher temperature. Stretching cold muscles can harm them and keep you from reaching your potential.

For runners, include an active warmup (at NAHS we like to go from a slow to fast walk then slow to fast jog) or dynamic stretching

as part of each pre-workout routine. Dynamic stretching controlled movements. It should include all of your major muscle groups from your neck to your toes.

Reserve static stretching (in place with no joint movement) for after your workout so if you create any micro tears, it won't impede your workout. Hold stretches for 15-30 seconds (Ed. Note: we use the three minute stretch routine which can be found on the *Running Warrior* web site) to help lengthen your muscles and improve flexibility post run.

Does Stretching Really Decrease Injury? While there's scant scientific evidence that regular and controlled stretching reduces your risk of injury, most runners say it staves off soreness. In any case, it improves flexibility, mobility and range of motion – big pluses, especially the older you are. Stretching can also relax the body, reduce stress levels and help pit your body in good ergonomic alignment.

Don't Overdo It. The goal of stretching is simple: to improve posture and encourage better joint movement. Remember not to over-stretch. Feeling pain during a stretch indicates that you have stretched too far. If it hurts to stretch, then stop!

Super Beets

Many of you wanted information on Super Beets. [Super Beets](#) is a powder made from beet roots that can be used as a supplement to boost circulation (a distinct advantage for runners). However, not everyone can absorb nitric oxide efficiently. If you purchase three 150 gr. canisters, you get nitric oxide test strips. At the three canister price, it costs less than a \$1 for a serving. This is much less

expensive than purchasing beet juice (\$4-9 for 8-16 oz. sizes). It comes in a tasty black cherry flavor.



Calendar

1. **Jan. 9** – Track & Field team meeting, 4:00P - Media Center
2. **Jan. 16** – MLKDay 5K Piedmont Park 8:45 AM
3. **Jan. 17** – First day of official Track & Field practice at 4:10P.
4. **April 29** – Sectional Track Meet
5. **May 11-13** – State Track Meet
6. **July 9-14** – Nike Smokey Mt. Running Camp



NAHS sports web site:
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NAHS Field and Track / XC Stats Page:
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