

SUMMER RUNNING BLURB #5

July 5th 2025

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New runners

Monday saw us teach the new runners our infamous 'Mom Walk' a local loop of 1.1 miles with a lot of hills. Everyone learned how to navigate it and run as much of it as they could - later on in the season they will gradually be able to run 2 - 3 of these repeats as their legs become stronger. We also introduced a new trail called 'Forgotten' down the lovely Sulfur Springs trail and the entire group managed 3.5 miles of trails. We re-tested them on the flat 2.2 mile Trails End loop and many moved up a pace group, with runners like Mason Lien and Sarah Niederer by a couple of minutes. Then on Thursday we learned how to warm up for races and concluded with a fun 4th July scavenger hunt on the campus.

Veterans

Our older runners are now getting into shape with eight runners now having earned their 100 mile shirts and many to come. We extended our Monday trail run, as it was a drop down week, but one that would see progressively easier workouts as we got close to a race opportunity. We took in the wonderful Indian Valley Creek trail. Our speed day was a 2.5 mile run over to Heather Farms with a one and done mile repeat around both

duck ponds to remind the runners what a longer speed effort would feel like. Racing a 5k when you haven't raced for a while can be a shock so it was intended to mentally callous them for race day and remind them that they need to take their first mile much slower than that workout. They then had the joy of running 2.5 miles back to campus. The next day we worked further on the 5k education by running an even paced trial 5k at 'brisk' pace or close to half marathon pace. Many found this harder than they expected so it was a good reminder that a 4th July fun race will likely not be a PR opportunity for most and we don't actually want these athletes to be in tip top shape until October and November when the more exciting end of season races occur. Racing should be fun and exploratory - a chance to see what your body gives you on the day and not be burdened by expectations of PR's or improvements.

On Thursday we moved up our faster freshmen to the veteran group for the scavenger hunt. When the varsity boys showed up with a wheeled suitcase (apparently left curbside?) full of the red white and blue flags and tchotchkes hidden by the coaches, we could tell those poor freshmen boys wouldn't have much left to find. Much to our surprise a few minutes later a herd of young freshmen approached the track gates looking like triumphant American settlers. The gang was led by a flag bearer. The flag held high was unfurling poetically in the breeze. This had not, however, been part of the treasure hunt. Any of the rapid sinking feelings in the coaches' stomachs were soon allayed when Coach Megan assured us the freshmen boys were nothing but politeness and in their frustration at seeing all the spoils taken had knocked on a door and kindly asked to borrow the flag which the owners thought was cute and agreed to. Mack and his crew even brought the flag back with a bonus bag of

plums to say thank you. The judges enjoyed the ingenuity, the thumbs up for positive community engagement, and gave them first prize kudos.



Our freshmen boys are competitors and use their brains as much as their legs



The varsity boys traveling with their suitcase



The girls also got an honorable mention as they found many of the items



*Francis, Steven, Riley & Abram hit 100 miles.
Elena is our first girl to hit the magic 100*



We also continued to develop our weight room stations with Coach Rebecca introducing the agility ladder to the second workout of the week



Coach Jenn has developed a three station weight room workout designed specifically for distance runners to create power and injury proof them for the season

SOCIAL PROGRAM

Our scavenger hunt was not the only fun we had this week. The Chmielewski family also hosted a pool party for us that was a ton of fun. Huge thanks to them for opening up their beautiful pool and garden to the team.





LOOK OUT

Next Wednesday our fun social event is the *Great Summer Running Baking Show*. We will have a tent set up and all athletes are invited to bring their baked goods to compete. Muffins, cookies, breads, anything you can think of. Last year Maren won with her amazing plum compote pavlova's. Who will be crowned by our two foodie celebrity judges this year? Coach Ella Kopper is not only a distance runner extraordinaire, but also a well known chef and food critic, and alumni Lily Wright, Cal Poly Nutrition Major (also known as the face behind the famed instagram site *lily_likes_lunch*) will be partnering with her in determining this week's winner. Bring your goodies at the start of practice, or in a cooler and stay to taste all the offerings after long run day.



Maren was crowned last year's victor - will she go for a repeat?



 Social Program

2. Week 5 Training Plan

7/7 - 7/12

We start to build back up after a drop down week, veterans can run double days on request

Monday -trail runs

2 laps, All team name game

Veterans

Wickets & drills

Behind the stables Variations

New runners

drills

Out and back on the Castle Rock Road

Weight room

Tuesday - tempo

Veterans two person Mom Walk Relay teams, each person will run 2 x Mom Walk

Weight Room

New runners Guided Behind the Stables

Wednesday - Distance Day

Veterans Activation warm up with Abel Romero, wickets, 80 min long run towards Pleasant Hill on the Canal trail

New runners 30 mins warm up (10 mins grass, drills, then wickets)

30 mins Abel Romero activation

45 - 60 min long runs towards the YV tunnel

Summer Running Bakeoff after practice 10:30 am

Thursday - Recovery Day

Dynamic Warm up for all

New runners drills & wickets, flat Wiget loops

Veterans out and back on Northgate Road then weight room

Friday - all team 7/7 or 5/5 warm ups, drills strides, 4 X 400m teams for Banana Relays - lets see how relaxed your grip can be and how smooth your handoff or you will be passing off a 'smoothie' not a banana to your team mate. Weight room new runners, extended cool downs for the veterans

Scenic Saturday

This week takes us over the iconic Golden Gate Bridge. This route is for veterans only. Attached is a link to further details but it will involve trains, boats, and a lunch and an entire day long commitment.

[San Francisco Golden Gate Run](#)

3. SIGN UP FOR OUR END OF SUMMER RACE WITH THE ALUMNI

All runners are strongly encouraged to attend our end of summer race for alumni in **Castle Rock Park on Saturday August 2nd at 8 am**.



There is no registration fee attached and we have organized this ourselves to give athletes a chance to test out their fitness after a summer of training. It is fun for all the family come run, walk, race, cheer or eat breakfast.

Please RSVP to the end of summer race here [alumni race](#)

4. SOCIAL MEDIA

You can stay up to date by following the cross country team either on Instagram at

<https://www.instagram.com/northgatexc/>

Or search and request to join our closed team group on Facebook

Northgate Cross Country & Track and Field Teams

OTHER USEFUL LINKS

Here is the schedule for all of our additional Scenic Saturday runs:

SCENIC SATURDAYS 2025

Here is the schedule for our mid week Social program and theme Fridays:

Social Program


Here is the calendar for the upcoming Cross Country season for those who decide to join our team

NORTHGATE CROSS COUNTRY CALENDAR

Here is the list of volunteer opportunities for parents of those on the cross country team

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS 2025

Here is a link to the sports physical form that is needed if you decide to join the cross country team. Each athlete needs to submit this form and be dated by their doctor

 CIF Preparticipation Physical Evaluati...

between June and August 8th 2025 to be able to participate on August 11th. If you require a physical and your own doctor can not do it in the time scale the Sports Med Dept at Northgate also holds one on Thursday August 7th 6 - 8 pm, and last year that cost \$100 per student \$150 per family and a link to register will be out later in the summer

5. 4th July Stars and Stripes, Concord, Race Recap

We had 27 Bronco's out racing today which was pretty awesome. Joseph Cruz's impressive promo video did much to boost excitement. We are months away from when we want our team to be in shape but it's a good opportunity to practice some of the racing skills we will be using later. How to resist the impulse to go out too fast, how to focus back in after the 2 mile mark when you start to zone out to avoid the discomfort. We were very privileged to have Coach Julia, Sophia and Megan also racing, which was a huge benefit to the team. Coach Julia worked with Francis to try and pull him in faster at the end, Coach Sophia was side by side with Ismael when he fell back from Francis, Coach Megan was there to remind Steven to focus on the blue shirt ahead of him. All in all it was a good day to be a Bronco and here are the results

Name	place	Time	AG place
Julia Vasquez	6th	17:20	1/19
Francis Chmielewski	7th	17:32	1/28
Ismael Opeyany	10th	17:57	2/28
Sophia Carcamo	11th	18:01	2/21
Joaquin Guerrero	14th	18:19	4/22
Megan Malloy	16th	19:08	3/21
Steven Olson	18th	19:13	4/28
Anders Lien	22n	19:36	6/28

Abram Messiha	23rd	19:37	7/28
Rhys Sullivan	25th	19:52	8/28
Adam Abrinko	30th	20:28	10/28
Riley Williams	31st	20:33	11/28
Natasha Cohen	36th	20:58	2/21
Joseph Cruz	42nd	22:06	13/28
Nathaniel Ferris	46th	22:22	14/28
Josh Berrett	49th	22:53	15/28
Milo Curtin	53rd	23:06	17/28
Keira Sadur	64th	23:52	3/21
Mason Lien	73rd	24:12	18/28
Robyn Khaund	74th	24:13	5/21
Luca Curtin	102nd	25:49	3/19
Rowan Klosky	141st	28:23	4/19
Autumn Berrett	168th	29:36	9/21
Natalie Cook	172nd	29:39	2/13
Sophia Pritchard	230th	32:47	

NB

Highlighted names placed in their Age Groups

Those in italics are coaches

Things the coaches enjoyed seeing:

1. Kids eager to show up and test themselves to race and have **fun with it!**
2. **Self awareness coupled with a willingness to make mistakes**, some runners knew they went out too fast in that first mile. Sometimes you have to feel it to change that behavior and experience is the best teacher.

3. **Communication**, we saw Francis and Ismael were talking strategy and pacing when they raced
4. **Using other runners** - Joaquin has a CV opponent he uses for motivation
5. The ability to **not place too much significance on the finish time**, more what could I do effectively with my body today? Josh did really well with his knee injury by starting out slowly and cautiously and then building and forgetting about a race time and focusing on putting a complete race together.
6. **Being brave** - all the kids did this by showing up. None more than Elena who has been out for injury for a year. She took a leap of faith and ran a great race. Elena was up front with Natasha, until she hit the straightaway to the finish line and fainted due to her prior blood pressure/vagal response issue. Her recovery was that of a pro. After EMT helped her and she was horizontal for ten minutes she and Sophia walked through the finish line together and she went straight to food and hydration to take care of her body.
7. **Supportive families**, so many parents and siblings joined the fun and ran too.
8. Those who didn't time their arrival for 7:30 am as well as they wanted realized it was stressful and disadvantaged them in racing, and can **adjust for the next race**

Watching all the kids compete today, from our newest runners to our veterans filled the coaches with some excitement for the season and the journey we will take with these athletes.

Nothing tastes better than 4th July picnic food when you have:

Been brave and vulnerable

Tested yourself and done something hard

Given yourself the chance to be humble self -reflect and figure out how to do it even better next time.

NEWSFLASH.....

Coach Julia also set a new record for the women, breaking the one set prior by Reyna Stanziano by 30 seconds.

Pictured below, early pack running from the varsity boys - we just missed Niko who is away at a camp in Mammoth.

