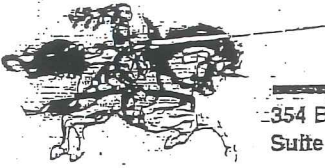


"Home of the Golden Knights"



Union School District

UNION HIGH SCHOOL

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Union Jr./Sr. High School Injury Warning

CROSS COUNTRY

Cross Country is a sport which can be both the safest and most dangerous of organized sports on the grade school, high school and college levels. It is mandatory the coach/teacher/organizer be familiar with all the potential risks involved, and have knowledge of correct techniques by coaches and athletes, appropriate supervision, and properly organized practices and competition.

Possible Catastrophic Injuries

RUNNING: Although catastrophic injury as a result of running is rare, there are two situations that can result in serious injury: being struck by an automobile, and illness due to over-exposure to heat. The types of traffic-related injuries sustained by runners are the same as those suffered by other pedestrians. To avoid problems it is advisable for the coach to warn the runners prior to the season that there is a risk of injury when training on the road. Of the countless circumstances that could be envisioned and forewarned of, the following suggestions should be given greatest emphasis:

1. When running along a road or its shoulder, run in the direction opposite to the flow of traffic.
2. Wear bright or reflective clothing when running at any time, day or night.
3. When running in groups, run in a single-file line.
4. Obey all traffic laws.

Catastrophic injuries can occur in runners as a result of illness from over-exposure to heat. In cases where patients recover from heat stroke, irreversible damage to the nervous system can remain, including impairment of the thermoregulatory function of the hypothalamus.

From an instructional standpoint it is important to inform the runner that it is vitally important to drink water and other fluid replacements on a regular basis especially during hot weather. Fluids should be consumed in the regular diet, during workouts, and before and during competition, when practical. It may be useful to mention that research has not shown water intake to be detrimental to performance.

From a coaching standpoint, it would be helpful to acclimatize or adapt the runners to unusually warm ambient temperatures to avoid the risk of heat disorders. This can be achieved with a progressive training schedule that exposes the team to longer bouts of exercise from day to day, over a five to eight day period. The American College of Sports Medicine issued a position paper recommending measures to be taken by race organizers and athletes when participating in conducting and in distance races (Mathews and Fox 1976). These recommendations have been incorporated into the preceding paragraphs.

Activity	Possible Injury	Causes	Prevention
Distance running	The possible catastrophic injuries to a distance runner would number any one of the many injuries that could be sustained by a pedestrian (injury by impact of an automobile, or other moving object. Injuries could be to the head or spinal column, and could include death.	Struck by a motor vehicle.	Coaches should instruct runners to run facing the opposite direction of the traffic flow when running on the roads or busy streets. Cross roads only at pedestrian crosswalks or intersections. Runners should follow pedestrian rules. Avoid thoroughfares which do not have sidewalks. Run on shoulder of road, not pavement, when there is no sidewalk available. Avoid areas where farming equipment is being used. Run single file. Front and back runners should make other athletes aware of possible dangers. Warn of oncoming traffic.
	Impairment of thermoregulatory system	Heat stroke	Administration of sufficient liquids before, during, and after workouts. Avoid running during peak temperature hours and high level of humidity. Acclimate runners to hot temperature through use of progressively longer exposures to heat.

This warning does not cover all potential possibilities in cross country but it is an attempt to make the players and parents aware that fundamentals, coaching and proper conduct are important to their safety and enjoyment in cross country at Union Junior/Senior High School.

The above information has been explained to me and I understand the procedures of cross country. I also understand the necessity of using proper techniques while participating in cross country.

ATHLETE'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

PARENT'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____