

Race Day Survival Guide

Before you arrive:

A. Pre-race meals

- **Saturday races:** Group A girls typically participate in morning races on Saturdays. On race day, girls should eat a breakfast higher in carbs, but lower in protein and dairy products, and which also doesn't include greasy or heavy foods, empty calories, etc., no less than 2 hours before you compete. For early races, this may not be possible, but it's still important to find a way to fuel up before these races. Some breakfast options are oatmeal, toast, cereal, apples, etc. Over time, you should strive to develop a pre-race morning meal routine that works for you.
- **Weekday races:** most weekday races start around 5:00pm. This provides enough time for most girls to eat a normal lunch that day. Some girls prefer peanut butter and jelly sandwiches with maybe an apple and something else on race day, but you want to figure out what works best for you. You should still avoid fried foods on race day and anything *heavy*. It's also ok to snack after school before a race, just like you do at after school practices.

B. Meet attire

- **Uniform:** Group A and Group B girls have a specific uniform that they must wear to races. As per KHSAA rules, no girl may race without a proper, school-issued uniform.
- **Team shirt:** the team shirt should be worn over your uniform when you arrive at each meet. We wear this shirt before and after races (e.g. during warmdown and any awards ceremony). When appropriate, we allow girls to substitute the blue long sleeved Assumption Elite Distance shirt for their team shirt. Note that we have phased out a shirt we called the podium shirt and replaced that shirt with our team shirt. Older girls may have the podium shirt, but everyone on the team will have the team shirt, and so the team shirt is what we will ask girls to wear to meets over their uniform.
- **Shoes:** girls compete in each meet wearing either racing spikes or training shoes. Varsity level or aspiring Varsity girls should consider racing in "spikes", but training shoes (i.e. the shoes you wear to practice) are adequate for our Group B girls.
- **Undergarments:** although most of our meets are run under conditions that are too hot for anyone to consider wearing an undergarment, end of season meets can be much cooler. KHSAA rules dictate that any visible undergarment must be a single solid color, and if more than one girl wears a visible undergarment, that color must match for each girl on a particular team (Varsity or JV), where sleeve length or leg length of the undergarment does not matter. Our general team rule is to wear a solid black undergarment, but we will confirm this in advance of any meet where undergarments may be necessary.

C. Arrival: coaches will provide arrival times for each race, and **girls should always arrive no later than that arrival time.** This provides for opportunities to prepare for your race, warm up, etc. As a general rule, arrival times are typically 90 minutes before the start of a girl's race, but that will depend on whether we want the girls at a meet in time to support teammates who run earlier in the day (e.g. we may have girls arrive 2 hours before their race if we want them there to support a teammate who competes before them), or whether the girls have an early morning race (e.g. we may only ask the girls to arrive 60-75 minutes before a race that starts at 8-8:30am).

After you arrive:

I. Warmup: When you arrive at a meet, the first item of business is to find our team tent or area. After that, find the location of the bathrooms, and then get a look at the course map. We warm up as a group and typically start about 45 minutes before race time. Here's a typical routine:

- 1) Start with a 5-10 minute warm up run. This run will typically cover some part of the course itself, very often the final mile. During or after the warmup run, you should do the warmup exercises from practice (i.e. leg swings, stretching, etc.).
- 2) After the warmup run, restroom visits are very typical, but be careful here. Restroom lines at meets can be very long, so plan ahead (e.g. you could be in line as much as 10-15 minutes).
- 3) If you have racing shoes, then you'll need about 10 minutes to switch into those shoes. All competitors will wear a competitor number on their hand, and/or race bib, shoe chip, etc., that will identify them at the finish line. You'll also need some time to put on these items as well.
- 4) It is also important to find time for some pre-race mental preparation. This may be as simple as getting a few minutes of alone time to relax and escape the fray, or may possibly involve some pre-race visualization or meditation.
- 5) There is often a check-in process at the starting line of each race. At about 20 minutes before race time, we need to find our "starting box", if we have one, and spend any remaining time before our race doing strides, some sort of pre-race talk, a group prayer and our team cheer.

II. Supporting teammates during their race: we ask that each girl do her part to make our team supportive and encouraging of one another. This means taking the time and effort to support teammates when they race. At meets with multiple races, we realize that some girls may need time before their race to prepare, so it'll be very difficult to also get out on the course to cheer for teammates. We do expect each girl to be out supporting teammates after each girl has finished her race though.

III. Warmdown: each girl should do a warmdown run after her race. This should involve 10 or more minutes of easy running with a group of girls, preferably everyone who ran in one particular race that day. E.g., the Varsity team in one of our races should gather as a group and do their warmdown together. The warmdown run is important, both from a physical and mental recovery aspect.

D. Post-race Recovery

- **Fueling up after a race:** it's no less important to have a recovery snack or drink within 30 minutes after the completion of a warmdown – although this may be admittedly difficult to do in some cases. We promote snack/drinks with a carb-protein ratio of 3:1 or even 2:1.
- **Fueling up at Dinner:** races are similar to hard day practices, so we want the girls to get sufficient protein in any post-race dinner, just as they do after hard day practices.

E. Departure: we implement different departure guidelines for Group A and Group B.

- **Group A girls:** we strongly encourage Group A girls to stay for the duration of each meet to support their teammates. Most Group A meets have multiple divisions, and they are sometimes spaced fairly wide apart, but we do ask for the girls to support one another. If a girl or one of our teams receives an award, we ask that she or her team stay for the awards ceremony where that award is presented. Regardless of the reason for leaving, departing early from a meet without picking up an award is viewed by some as poor sportsmanship, so we strongly encourage our girls to avoid sending that message.
- **Group B girls:** we require Group B girls to stay until all Assumption runners have competed and we ask that each Group B girl support her teammates during the meet, and not simply disappear as soon as each girl finishes her race.