

## Goal Setting

Goals give you a destination and help you set a direction to achieve. As a cross country runner we are always striving to improve on past performances. Goal setting is a great way to help you reach your potential as a runner and will help in all facets of your life. Goals will help you improve on a day to day basis and throughout the season.

So – How do we set a goal? Look in the mirror, be honest with yourself. Start with a look at the big picture then narrow your gaze to what you need to do every day to achieve your desired outcome. Use the following questions to help guide your goal setting:

1. What do you want to accomplish in cross country before you graduate high school?
2. What do you want to accomplish this cross country season?
3. What do you want to accomplish during each competition?
4. What do you want to accomplish each week during practice?
5. What things are you going to work to improve upon each day?

One way to set attainable goals is by using the SMART goal setting method. Make sure your goals are:

<u>S</u> pecific:	Know what you're going for
<u>M</u> easurable:	Something you can keep track of (times, meet places, or miles run)
<u>A</u> ction oriented:	Something <b><u>YOU</u></b> can do
<u>R</u> ealistic:	Difficult - but attainable
<u>T</u> imely:	Set a deadline

Here is a story about one of my athletes who set a realistic goal and was able to succeed.

Molly had a goal of running the mile under 5:00 minutes by the end of the track season. At the start of the season she ran a mile time trial in 5:30. She looked at the competition schedule and saw she would have 10 races that season. With her ultimate goal to drop 30 seconds, she set a goal of dropping 3 seconds each race.

Molly wrote 4:59.9 (her season goal) on a large banner and hung it over her bed so she would see it every morning and every night. She wrote it on the inside of her locker and the outside of her school folders. She even set her watch alarm for 4:59 PM so it would ring exactly 4:59 and she would be forced to look at her watch and see her goal. For several days before each race she would write down the specific goal for that race (5:27, 5:24, 5:21, etc.) and visualize herself running that time.

After a great deal of work, and a few setbacks, Molly was able to obliterate her goal by the end of the season running 4:57.5 for the mile. By setting daily goals through the season she was able to improve and see the big picture (for her running a sub-5 minute mile).

I know you all will have a great season if we set goals and work hard to attain those goals. If you have questions or need help making goals let me know and we will work on some goal setting together.

**GO CHARGERS!**