

Roy C. Ketcham Track & Field

Contact Information: Charles Ropes
Roy C. Ketcham High School, Room 362, Physics
Phone Number: 845-298-5100x31070
Email Address: charles.ropes@wcsdny.org
Webpage: <http://www.wappingersschools.org/Page/10934>

My Mission:

As a track coach, I will do my best to give each individual the opportunity to achieve their goals as a runner and an athlete in the RCK community. As the coach of the RCK Track team, I will provide each athlete with quality training and an understanding of the level of dedication and commitment necessary to become a successful runner. I will instill you with the competitive spirit needed to be the best they can be. In addition, I will foster sportsmanship and camaraderie among all members of the team. Lastly, I will mold and shape each runner through numerous "life" experiences that will help you prepare them for their future.

Objectives:

On an individual level, I hope to develop runners of all abilities to become better athletes and stewards through high quality training and motivational support. To do that, I intend to:

- Challenge every runner to be their best through hard work and dedication.
- Teach my runners how to deal with the adversity of physical discomfort for extended periods of time
- Teach my runners how to organize their lives to get the most out of their bodies as an athlete.
- Promote the spirit of competition and camaraderie that exists within every athlete.
- Promote sportsmanship and a sense of pride for both the team and school.

For the team, I hope to develop the RCK Track Team into a competitive and respected program in our league and Section 1 as a whole. I aspire that the team will earn top honors in our league and perhaps Section 1 for the very first time at some point during my tenure as a coach.

My Philosophy:

I feel that every individual can become a better runner with some level of dedication and commitment, as well as good guidance. My training methods are largely driven by my own experiences as an endurance athlete and *Jack Daniels*, one of the most respected running coaches in the United States and elsewhere around the world. I also have many friends in the running community, some who also coach at both the high school and college levels.

As a runner, I have learned many lessons of life through my own pursuits to be a better athlete. I know what it means to be dedicated and committed to an athletic endeavor. To be a good runner requires a great deal of planning and sacrifice as well. You also need a competitive spirit to be your best. That being said, I understand that not every athlete approaches running with the passion to compete as I did, nor do all runners have the same physical ability. All I ask is that you try. I will always feel more respect for the lesser runner who gives their heart and soul to the sport compared to the gifted individual who never showed the passion to achieve their best.

As your coach, I want each and every one of you to like running. I also want you to enjoy the competitive nature of the sport and the camaraderie that goes along with it. I want it to be something that you will want to continue to do as part of your life even after you leave high school. Running is the one sport that I feel anybody can do virtually anywhere in the world. I have had the opportunity to run in the many places that I have visited all over the world, and have had many great experiences along the way. Sure I have gotten lost, but that is part of the fun when you explore new regions. To run, all you need is a pair of running shoes and appropriate clothing. You cannot say the same for any team sport, or other individual sports such as swimming and biking. I also feel very strongly about the health benefits of running, both physical and mental. The physical benefits I think are rather obvious, but I have always found running is a great way to clear the mind, think about the day's events, and plan my life ahead.

As a member of the distance running community, I would like to welcome you to the Roy C. Ketcham Track Team. Many of my closest friends to date are those that I ran with in high school, college and in our community. The running community is a great group to be associated with. Most are high academic achievers, tend to be goal oriented, and are successful in their careers. Being a distance runner has taught me a lot about setting goals, dedication and commitment, as well as time management. I hope your experiences at RCK will help instill you with these same qualities such that you will become successful in your own challenges in life.

Expectations:

Practice:

In order to practice, you will need to have an active physical on file. If you do not have a physical, you cannot practice with the team.

I am a big believer in personal responsibility and self discipline. That means coming to practice ready to run each and every day, **and on time** (We meet on the track between 2:25 and 2:35 every day).

If you cannot make it to practice, I will ask you to do two things. One, let me or my assistant coach know. Two, run on your own. Running, while very much an individual sport, is also a team sport, especially in the relay events and cross country. Remember that we train as a group. If you do not come to practice on a regular basis, you will miss out on the camaraderie and team building that occurs. That being said, I do understand that some of you have other commitments (academic, religious, family obligations, etc.) in your lives that may prevent you from being at practice on a given day. If you cannot make practice, either ask me what to do, or see what I planned for you to do and do it on your own.

If you fail to make it to practice on a regular basis without a good reason, you will not only lose out on the opportunity to spend quality time with a great group of athletes, but you will also jeopardize your ability to compete. **Excessive cuts from practice without good cause may result in being denied the opportunity to compete in an upcoming meet, or worse, expulsion from the team. Work is not an excuse to miss practice. Make your job work around the track team.**

Diet, Hydration and Rest:

In order to get the most out of training, make sure you eat and drink appropriately. Do not skip breakfast, and do not eat fried foods for lunch. Remember the saying, "***You are what you eat.***" There is a lot of truth to it. If you eat crappy, you are going to feel crappy when you run. Strive for nutritious foods rather than then empty calories in snack foods and the fat in many fried foods. Consider having an energy bar or gel pack shortly before practice or competing.

You also need to be hydrated before you start running. Drink during the day prior to practice. If you wait until practice starts, you may be too late. Nonetheless, I highly recommend that you bring extra water and/or a sports drink to practice. Although I am a fan of sports drinks, I will admit that they may not always be necessary.

Finally, you need to be well rested in order to perform at your best. Most high school aged kids require more than 8 hours of sleep. As an athlete, you probably need more.

Shoes and Clothing:

Proper shoes and clothing are a must for runners. When the weather is hot and humid, light clothing that breathes is most desirable. When the weather is cool, you may find that you will need a long sleeve shirt and running tights to be comfortable. You may also find that you need to wear gloves, a hat and running tights under more severe conditions. As for shoes, **DO NOT SKIMP!** If you want to

run injury free, you will need to spend some good money on a good pair of shoes (more than \$75.00 retail). Secondly, if you have over 400 miles on a pair of running shoes, it is probably time to think of replacing them. For most distance runners, you can expect to get about a season, to a season and a half out of a pair of running shoes. Cheap and worn out shoes lead to injuries. Shin splints and season ending stress fractures are a couple of the most common forms of injuries to runners. Don't become a statistic.

Safety:

Your safety is of my utmost concern. You will spend a lot of time running on public roads around Roy C. Ketcham High School. Some of the roads are very busy and others have marginal shoulders on them for runners. The safest way for a runner is against traffic, or the left side of the road. The wider shoulder and the less traffic, the better it will be for your safety. I will do my best to send you on routes that I feel are the safest for you.

Use the buddy system. Never go out alone. Minimally, you need to run in pairs. However, due to differences in running ability, runners will naturally become separated from one another on the road. When that occurs, the more forward runner should loop back to regroup with the one left behind. The buddy system will not only contribute to your safety, but it will also foster camaraderie.

In the event of a true emergency, call 911 if you have your cell phone with you. Otherwise, flag down a passing vehicle or go to a house.

Pain:

As an athlete, you can expect to have some pain. It may be in the form of the discomfort associated with the fact that you may be running hard, or it may be due to general muscle soreness. The latter should be expected, especially after a hard workout session, or if you are just starting run as a freshman, or a seasoned runner who is out of shape.

However, pain due to injury needs greater attention. If you feel that you have an injury, or are coming down with an injury, you will need to let me know and go see Kelly, our trainer. She is really nice and was a very good cross country runner when she was in high school. She is also very good at what she does.

Meets:

In order to compete in a meet or dual contest, you must have participated in at least 10 practices. Make sure that you are at the school 15 minutes before the scheduled departure time for the bus.

To compete at the State qualifier, you will need at least 6 meets under your belt. If you did not take care of your physical in a timely manner, or have missed a number of practices, you will adversely affect not only your early season eligibility, but an opportunity to race in the post season.

Transportation:

In most cases, you will be transported to your track meets by the school district. In the event that a parent/guardian or other parent is planning on taking you home from an event, the appropriate permission form will need to be filled out and signed. Failure to fill out this form and properly notify the coach will result in disciplinary action.

Academic Eligibility:

While I want you to be committed to running with the same passion that I have, I understand that your main purpose in high school is to get an education. If you are struggling with your academic workload and need help, please be sure to let me know that we can come up with a plan that may allow you to continue to run, but at the same time give you the academic support you may need. The district's policy allows you to fail one course and have an average of 70 or above and still compete. In addition, freshman, sophomores and juniors must be enrolled in at least 6 courses, while seniors need a minimum of 5 in order to participate on the track team.

Uniforms:

You will be given a uniform before the first competition of the season if you do not already have one. There are strict guidelines that must be adhered to with regards to uniforms, especially with regards to relay events. If you do not obey the NYSPHSAA rules, you will put the team in jeopardy of being disqualified from a competition. First and foremost, you cannot wear any jewelry of any kind during meets. You may wear the shorts you have been issued, or navy blue close cut briefs for girls, or navy blue compression shorts for boys. Any other garment that you decide to wear under your uniform, must match the color of every other member of a relay team you may be competing on. A compression top is a good example of this. The only acceptable colors for this type of garment are red, navy blue and white; and they must match.

Sportsmanship:

How you behave in public is a direct reflection of whom you are and who you associate with. Remember that while practicing and competing, or when out during a team building event, you represent yourself the team and the school. Please keep that in mind and behave respectfully.

During competition, please make every effort to cheer on your teammates as well as those on the boys' team. Wouldn't you want them to do the same for you?

Earning a Varsity Letter:

To earn a varsity letter, you must achieve each of the following:

1. To start with, you must have a good attendance record. You cannot have any more than 3 absences from practice without a valid excuse. Valid reasons for missing practice include academic needs, doctor's appointments, injury, family emergencies to name a few of the most common. ***Work is not a valid reason to miss practice.***
2. You must attend all championship level meets that you qualify to compete in (Leagues, Northern Counties and Class A), at least one invitational and all of the duel meets that the team will compete in.
3. You must score in any in a duel meet, varsity level invitational or championship meet.

Communication Policy:

I may be contacted through my email address or phone contact at school, both of which are posted at the beginning of this document. However, I fully understand the digital age we live in today and appreciate the timely communications that cell phones provide. I use Remind, an app for any smart phone to do most of my communication. It allows me to communicate with your son without having to know their cell phone number, and mom and dads can sign up as well to keep abreast of what the team is doing.

Signing up for Remind:

Start a new text to 81010, and then in the body of the text message type “@rckt”. You will get a message shortly after confirming that you have joined the group.

That being said, I try to use my captains as the main path of communication between other student athletes and myself. That being said, you may communicate with me through Remind; though calling me on my cell phone is okay if the situation warrants it. You may also find me in my classroom, Room 362, in the science wing.

I will keep updates of important information (practice plans, meet schedule, bus departure times, etc.) on either or both

My website: <http://www.wappingersschools.org/Page/11953>

as well as the

RCK Track & Field Google Classroom:

- <https://classroom.google.com/c/NDAXMTU4MDY5NzFa>
- The access code is **sdnxz3g**

----- Read, sign, and date, and return signed portion to your coach. -----

I, _____, have read the above policies for the Roy C. Ketcham Indoor Track & Field team, and they have been clearly explained to me by Mr. Ropes, my coach. I agree to abide by all the points made and will do my best to commit myself to being the best athlete I can be.

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Date: _____