

Guide to Your first Meet

There are two types of meets: invitational and league. An invitational is a large meet that includes many schools from around the area. Most of them are early in the season and are on Saturday mornings. League meets count towards our team's place in our league, which consists of Mira Costa and four other nearby schools. There are three total: two league prelims and one final. They are spread throughout the season and are held on Thursday afternoons. The league final scores double the prelims and the combined score determines the league standing for advancement to the CIF Prelims.

This is a guide to help you prepare for any meet. Hopefully it will be helpful for your first few.

The day before

Bring a 1.5 liter bottle of water to school and drink it throughout the day. You will have to use the restroom a lot, but it insures that you're well hydrated for the race the next day. If you forget to drink at school, drink in the evening. If there is a pasta party the night before, try to go. They're fun, and are an easy way to carbo-load. If not, have pasta yourself. The carbohydrates give you the energy you need for sustained output. Be sure to get enough sleep; around 8 hours is good.

The morning of the race

Eat a bagel or similar bread product about 3 hours before your scheduled race time. Do not eat dairy products, as lactose takes a long time to digest. Let's put it this way: Don't eat anything that you don't want to see again later. Drink a 0.5-liter water bottle in the morning too. Don't drink Gatorade before your race because the acidity can be less than pleasant on your racing stomach. Freshmen are usually expected to carry the easy-up canopy from the coach's room to the buses.

Before the race

Make sure you get your race number or tag from a coach. Get to know the course as well as possible. You can ask an upperclassman to show it to you, because they have run them all before. Begin warming up 45 minutes before your race. Wear your warm-ups or sweats to retain your body heat. You should get your teammates together and jog for 15 minutes. Then have someone lead drills and stretches for 15 minutes. The last 15 minutes should be spent putting on racing flats, getting to the start line, and doing strides. Wear your sweats to the line and then give them to a designated person to take back to the canopy.

After the race

Change back into your trainers and warm-ups. Drink at least a bottle of Gatorade. **Jog a 15-minute warm down** with your teammates. Running more is probably the last thing you'll want to do after a race, but it is important to purge the lactic acid that you have built up during the race. You will be less sore later if you run a warm down. In your spare time, it's great to cheer on your teammates.

What to bring to a meet

- Water for before the race (at least .5 liters)
- Gatorade for after the race (about a liter)
- Uniform (singlet and shorts)
- Warm-ups or sweats
- Trainers, racing flats, and socks
- Running shorts to change into when it gets warm (those uniform shorts are *really* short)
- Small safety pins (if you have them from a previous race, it reduces hassle)
- CD player with pump-up music (helps pass the time on the bus and get you in the mood)
- Sun protection (it gets hot at some of the meets)