

Dear modified T&F parents,

My name is Derrick Balinsky and this spring I will be coaching your son or daughter. I would like to take this opportunity to share some of my expectations and guidelines.

We are student-athletes, and the first part of that is being a responsible student. Student-athletes are expected to maintain their good academic standing, or risk academic-eligibility sanctions. We have a short outdoor season and a suspension will jeopardize both the athlete's and the team's success this season. Students who become academically ineligible are responsible for procuring all necessary paperwork and fulfilling any after-school obligations. THIS IS NOT THE COACH'S JOB, IT IS THE STUDENT'S JOB. In addition, attendance is extremely important. If your student-athlete is going to miss any portion of the day, he or she must have an official note from a doctor, dentist, etc. in order to be eligible to practice or compete. Also, it is my expectation that student-athletes will attend school the day preceding and following our meets.

Practices are required, obviously. We begin at 3:45 and end around 5 p.m. We will have practice on every school day unless something comes up and your student-athlete is notified during the day. Please make arrangements for your son or daughter to be picked up if they are not walking home. I appreciate your cooperation on this since I live out of town. Modified student-athletes are required to have 12 practices in order to be eligible to compete in our first meet (4/19).

Please make sure that your son or daughter comes with proper attire. With the ever-changing weather, we may be forced to hold some practices indoors. I suggest student-athletes bring sweatpants/running pants, sweatshirt or long-sleeved t-shirt, short-sleeved shirt and shorts. Dressing in layers will allow them to adapt and change to the weather conditions. Running sneakers are preferred. In addition, this year modified athletes will be allowed the opportunity to use metal spikes/removable spikes as well as starting blocks. Obviously, the blocks will be provided. Spiked shoes will not.

Other concerns/thoughts

- **Sportsmanship** - We also take great pride in being gracious competitors. This means wishing opponents good luck before competition starts and offering congratulations - win or lose - afterward. Hornell athletes should offer to help, whether moving equipment or helping another coach or an injured athlete, without fail.

- **Transportation.** Athletes will ride to away meets on the team bus. Parents may take their child home after competition. Coaches will have a sign-out sheet. If any athlete needs to ride home with someone other than a parent (i.e., another teammate’s parents for special events), *a note from both parents must be submitted to Mr. Werner 24 hours before the competition.*
- **Nutrition**
A great post-workout drink is chocolate milk. Research shows it to be as effective as any sports drink available. It is important to have protein to aid in muscle recovery. This can be red meat, fish, or, for the vegetarians, legumes and dark green vegetables.
For the meets, or any time, junk food is less than desirable. Basically, poor fuel equals poor performance. Water, fruit, and carbohydrates (e.g., bagels) are great. The sugars in these are much easier to break down and won’t create stomach cramps.
- Hornell track and field has a **website** that is easily accessible through hornellcityschools.com, under “Athletics.” It will contain links to the “modified” section of the site. Our schedule can be found here with the exception of one change – WE WILL NOT PRACTICE DURING SPRING BREAK.

Please feel free to contact myself, or assistant coach Delany, with any questions or concerns. Also, keep in mind that my number one goal is to have fun and teach our young athletes the fundamentals that will aid them throughout their track careers. Most importantly, however, it is to have fun.

Sincerely,

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