

DEERFIELD BOYS CROSS COUNTRY – The DFDC

Dear incoming freshman parents,

I'm thrilled your son is potentially interested in joining the Deerfield cross country team. I truly believe joining the team is the *second* best decision a high schooler can make. That might sound like a sweeping statement, but consider my perspective.

My name is Scott Friedlander, and I am the head coach of the Deerfield boys cross country team. Twelve short years ago, I graduated from Deerfield High School, and 16 short years ago, I attended 8th grade activities night and put my name on a list of incoming freshmen potentially interested in joining Deerfield cross country. My experience between 16 and 12 years ago completely changed my life and set me up for success well beyond high school. I am sincerely indebted to my 8th grade self for putting my name on that list.

I arrived at my first practice as a regular kid, an average athlete, and with no intent of making cross country any more than an after school activity and good exercise. But immediately, juniors and seniors on the team started voluntarily conversing with me. They taught me cross country, showed me their running routes, and included me in social activities. I wondered - *Why?* They told me that my classmates and I are the future of the team. *Why do they care if they'll be out of high school by the time I'm their age?* They said they care because even when they're no longer at Deerfield, this team will always be important to them. *Really?* And then DHS cross country alumni started showing up to practice. College kids. College graduates. They had such bigger lives to live, *why did they bother to come to our practice?* They said they learned so much from their teammates, their coaches, and the sport of distance running that they applied to their high school running careers, and later, applied to life. They said they were better students, better professionals, better family members, and better people because of the lessons and discipline they learned from Deerfield cross country. Plus, they said some their fondest memories came from their time as a Deerfield cross country runner, and it's fun to go back to reminisce and meet the next generation. *Wow.*

After learning this, I decided to buy in to the culture. And *that's* the best decision a high schooler can make.

We call ourselves the **DFDC**, which stands for Deerfield Distance Crew, because it's more than just a regular high school sports team. The moniker was invented by the team in the late 1990s, so I'm too young to know all the details of how it started, but I helped carry the torch. It represents the unique mentorship and inclusivity of one big unseparated team – from freshmen to seniors and from slowest to fastest. It represents keeping your eyes on your goals at all times - from working hard at practice to making smart decisions about diet, sleep, time management, and attitude when away from practice. It represents being model students and citizens with an excellent history of academic success and a school-wide reputation for being good kids. Pride in knowing we're the cleanest program in the school when it comes to drugs and alcohol – not because we're told to, but because it's detrimental to our training (and I'm confident about that, since I *know* it was true in my day, and I'm confident it hasn't wavered since).

I've heard from countless cross country parents, including my own, that they wish there were a magic way to tell the parents of all incoming freshmen that there is an easy way to guarantee an extremely positive high school experience that you and your son will be proud of. Everybody who joins the cross country team is proud they did.

As I said, I bought in. I made great friends, I worked hard, I had fun, and I improved – a lot. I ran a mile in 7:35 during the first week of practice, and I ran a mile in 4:29 before I graduated. I built myself an identity, and I had something to strive for. When I ran a three-mile cross country race in 14:45 my senior year, that was my ticket into Brown University – an educational experience beyond my wildest expectations. But as an admitted athlete at Brown, I had to rely on the mentality I developed as a high school runner to survive in a very tough academic environment. If my work ethic could create an All-State runner out of an average athlete, I learned that same work ethic could create a competitive Ivy League student out of someone who was admitted for athletics. I did it, and I did it well, and I got a lot out of my college experience. I absolutely credit Deerfield cross country with equipping me with the skills and mentality to do that, and I am much better off today because of it. It doesn't stop there. I apply those lessons to my career, and I try to apply the same work ethic as coach as I did when I was a runner.

There are countless DFDC stories like mine, many more being constructed right now, and even more that will begin next year. When my coach retired, I came back to coach because I wanted to help maintain the incredible culture he helped develop. I get a ton of satisfaction from helping kids learn and grow through cross country and putting great young men out into the world after high school. I hope your son will be a part of it.

If you have any questions whatsoever, feel free to send me an email or give me a call. Anything at all. It is not a bother, this is my passion!

Scott Friedlander

Head Coach – Deerfield Boys Cross Country

DFDC Class of 2008

sfriedlander@dist113.org

847-207-4040

Twitter: @CoachScottDFDC

dist113.org/BoysCrossCountry

Head Coach
Scott Friedlander
DFDC Class of 2008

Assistant Coach
Sam Friedland
DFDC Class of 2013

Assistant Coach
Aaron Spak
DFDC Class of 2015

Assistant Coach
Robby Winter
DFDC Class of 2017

Assistant Coach
Tracey Wool

2019-20 Team Captain
Joe Ariano
DFDC Class of 2020

2019-20 Team Captain
Jason Dahlberg
DFDC Class of 2020

2019-20 Team Captain
Grant Fisher
DFDC Class of 2020

2019-20 Team Captain
Ben Kraemer
DFDC Class of 2020

2019-20 Team Captain
Jacob Nitsun
DFDC Class of 2020

2019-2020 Cross Country Team Roster

Seniors

DFDC Class of 2020

Joe Ariano
Aleksandar Burmeister
Mac Cooley
Jason Dahlberg
Grant Fisher
Ben Kraemer
Matthew Kroscher
Jacob Nitsun
Jeremy Plofsky
Micah Plofsky
Coby Segal
Elai Spector

Juniors

DFDC Class of 2021

Brendan Beamer
Max Bolon
Stephen DiNardo
Max Dunn
Ethan Friedman
Mark Goldenberg
Zack Greco
Charlie Hart
Joe Healy
Jonah Kaplan
Hayden Katz
Asher Kriegel
Logan Lofland
Zach Luke
Brent Meilman
Tyler Nagelbach
AJ Osborn
Josh Puyear
Brian Reich
Jeremy Rosenblum
Drew Shore
Ben Spiegel
Trey Symonanis
Spencer Vernier
Sam Voigt
Ben Zamler

Sophomores

DFDC Class of 2022

Jack Aronson
Carson Amstutz
Cole Bernstein
Ryan Bernstein
Ethan Blacher
Noam Dor
David Fisher
Noah Fishman
Ben Flaxman
Robert Getty
Jack Gordon
Nick Krishnan
Eric Lakemaker
Alex Luo
Evan Morris
Lucas Moskovitz
Chase Needelman
Jonah Satyr
Brandon Stein
Ian Van Every
Yijia Wang

Freshmen

DFDC Class of 2023

Jacob Cohn
Nathan Dubinsky
Charlie Dumo
Emmett Dunn
Adam Fenster
Zach Garland
Lucas Goldenberg
Kyle Jensen
Brandon Kerpel
Adam Khan
Nathan Kim
Owen Lacy
Jeremy Lamm
TJ Mangurten
Gavin Picklin
Jack Pinsky
Jordan Plocker
Charlie Sandberg
Ethan Schott
Aden Siegel
Jacob Smith
Drew Spiegel
Dylan Teitelbaum
Avi Wolkenberg
Yaokai Yang

2019-20 Accomplishments

CSL North Conference CHAMPIONS!

On all four levels

- Varsity Champions!
- JV Champions!
- Sophomore Champions!
- Freshman Champions!

Seven CSL North All-Conference Runners:

- Cole Bernstein (So) – 3rd place
- Josh Puyear (Jr) – 4th place
- Ben Kraemer (Sr) – 5th place
- Lucas Moskovitz (So) – 8th place
- Ryan Bernstein (So) – 9th place
- Eric Lakemaker (So) – 12th place
- Ben Zamler (Jr) – 14th place

(Note: First time in school history with 7 All-Conference runners)

IHSA 3A Regional Runners Up

IHSA 3A Sectional Qualifiers

Hornet-Red Devil Invite Sophomore Champions!

Pat Savage Peoria Notre Dame Invite Frosh/Soph Champions!

Prospect Invite JV Champions!

- Frosh/Soph Runners-Up

Deerfield Cross Country Recent History

CSL North Conference Champions

2019, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005

IHSA State Championships

2A Team Qualifiers

2017, 2015, 2014, 2012

IHSA State Championships

3A Individual Qualifiers

Alex Gold (2011 – 35th)

Billy Malmed (2008 – 28th)

Scott Friedlander (2007 – 21st)

Noble Schermerhorn (2006 – 11th)

Noble Schermerhorn (2005 – 36th)

Dan Bailey (2005 – 85th)

Jeff Bailey (2001 – 96th)

Ben Kraemer
Bradley Brodsky
Declan Black
Henry Shore
Charles Nash
Billy Anderson
Reilly Grant
Alex Gold
Pat Wylie
Dan Channon
Michael Bukszar
Billy Malmed
Scott Friedlander
Joe Sullivan
Colin Johnson
Jordan Bell-Masterson
Noble Schermerhorn
Chris Sally
Dan Bailey
Matt Cervarich
Jeff Bailey
Nate Stops

Collegiate Cross Country Runners

DFDC 2020 Vanderbilt University
DFDC 2019 Drake University
DFDC 2019 Savannah College of Art and Design
DFDC 2018 St. Olaf College
DFDC 2015 University of Iowa
DFDC 2015 St. Olaf College
DFDC 2014 Grinnell College
DFDC 2013 University of Illinois
DFDC 2010 University of Pittsburgh
DFDC 2010 University of Wisconsin – Stout
DFDC 2010 Loras College
DFDC 2009 Vanderbilt University
DFDC 2008 Brown University
DFDC 2008 University of Chicago
DFDC 2008 Augustana College
DFDC 2008 Grinnell College
DFDC 2007 University of Illinois
DFDC 2007 Augustana College
DFDC 2007 Augustana College
DFDC 2006 Augustana College
DFDC 2006 Vaparaiso University
DFDC 2003 Augustana College
DFDC 2002 Butler University



Unique Features That Make Cross Country Awesome!

Everyone can join – no cuts. Everyone competes – no benchwarmers. Everyone has a chance to accomplish individual goals.

Although cross country contains varsity, junior varsity, sophomore, and freshmen levels, the separation only applies to racing. We are truly one single team of about 85 runners from freshmen to seniors and from slowest to fastest. There is one coaching staff and one big, altogether practice each day. We all go to meets together, but compete at different times, which means the freshmen get to watch and cheer for Varsity, and Varsity gets to watch and cheer for the freshmen.

Most runners do not disband after the season ends. It's completely optional, but about 70% of our roster becomes the distance crew on the Track & Field team in the winter and spring – joining forces with sprinters, jumpers, and throwers on a roster that reaches over 100 athletes. Head cross country coach Scott Friedlander is also on the Track & Field coaching staff as the long distance event specialist.

Summer: The team gets together to run over the summer. All summer long, the runners meet at 6:30 AM Mon-Fri before they disperse to their jobs, summer school, etc. This is a great way to get a head start on training and to get to know your teammates before the school year starts. Email sfriedlander@dist113.org for more details. But again, it is optional, and we welcome any newcomers who want to begin once the official season starts in mid-August.



HEAR WHAT OUR PARENTS HAVE TO SAY

"My son spent four years running cross country and indoor and outdoor track. I must say I was surprised when my son decided to do cross country. He had played other sports; baseball, basketball and volleyball. But running as a sport...never. In fact, I didn't get him running shoes before his first practice, thinking once he learned about the sport, he wouldn't do it. Was I wrong!!!

I can't tell you how grateful I am as a parent to see all the positive aspects that come from being on the DFDC. The friendships that form are bonds that are so strong. Most of these boys end up running all year long. They get hooked. It happened with my son. Another positive aspect to the sport is that kids from different grade levels are all together. When my son was a freshman, the older boys would drive him home from practices and the many food runs (you burn lots of calories, so food is a must!!) It is part of the culture of the team, look out for your team and help one another.

I can't end before talking about the fabulous coaches They set the tone for the team. They are positive, motivating and truly passionate about the sport and give that to the team. I am so thankful to have them be such a positive influence on my son. They have taught him not just about the sport of running, but life skills...dedication, perseverance, tenacity, and commitment"

-Felicia Schneider
Mother of Brett ('17)

"Our son who is a sophomore and autistic was welcomed as part of the team on day 1! He doesn't run fast, and the other boys finish ahead of him, but when he does cross the line, many of his DFDC teammates are there urging and cheering him on. He goes to all the team pasta dinners and is accepted as a teammate and friend. This team IS a family and have each other's backs."

-Mila and Neil Burmeister
Parents of Andrew ('17) and
Aleksandar ('20)

"Joining DFDC was the best decision, the greatest start to Bradley's high school career. Bradley was hesitant to join but after the first practice, he was hooked. Since that first run, he has never looked back, not ever wanted anything different. It is the greatest group of boys, friends, mentors and coaches that any parent could wish for. It is a FAMILY from day one. The way the boys support one another, stick by each other and have fun together is second to none. It is a parents dream to have their child participate in something so healthy, so strong, so formative as the DFDC."

-Debbie Brodsky
Mother of Bradley ('19)

HEAR WHAT OUR PARENTS HAVE TO SAY

"We are the proud and very grateful parents of 3 devoted and accomplished members of the DHS Cross Country and Track Teams – Danny (2009), Alex (2013) and Matthew (2018). We cannot rave enough about how we feel the program enhanced their high school experience and how the program enriched their character and maturity. Running is an incredible sport and teaches remarkable life lessons on and off the course. It requires hard work, dedication, sacrifice, smart decisions with rewards that are incredibly satisfying and real. The team is like a family and the boys look out for each other across all grades. They have so much fun and follow countless creative and hilarious traditions. The friendship created among these boys is so strong that alumni continue to return to meet long after graduation. Many of the alumni will tell you that the life lessons learned from running at DHS continue to help drive their decisions in college and beyond. We highly recommend that you encourage your son to give the teams a chance."

-Laura and Mike Gold
Parents of Danny ('09), Alex ('13), and Matt ('18)

"Sending a shy, chubby, non-athletic BOY to high school is daunting, and I was nervous that even a no-cut sport would not be able to make room for my son Reilly. Indeed, he was the slowest entering freshman when he started, but earned the respect and friendship of his teammates by showing up and working hard each day. The team culture of inclusion, hard work and peer pressure to succeed as a student by making good, healthy choices became Reilly's way of life - a way of life that has followed him through college. I could not be more grateful for the structure that culture provided during a time when peer influence can derail a high school student's path to success. I credit the DFDC with putting Reilly on the right path and running beside him until he could see his way to his own potential."

-Mimi Noonan
Mother of Reilly Grant ('14)

"From Justin's first week as a freshman with the team he knew that he wanted to work hard and be great at his sport. What he didn't expect was that the lessons he would learn would go far beyond XC. Through the influence of the wonderful coaches, mentorship from older teammates and hard training these young men discover their potential at a critical age. This transformation will affect the way they see the world and approach challenges throughout their lives. We have loved watching Justin grow through this sport over the last 4 years and are so grateful to the DFDC community for all of the support and friendships. Thank you for a lifetime of memories!"

-Vic and Laura Lew
Parents of Justin ('17)

A WORD FROM OUR GRADUATING CAPTAINS

Ben Kraemer DFDC Class of 2020

**4th Place Finish in Varsity Conference
Attending Vanderbilt University**



I hated running for the first two months of my freshman cross country season, but I kept coming to practice because I had so much fun when we weren't running. It was so cool to get driven home by upperclassmen and go to team events, like our BBQ and banana relay. Once I started enjoying running, it was the perfect fit. Throughout my four years of high school, cross country gave me an opportunity to excel athletically, but more importantly I found lifelong friends and made unforgettable memories. The DFDC is very inclusive and has an extremely strong culture, with super fun traditions dating back several decades.

Jason Dahlberg DFDC Class of 2020

**4th Place Finish in JV Conference
Attending the University of Texas**



The DFDC dramatically changed who I am as a person in the best ways possible. I think the most important change I encountered was learning how to test my strengths and weaknesses as a person. Running highlights what you are good at (for me it was finding a daily routine) and what I wasn't so great at (diet was a big one for me.) I am so fortunate that I got to learn all of this with people who are now an extended family to me. Joining is one of the best decisions I've ever made.

Grant Fisher DFDC Class of 2020

**8th Place Finish in JV Conference
Attending Indiana University**



I originally joined the DFDC as a means of conditioning for tennis in the spring. All it took was a few weeks to realize I wanted to commit full time. Team comradery extends from our fastest runners to the one towards the back, and everyone is very supportive of helping you accomplish team and personal goals. Friendships are formed both inside and out of practice, ones that will last forever. DFDC has a great reputation of holding everyone to top academic & athletic standards, forming well-balanced student-athletes.

Joe Ariano DFDC Class of 2020

**11th Place Finish in JV Conference
Attending the University of Dayton**



Joining the DFDC has easily been the best choice I have made. After my first day with the team, I got that gut feeling that I knew I had found something incredibly special. And from there I went on to meet some of my greatest friends, have the most fun times of my life, and I learned to be the best person I can be. High school is a new and changing time in everyone's lives and this team helped me with that transition greatly. It gave me a solid group of guys to always be there for me, to have fun with, but also to be role models. While we do run a lot, this team is so much more than running, it's a special group of people.

Jacob Nitsun DFDC Class of 2020

**57th Place Finish in JV Conference
Attending the University of Michigan**



Going into my Freshman year, I joined cross country in order to stay in shape for basketball. Little did I know, the DFDC would shape my high school life at DHS. Not only does the DFDC teach you to be a hard worker on the trails, but it teaches you how to be a hard worker off of them. The team taught me to balance athletics and academics in a way in which you can maximize your potential in both. These lessons were invaluable and will resonate with me throughout the rest of my life. When looking back on my high school experience, I will undoubtedly attribute any success I may have had to the DFDC and the lessons it taught me.