

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. Ten short years ago, I graduated from Deerfield High School, and 14 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 14 and 10 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 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 a decade ago, 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

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Head Coach
Scott Friedlander
DFDC Class of 2008

2017-18 Team Captain
Dylan Wheatley
DFDC Class of 2018

Assistant Coach
Mike Nigliaccio

2017-18 Team Captain
Henry Shore
DFDC Class of 2018

2017-18 Team Captain
Matt Gold
DFDC Class of 2018

2017-18 Team Captain
Ben Wolfe
DFDC Class of 2018

2017-2018 Cross Country Team Roster

Seniors – DFDC Class of 2018

Noah Blaustein
Matt Butler
Aaron Cohen
Zach Dolnick
Will Dowell
Jack Fisher
Matt Gold
Ben Kamen
Matt Kamen
Seth Neiman
Jaxson Perlow
Henry Shore
Dylan Wheatley
Ben Wolfe

Jacob Nitsun
Jeremy Plofsky
Micah Plofsky
Coby Segal
Elai Spector

Freshmen – DFDC Class of 2021

Brendan Beamer
Max Bolon
Ethan Friedman
Mark Goldenberg
Jake Goldstone
Zack Greco
Charlie Hart
Joe Healy
Thomas Hu
Jonah Kaplan
Hayden Katz
Asher Kriegel
Logan Lofland
Zach Luke
Brent Meilman
Tyler Nagelbach
AJ Osborn
Alex Pettigrew
Josh Puyear
Brian Reich
Cameron Rich
Jeremy Rosenblum
Drew Shore
Ben Spiegel
Trey Symonanis
Reid Wilson
Ben Zamler

Juniors – DFDC Class of 2019

Daniel Ballenger
Declan Black
Bradley Brodsky
Daniel Chertow
Matt Krengel
Brett Needelman
Noah Seed
Jonathan Walk

Sophomores – DFDC Class of 2020

Joe Ariano
Wyatt Browdy
Aleksandar Burmeister
Mac Cooley
Jason Dahlberg
Grant Fisher
Ben Kraemer
Matthew Kroscher

2017-18 Accomplishments

IHSA 2A State Finals Qualifiers
Finished in 13th Place!

IHSA 2A Sectional Champions!

IHSA 2A Regional Champions!

CSL North Conference Runners-Up

Three CSL North All-Conference Runners:
Matt Gold (Sr) – 4th place
Bradley Brodsky (Jr) – 5th place
Henry Shore (Sr) – 7th place

Whitney Young Invite Champions!
-Varsity and JV races



Deerfield Cross Country Recent History

CSL North Conference Champions
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, 2005 – 36th), Dan Bailey (2005 – 85th), Jeff Bailey (2001 – 96th)

Collegiate Cross Country Runners

Henry Shore	DFDC Class of 2018
Charles Nash	DFDC Class of 2015
Billy Anderson	DFDC Class of 2015
Reilly Grant	DFDC Class of 2014
Alex Gold	DFDC Class of 2013
Pat Wylie	DFDC Class of 2010
Dan Channon	DFDC Class of 2010
Michael Bukszar	DFDC Class of 2010
Billy Malmed	DFDC Class of 2009
Scott Friedlander	DFDC Class of 2008
Joe Sullivan	DFDC Class of 2008
Colin Johnson	DFDC Class of 2008
Jordan Bell-Masterson	DFDC Class of 2008
Noble Schermerhorn	DFDC Class of 2007
Chris Sally	DFDC Class of 2007
Dan Bailey	DFDC Class of 2006
Matt Cervarich	DFDC Class of 2006
Jeff Bailey	DFDC Class of 2003
Nate Stopps	DFDC Class of 2002

St. Olaf College
University of Iowa
St. Olaf College
Grinnell College
University of Illinois
University of Pittsburgh
University of Wisconsin – Stout
Loras College
Vanderbilt University
Brown University
University of Chicago
Augustana College
Grinnell College
University of Illinois
Augustana College
Augustana College
Valparaiso University
Augustana College
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 60 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. About 80% 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 nearly 100 athletes. Head cross country coach Scott Friedlander is also on the Track & Field coaching staff as the long distance event specialist.

Summer: We hold optional practices over the summer. All summer long, we meet at 6:30 AM Mon-Fri before the runners disperse to their jobs, summer school, etc. This is a great way to get a head start on training and 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 (and the great coaching) 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

Matt Gold DFDC Class of 2018

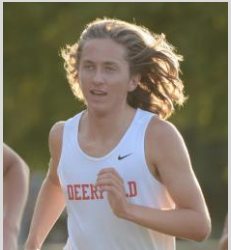
**4th Place Finish at Conference
Attending University of Illinois**



As a baseball player throughout my childhood, switching to running Cross Country and Track was one of the best decisions of my entire life. By joining the team I made many of my best friends and learned how to be a tougher person. Along with making friends and staying in great shape, the team has a unique culture bringing each other closer, from seniors to freshman, and farther away from drugs and alcohol. The DFDC takes pride in its high GPA average and low substance use across the athletes. We love what we do and push through the toughness together and find ways to make it fun.

Henry Shore DFDC Class of 2018

**7th Place Finish at Conference
Attending St. Olaf College**



The DFDC is truly an amazing group of lads. From my very first practice, I knew this was my place to be. Everyone was very welcoming and accepting, no matter how different you may be. As I spent more time with the team, I noticed that I started to make better decisions and genuinely become more happy. After four years, I can confidently say joining the team has become the best decision I have ever made. The memories, the fun, the struggle, the success, the teammates, absolutely nothing can compare to my time in the DFDC. This is a brotherhood like no other.

Ben Wolfe DFDC Class of 2018

**27th Place Finish at Conference
Joining the Air Force, then attending Western Michigan U**



Joining cross country was the best decision of my life. I have meet incredible people, done amazing things, and pushed myself to achieve greatness. But above all else, it has made me a better person. Cross country at Deerfield is more than a sport because of the bonds and relationships built between the upperclassmen and underclassman. Being a freshman and having incredible upperclassman of upstanding character to follow the footsteps of really cultivates a group of goal oriented people in a healthy environment, and I hope this sparks some interests!

Dylan Wheatley DFDC Class of 2018

Attending University of Michigan



Coming in, I had never played sports nor ran more than a mile, but that didn't matter. This team is more than just fast runners (although we have plenty); it's a culture that fosters determination and hard work on and off the course. Most importantly it's a family. The last runner to finish mixes with the first. The upperclassmen befriend the underclassmen. The seniors drive you to practice, say hi in the halls, help you with homework, go with you to lunch after meets, and constantly make an effort to include you. I never ended up being the fastest runner, but I have been transformed, learned life skills, and wouldn't trade my experience for anything.