

KING HIGH CROSS COUNTRY

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xc4life ~ learning, integrity, faithfulness, excellence

September 1, 2017

During our Summer Speaker Series, King alum Carissa Hoerner spoke eloquently to our athletes about the role suffering plays in running cross country. “If you get anything out of this sport” she said, “it will be how to suffer well.”

True words that were coincidentally brought up by our seniors in Mammoth a couple weeks later. Per our tradition, they spoke to their teammates on the last night of the camp. Almost to a person, and unbeknownst to each other, they spoke of their suffering, the wounds they have taken and endured during their time in life and in running. It was a powerful night of echoing for themselves what Carissa had said was her main takeaway from high school and collegiate running.

It reminded me of the lyric to a song I’ve been running through my head for a couple years now. It’s titled *Where The Light Shines Through* from the writer, Jon Foreman. Part of the song goes like this:

*...You're a version of yourself, but you're not the same
You try to keep the wound camouflaged, and
The stitches heal, but the years are lost, and
Another bottle on the shelf can't numb the pain
Why are you running from yourself now?
You can't run away
'Cause your scars shine like dark stars
Yeah, your wounds are where the light shines through
So let's go there, to that place where
We sing these broken prayers where the light shines through--
The wound is where the light shines through
Yeah, the wound is where the light shines through*

Later, he writes, “*The only tattoos that I have are scars.*”

Wounds – physical, mental, emotional – are part of life, and competitive sports can just highlight them. But as I listened to our seniors that Friday night in Mammoth, I realized that many of them are beginning to see the light cracking through the holes in their souls. They’re beginning to see that while none of us wants to suffer, life wounds us and when it comes, the suffering can become the “dark stars” or the “tattoos” that mark us. Ironically, they can also become the most beautiful scars imaginable if we follow Carissa’s advice. Learn to suffer well and grow through the pain. Let the wounds let light shine through, illuminating things about yourself once hidden in the shadows cast by comfort and ease.

In a sport such as ours, pain will mark the journey. Any good runner will tell you that; embracing the suffering is the ONLY way to success. What’s true in running is true in life. If you’re not quite there yet kids, that’s ok, but I urge you to start thinking differently about the suffering, the wounding that comes with the sport and with life.

Your scars can become your most beautiful tattoos. It’s just a matter of how you thinc about them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Our first race is tomorrow. Directions, times, teams, lineups ... all on the website.

What to pack? Here's a list:

- 1) A positive attitude and competitive spirit
- 2) Confidence
- 3) Purpose and a plan
- 4) Running shoes, racing shoes, team shirt, team sweats, uniform
- 5) 64 ounces of water or Gatorade
- 6) small snack of carbs
- 7) toilet paper roll
- 8) Sunblock, cell phone, ear buds,
- 9) \$ for t-shirt (optional)

No team practice on Labor Day

Our second meet will be at the Mt.Carmel Invitational in San Diego. Trust me, it's worth the drive! Afternoon races on a historic course and a competitive meet. We have had a three year span from the meet, but historically it's been a meet and course that we've competed on many, many times. Excited to return!

The Big 8 League will open this month. The first race (against all five schools simultaneously) will be September 20 at Eastvale Park, hosted by Roosevelt.

Clovis Overnight trip: October 6-7 we will return to the Clovis Invitational. It is a large and very competitive meet that draws teams from across the state to run on the famed "state meet course" at Woodward Park. We will invite 14 boys and 14 girls to go on the trip. It does cost the athlete's family, approximately \$125. A precise cost will be made in mid-September when we assemble the teams that will go.

Fundraising: We ask that all families raise \$125 to help meet our \$12,000 in needed funding for this season. Please do what you can, we appreciate your help tremendously. We will also have some "eat out" events this month and next at restaurants that will give us a percentage back of our sales. See the website for more details and dates.

Sweats: The sweats are on loan and we ask that you treat them with care. We will have the recollected after the season is over. Damaged or lost sweats will be billed to the athlete at \$80.

Booster Club Meeting: The next one will be on September 11 at 7:00 PM in Coach Peters' classroom.