

# AVON LAKE CROSS COUNTRY'S

## *"Meet Cheat Sheet"*

Tiffin

Saturday 9.7.13

### TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF TAKE CARE OF YOUR TEAMMATES ALLOW YOUR TEAMMATES TO TAKE CARE OF YOU

One of our goals for our team is for everyone to take ownership of this team. Ownership means that everyone owns a piece of the team. For everyone to own a piece of it, every person has to have a role on the team, for the team's benefit. There are no captains of this team—I don't believe in one or two captains taking the lead and everyone following. Instead everyone needs to take a role on the team, everyone needs to own a piece of it. You need to help the team and allow the team to help you when you need it.

This is important, and key to our team philosophy. If you are the number one runner, you are our anchor. You need to set the tone for the entire team. But, the number one runner needs to know that our 2<sup>nd</sup> runner is backing them up! That runner is right behind you, so you're not alone.

Some of you are taking ownership of this team by helping us at practice, organizing Friday Game Days, setting up and taking down camps, and getting everyone ready for races. The encouragement at practice, getting everyone to take dynamic stretches seriously, and making sure everyone stretches after practice are all examples of taking ownership of this team. It's not one athlete's team, or a group of athletes' team, or the coaching staff's team. It's **our** team.

It is important for our 8<sup>th</sup> grade runners to initiate talking to, encouraging, and reflecting with the team on our races. This is part of taking care of each other. 8<sup>th</sup> graders, you need to take the lead on this, as you need to talk to the 7<sup>th</sup> graders about the races you just ran, how everyone felt, what the first mile was like, what the second mile was like, how you attacked the hill, when you surged, how you felt after the race, etc. We are not just running any more, we are racing. And now it's important to take care of each other as we are competing against other teams and one of the ways we can get better as a team is if we start talking about racing. This continues with reflecting on our races. We expect you to start talking and reflecting on races on the bus rides to and from the meets. Keep it light, have fun, but start talking to each other about racing. More to the point, start talking about how you **felt** about the races you have run. I always tell teams that the only people who can ever really understand how you feel at that

moment when you line up for a race are the people you're lining up to race **with**. Share with them! And allow them to share with you.

Last week we talked about how winning is not as important as who we win with. Now we are focusing on taking care of each other by continuing to do all those good things we've been doing AND by talking to each other about what we're doing. Great teams take care of each other and communicate with each other! Communication is huge.

## *“Team Racing Goals”*

### **1. Talk to each other!**

In addition to talking about and reflecting on our racing, we want to start talking to each other **during** races. Not a lot! No conversations out there! But short words of encouragement and short phrases of instruction. Examples of this are:

‘Stay up with me!’

‘Great job!’

‘Surge here!’

‘Lean in on the hill.’

Keep your phrases short, positive (**always positive**), and focused on you and your team. This is another example of taking care of yourself (if you can take care of someone else you know you're okay), taking care of your teammates (they need you), and helping your team (the team benefits when it is **pushed**)!

### **2. Surge.**

We briefly mentioned surging last week. At Earlybird our racing goal was to run as a pack. This week, we want you to run with groups within the pack, and now we want you to focus on surging! A surge is a brief, quick burst of speed spread out throughout the course of a race. It's only a few steps. You are going to surge around any small dips (you'll be using gravity to your advantage), around corners, and at the base of any large hills. It's only 3-4 steps. Afterward, you'll go right back to your regular running form. Surge with your teammates!

### **3. Stretch.**

Just as we've talked about diet and how important a role it plays, and how rest will help you on easy days and at the end of the season, dynamic & static stretches are vital to your overall improvement this season. We need to continue our great dynamic stretches *for the rest of the season*! Additionally, we need to start doing static stretches at the end of practice more consistently and **you need to stretch at home every night!** Also, on your off day (Sunday), make sure you stretch again (but no running).

## *“Reminders from the last 2 weeks”*

- Get a good start, practice good form, and finish through the chute!
- You can run with your teammates (pack running), but remember there will come a time when you will either have to leave the pack, or the pack will leave you. This is normal! Don't allow your pack to pull you back and don't let the pack be pulled back by you! Remember to communicate with each other at Tiffin. Again, there will be a time when the pack breaks up. This is normal and to be expected! So far, you've executed very well!
- Finish with nothing left. Middle school runners just have to experiment with this. It's hard to tell someone how they should FEEL, and really, no coach can tell you what your body is able to withstand. Coaches can do their job by setting up a good 1<sup>st</sup> mile, but the 2<sup>nd</sup> mile is really all up to you. Training will get you a good 1<sup>st</sup> mile. Your heart and desire will get you through the 2<sup>nd</sup> mile. Or, as my old coach said, First mile is skill. Second mile is will. You will get there! And when you do get there, you'll know it. And once you realize you did your absolute best, you'll no longer fear the pain of pushing yourself to your limit.

## *“Keep our SEASON GOALS in mind”*

#1

Promote a healthy lifestyle

#2

Ownership

#3

Collective Responsibility

Let's have some fun at Tiffin!

***GO SHOREMEN***

***&***

***SHOREGALS!***