

Eat Well, Feel Well, Run Well

Nutrition Testaments From Varsity Runners

Whether someone is completing a grueling marathon or taking a leisurely jog around the block, all levels of runners need proper nourishment for their body. This can look a little different for everyone, but especially for a team such as Lincoln Southwest's girls varsity cross-country team. They were second place at state this year and the amount of mileage they put their body through in season could make any non-runner gasp. But, how do these elite runners fuel their bodies in order to sustain this sport and feel their best?

"The day before my race I go to my pasta feed with my team and carb (carbohydrate) load on all the pasta," says sophomore Emerson Hogeland. "I usually put red meat with that because that's good for iron, and it's more carbs."

This iron in red meat is so crucial to someone in cross-country because as you run, the exercise increases iron loss through sweat and red blood cell destruction, so getting this back through foods, with red meat being one of the most rich in this chemical (Dietary Guidelines for Americans), is vital for good performance. But, what a runner has the day before a run isn't the only important piece in this puzzle. What one has the day of can also affect the body's endurance.

"I like having a peanut butter banana sandwich, because I get the carbs from the bread and the protein from the peanut butter," says sophomore Hannah Soucie. "Along with healthy fats and potassium from the banana."

There seems to be a pattern of carbs being involved when talking about pre-run foods, which is no coincidence. This is because carbohydrates provide glucose, the primary fuel for the body, which is stored as glycogen in muscles and the liver for later use (Johns Hopkins Medicine). All of this scientific wording is to say that if someone under-eats carbs, it can be very hard on the body and affect recovery after exercise. For a runner like Hannah, who is often running heavy mileage, it is essential that she gets the right amount of carbs to recover from the energy she inevitably loses. Speaking of recovery, food is also a critical part of regaining what is lost while running.

"Right after a race, I eat a popsicle," says junior Meredith Marsh. "You need to get enough (energy) to make sure that you can make it through the race."

A popsicle may not seem like a powerhouse when it comes to nutritional value, but because popsicles are primarily water, it helps replenish the fluids lost in sweat (Boston Magazine). Not only this, it can be a source of electrolytes for the body, which aids muscle function and recovery.

So, while there may be some contrast in what different high-level runners are specifically eating, one thing remains the same across the board: fueling the body with the right food is necessary, and listening to your body before, during, and after a run is absolutely imperative.

A Tight-Knit Community

Fashion Club Opens its Doors to Creative Minds

Fashion Club is a new addition to Southwest's list of extracurriculars and a place where students can make clothes, alter them and do crafts such as crocheting and sewing. Members meet every Thursday after school in room C110.

“I think a lot of friendships are growing from this club,” club president and junior Fatima Al-Hilfy Leon said. “I really like to see it because it’s a lot of students that you wouldn’t think would become friends, but they really do have a nice common ground.”

The sponsor of this organization, Mrs. Elizabeth Griffith, oversees the week-by-week operations. In her own words, “this extracurricular is a place where innovative, creative and intelligent people can come together in a safe space.” Fashion Club also offers extra resources that people may not normally have access to.

“We have a lot of cool tools here at school that we can use,” Griffith said. “We use really advanced sewing machines, fabrics and a space that people don’t necessarily have at their own homes.”

It is noticeable that when talking to members, one of the most unique aspects in Fashion Club is the community. People can work on their own individual projects, while at the same time feeling a sense of support and friendship.

“I’d say it’s a place where people can congregare and work to pursue their creative projects, usually involving fashion,” club vice president and junior Belle Blessen said. “It’s a community of people who create and have fun.”

It seems that Fashion Club to many is not just a well-equipped place to take on different creative endeavors, but also acts as a gateway to new friendships and builds a community full of like-minded individuals. Whether you are handy with all things crafts or are lacking experience, Fashion Club members encourage all new people to join.

“It’s a fun place to learn something new,” Al-Hilfy Leon said. “It’s a good learning environment, and a fun area if you need to calm down after a long day of school.”

From First Base to First Place

Hawks On Top in State Softball Championship

The state championship is seen to some as the pinnacle of high school sports. The final is the game where great teams can show off their talent and shine on the field, court or course. No stars would shine brighter on Monday, Oct. 20 than the Lincoln Southwest varsity softball team, who claimed their fifth state championship in program history against the Millard North Mustangs. Their extensive knowledge of pitching, hitting, and baserunning proved to be beneficial, with the final score being 4-2.

There were many factors that went into this victory, including the pitching talent showcased by one particular Silver Hawk. Sophomore Maisey McCarty pitched seven innings of play and was able to wrangle the Mustangs, holding them to only two runs. She was collected on the mound, and with the help of her catcher, was able to strike out ten batters in total.

“My pitchers are so good that they know their physical adjustments,” said junior catcher Morgan Gabel, “I think it’s important to give them the mental confidence they need, remind them that I have their back and they can play free.”

Even if the pitchers are phenomenal, there is still a mental aspect of the game that may often tamper with an athlete's ability. Specifically for Maisey, she remarks that staying calm and grounded was a way for her to combat her nerves and control what she was doing on the mound.

“I had to slow the game down and kept breathing when situations got tough,” McCarty said, “I just had to trust in my skills and know that everything was going to happen for the right reason.”

While the pitching was a big factor in Southwest’s success, the bats were also working this game for the Silver Hawks. One standout player was sophomore Raegan Brandt, who had three at-bats and a .667 batting average. When asked about her hitting process, she mentioned that a big part of her routine before stepping in the box is her faith. She draws a cross on the dirt and looks at her bat, reminding herself that God is with her through everything. State championships are the final game of the season, and the one that many deem to be the most important, which can make even the greatest athletes nervous.

“The energy for the state games will take your breath away,” Brandt said. “There is so much more pressure and energy is through the roof, but we have to stay true to ourselves and play Silver Hawk softball.”

Between the players on the field and supporters in the stands, the level of play that both teams displayed was evident. But, Lincoln Southwest was able to pull through with teamwork and determination in order to secure a championship win that would go in the Nebraska State Athletic Association (NSAA) history books.

“Winning state was a goal we set at the beginning of the season and we talked about it every day at practice,” Gabel said. “It was always at the front of our mind and to end the season on top felt so good.”