

Track Guidelines

The Vigilante Track Club (aka "Helena Nooners") is now in its fifth year of formal workouts held on Tuesdays during the lunch hour. The track workouts have been a positive experience for many Helena area athletes (we are now up to 116 on the listserve!), offering an excellent opportunity to train among friendly and supportive runners. The basic structure divides the year into 3 "phases" -- Spring training (culminating with the Governor's Cup), Summer training (now broken into two sub-phases), and Fall training (culminating with the Montana Cup -- see www.montanacup.com). In the schedule, you will also see a list of races that some of our runners may be participating in (see www.runmt.com for more info.) We will also try to include at least one social event per phase.

*Note: The Vigilante Track Group listserve is a closed "invite-only" format. If you are a Helena-area runner and interested in joining, please send a request to Patrick Judge at pjudge@bresnan.net

Once you are a member, you may post a message to the "vig" listserve (short for Vigilante Stadium) simply by sending an email addressed to "vig@npogroups.org" and all 120 members will receive it. Directions for removing yourself from the list are included at the bottom of each message that you receive.

Track Guidelines:

- unless otherwise noticed, intervals will begin at Vigilante Stadium at 12:15 sharp on Tuesdays
- make sure to complete your warm-up by that time -- this ought to include some stretching, 1-2 miles of easy jogging, and 4 x 100 m strides (strides are accelerators to prepare your body for the faster-paced intervals)
- you should complete the workout with a warm-down that includes another 1-2 easy miles, and some gentle stretching
- the training schedule assumes a basic level of physical fitness & running-specific conditioning. It is designed to help prepare people to reach their competitive goals -- generally, we begin each "phase" with longer, slower, strength-building intervals and then transition to some faster, sharpening workouts prior to some of the bigger races
- in other words, these workouts may not be appropriate for everyone -- each runner has the responsibility of modifying the workouts to match their own conditioning and goals -- runners might choose to do an "every other interval" type workout, run some of their intervals at an easier pace, or complete just the first half of the workout, for example

- we usually break the big group into 2-3 smaller groups of runners who are closer in ability, to make sure that everyone gets an appropriate rest interval in between the running intervals. each group has a leader in charge of timing the rest interval, bringing everyone to the line, and starting the next interval. the groups go by the monikers “Aspen” (fastest), “Birch,” and “Cedar.”

***NEW IN 2007: Karen Powell has suggested that the Cedars might try a somewhat more independent schedule this year. All runners would still be working out at the same time and place, with everyone encouraging each other, but the Cedars would be doing somewhat different specially-tailored workouts. I think it's a great idea, and commend Karen for stepping forward and volunteering to help coordinate.

- training smart is **ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN THE HEAT!!** -- Make sure to stay **WELL** hydrated and to back off if you start having any problems -- and make sure to wear sun block!

- I see my role more as “track coordinator,” rather than coach -- my purpose is simply to let people know that there is a group of people gathering for a workout, and to offer a suggested workout schedule. If you would like specific coaching advice, I would recommend several good books (Bob Glover, Jeff Galloway, etc.) or you could retain the services of Montana's star marathoner Nicole Hunt, at www.speedendurance.net, Helena's own Brian Wieck: (http://www.helenarunningclub.com/docs/running_specialist.pdf) or other services. And of course, you should always consult a doctor before embarking on any strenuous physical fitness program!

- Pat's #2 Pet Peeve (second only to being sued -- see disclaimer above!) -- we are very fortunate to have access to a magnificent facility like Vigilante. Please try to show respect by following the posted rules. In particular, please try to stay out of the inside lanes when **NOT** running intervals. When warming-up or warming-down, please jog in the middle or outside lanes. The lifespan of the track is primarily determined by the wear that takes place in Lanes 1 & 2. During each phase, we try to include a number of “track saving workouts” that spread the impact across multiple lanes. We have also been doing more of our workouts at alternate locations. During school months, make sure to be respectful of the middle school kids who sometimes run a couple of laps on the track as part of their gym class. By starting at 12:15, we should be off the track before the post-lunch crowd emerges (which usually happens at 5 or 10 minutes after 1:00). Thank you for your cooperation, and have a great season running!