

MOTIVATIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL METHODS USED BY  
HIGH SCHOOL CROSS COUNTRY COACHES

by

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## INTRODUCTION

Successful distance running requires a great deal of hard work and sacrifice on the part of the athlete. Running mile after mile, day after day can become very monotonous.

Distance coaches know that a great deal of variety must be incorporated into the runner's workouts. Only then will monotony and boredom be curtailed.

Just what can a coach do to bring about this variety that is so necessary for successful distance running? The answer may be found through the use of various gimmicks and drills.

The most successful cross country coaches know that to get high school and college boys to run from 2.0 to 6.0 miles consistently faster than their opposition they must avail themselves of all the thought and ingenuity they can muster. This means using gimmicks and gadgets of a motivational nature.<sup>(1)</sup>

The high school cross country coach is continually confronted with the task of motivating boys to participate. The coach must also be concerned with ways of building additional interest in boys who are already participating

The motivation of cross country runners is not an easy task. It requires endless hours of organization and ingenuity. The coaching of distance runners can be one of the most rewarding of coaching assignments. If from the endless hours of motivating young men to participate, a coach can develop a few great ones along the way and many more who will testify to the help received from these programs, then the task has been well worth the effort.

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(1) Scholastic Coach, "Cross Country Gadgets and Gimmicks", Bruce L. Waha and Robert A. Briner, Detroit, Michigan: Vol. 33 - No. 7, 1964, p. 38.