

RUNNER'S

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High School Runner :Training

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Stretching Out

Staying loose for peak performance

By Mike McLaughlin

Stretching exercises, as shown by athletes from Christian Brothers Academy in Lincroft, New Jersey, should be a part of every runner's training program. You must stretch-before and after running-to keep muscles loose, enabling you to run your best and avoid injury. Stretching is a daily routine at CBA, which has won numerous state track and cross-country titles.

In fact, one of CBA's founders was the late running guru Dr. George Sheehan, a former Runner's World columnist who often trained on the school grounds. Here are some of CBA's top runners demonstrating must-do exercises devised by Karl Torchia, head outdoor track coach, who serves as an assistant coach for cross-country and indoor track. Head cross-country coach is Tom Heath; indoor coach in Bob Maher. Torchia recommends holding each stretch for 20 to 30 seconds. Before stretching, always jog for at least 10 minutes to warm up the muscles.

Groin Stretch

While sitting upright with chest and head up, place legs in front with heels together. Press knees down with elbows while keeping hands on ankles. Keep back straight and lean in from hips; no "rounded" back.

Hamstring Stretch

While sitting, extend left leg with right leg bent, knee out and right foot touching left leg in quadriceps area. Lean in from the hips, pushing chest toward knee with hands extended to left foot. Do both sides.

Calf Stretch

Raise body off ground as in push-up, with hands forward, palms on ground. Cross feet, keeping bottom foot raised with balls of feet on ground, and other foot resting on top, to stretch lower leg. Do both sides.

Gluteus Stretch

While lying on back with head on ground, pull knee to chest, with other leg extended. Do both sides.

Hip Stretch

While lying on back with head on ground, cross right leg in front of left knee. Pull left knee toward chest with left hand at hamstring and push right knee with right hand, creating a stretch in the hip and butt. Do both sides.

Back Stretch

While lying on back with head on ground, swing right leg over left leg with right knee toward ground. With right arm out to side and right shoulder on ground, press right knee with left hand while left leg is extended to stretch spinal area. Keep feet parallel. Do both sides.

Quadriceps Stretch

Stand straight with chest out and pull right leg back with both hands so heel touches butt. Keep knee perpendicular to ground. If necessary for balance, touch wall with left hand while pulling leg with right. Feel stretch in front of

upper leg. Do both sides.

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