

Insiders Guide to Cross Country: Year-End Party, Sectionals & State Competition

We've put together some ideas and info that may be useful for future generations of Oak Grove Cross Country families. Hope it helps!

End of Year Party:

The Friday before Sectionals is the perfect time for the end-of-year XC party. Entire team is invited and serves the purpose of “carbo-loading” for Sectionals runners. Works well from 5:30pm-7:30pm. **Plan early!!**

- A parent volunteer is needed to host at their home (outside!!), with the other parents providing food: several pasta dishes, bread, fruit, light desserts, plastic/paper dinner ware, drinks
- Prior to the party, an email should go out to all XC families requesting optional participation for a gift for the coaches to be presented at the party (\$5/coach from each family)
- **New Idea:** have the coaches recognize team members for things such as: most improved time, best attitude, best team spirit, perfect attendance, hardest effort, most likely to be a marathon runner, most likely to be a college team mascot, and other serious or silly awards (awards could simply be a computer printout certificate)

Sectionals Meet:

General Info:

The time and location for the Sectionals meet will be posted early in the season at www.iesa.org. There is a lot of interesting information on this site. Just click on Cross Country and look for sectionals information, as well as past state results, etc. Even if your runner doesn't make the Sectionals team, you are encouraged to come to the Sectionals meet and cheer on Oak Grove. It is an exciting race and an even more exciting State qualifier ceremony!

Spirit Wear:

It is at the discretion of the coaches whether or not we will have the opportunity to pre-order Sectionals sweatshirts and t-shirts. You can visit The Cubby Hole website (IESA tab) www.cubbyholeonline.com to see the current styles that will be offered. If there is no time to pre-order and you wish to purchase a t-shirt at Sectionals, the host school will have some extra shirts to sell. Check The Cubby Hole for current prices and bring cash (exact change is best). It is advisable to get in line early to make sure you get the size you need! Orders can be placed on-line with Cubby Hole after Sectionals with a nominal shipping charge.

Team Spirit:

Send out an email to Sectionals families encouraging display of OGS spirit on cars!

State Meet:

General Info:

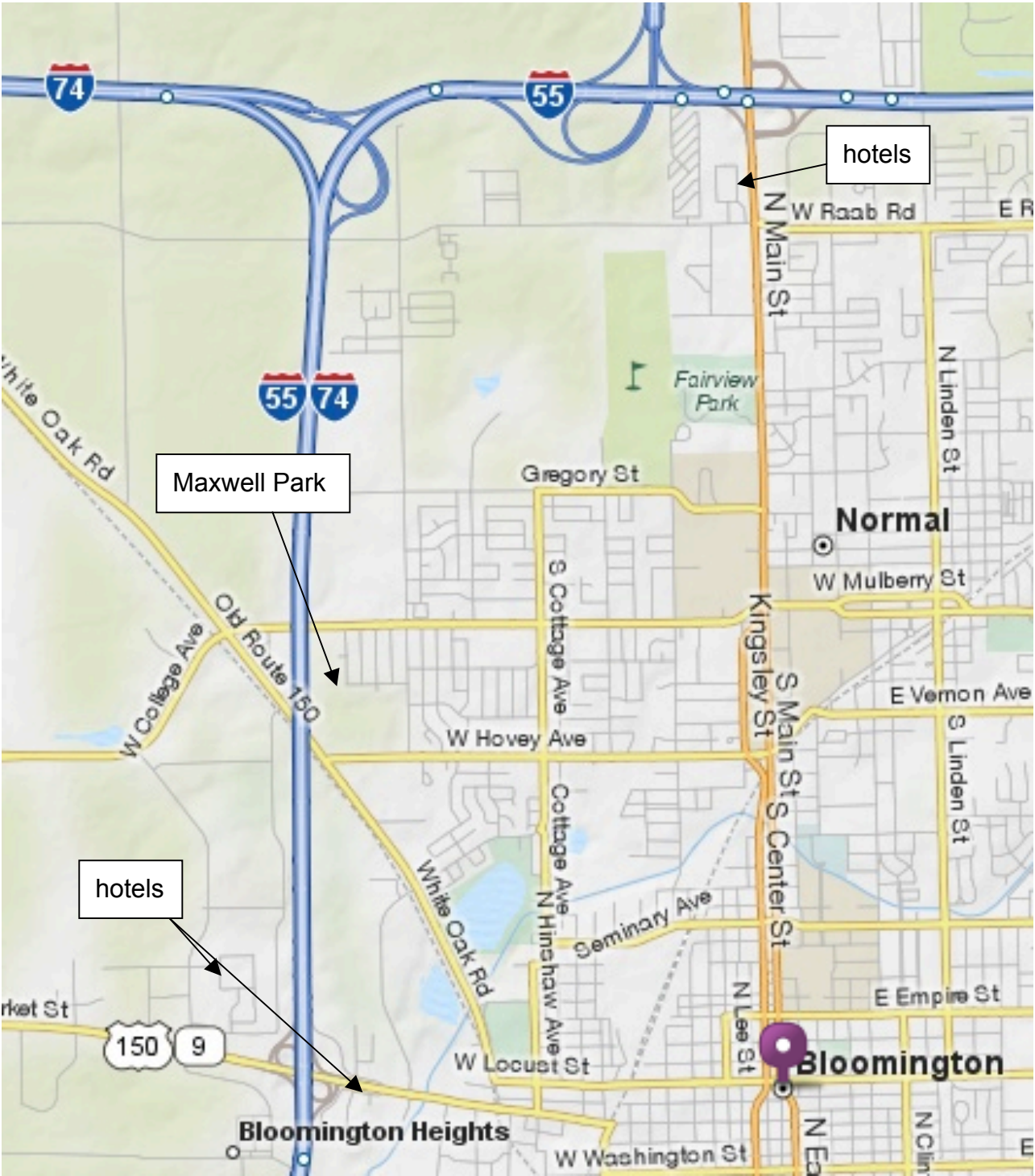
The race is always held at Maxwell Park in Bloomington/Normal, IL (see map next page), next to Parkside Junior High School at 101 N. Parkside Rd. Normal, IL 61761. This is just under a 3-hour drive from OGS.

State meet dates are always on Saturdays in mid-October and can be found at www.iesa.org, under Activity Calendar. The next few years' dates are: Oct 13, 2012 Oct 19, 2013 Oct 18, 2014

Hotel options:

Book hotel rooms early!! Even if you think your child will not have a chance to qualify for the State team, think again! It's better to be safe than sorry! It is a busy weekend in Bloomington/Normal: it is typically homecoming for several high schools and universities in the area and there is always a golf tournament too! Even if your child doesn't ultimately qualify, you can always cancel your room. These are hotels that we have used in the past. Check to see if breakfast is provided; makes for an easier pre-race meal. (Please see map on next page).

- Bloomington Inn and Suites 1031 Wylie Dr. 309-820-9990 (location of 2011 pasta party)
- Hampton Inn Bloomington West 309-829-3700 (location of 2010 pasta party)
- Country Inn & Suites 309- 828-7177
- Fairfield Inn 309-827-8000
- Days Inn Bloomington, 1707 West Market St. 309-829-6292
- La Quinta Inn Bloomington 309- 828-6000
- Comfort Inn & Suites 309-834-4700
- America's Best Value (used to be a Best Western) University Inn 309-454-4070



Suggested Team Activities and Time Schedule for State:

Friday before race

- Arrive by 5:30pm (optional): if you can, leave Oak Grove by about 2:15/2:30pm for an arrival to your hotel around 5:30pm
- 6:00pm: (optional) team will meet at Maxwell Park for a course walk-through
- 7:00pm-8:30pm: team will have a “carbo-loading” pasta dinner party at area hotel

Saturday, race day

- 8:00am: Oak Grove tent and banner set up at the school (this will serve as our “base” during the event)
- 8:20am: all Oak Grove runners and coaches should be at the school, meet inside front doors by display cases for pictures
- 8:30-9:00am: t-shirt/sweatshirt orders will likely be distributed at this time, team photos will be taken in the school gym
- 9:00-9:30am: parents & coaches assist girls first, then boys, to attach bib numbers and electronic tags to shoes; gather at team “base”
- 9:40am: girls must be ready and in their starting block for the race
- 10:00am: girls race begins
- 10:25am: boys must be ready and in their starting block for the race
- 10:45am: boys race begins
- 11:30am: meet back at team “base” for team photo pick up
- 12:00: (optional) meet at Steak N Shake for post race lunch
- 1:00: (for those who qualify) Awards ceremony at school

Misc. Things to Know:

- **“Base” tent:** it is preferable to have a portable tent/canopy set up at Maxwell Park so that finding each other in the crowd is easy for the kids and parents. Establish a parent volunteer to bring and set up their tent. Oak Grove also has a banner that can be secured to the tent to show our spirit.
- **Arrive early at Maxwell Park:** to ease tension for the first race, it is best to arrive early, get team photos taken, get bib numbers and electronic race chips attached and get spirit gear distributed to parents. Rushing through this can only hurt the girls who are gearing up for the first race.
- **Arrange for dinner at local hotel with delivery:** Dinner for 2011 was \$7/person and included 2 kinds of pasta (fettuccine alfredo & mostaccoli w/marinara sauce), meatballs, salad, garlic bread, delivery/tip, plastic cutlery/plates/napkins, and cost of a conference room at Bloomington Inn & Suites (they charged us only \$25). Moms brought fruit and desserts. Everyone brought their own drinks. Delivery was from Avanti in Normal, IL (309) 452-4436. A parent will need to organize headcount the week

before the race, place the order with catering manager at Avanti (guaranteeing to credit card), collect money and sign the bill upon delivery.

- **Team Photos:** A parent volunteer should take orders and collect cash to cover the cost of team photos. Every runner is required to be in the photo but purchase is optional. These photos are mounted onto a plaque and make a nice keepsake. (2011, the cost was \$20). This parent acts as the Oak Grove liaison with the photographer for both teams. Form is printed in advance (coach will email it), names and money collected and photos distributed after boys race.
- **Spirit Wear:** The coaches will distribute an email or hard copy of the State Gear pre-order form. It will be due the week prior to the race. The Cubby Hole website will have the current styles on-line. The coaches must pick up the pre-orders at Maxwell Park the morning of the State race. A parent can then volunteer to distribute gear to parents. Orders can be placed on-line with Cubby Hole after State with a nominal shipping charge.
- **Team Spirit:** Email should go out to all State families encouraging display of OGS team spirit on cars!

Go Oak Grove Running Eagles!!