

Bulldogs Add Cross Country By Emma Weiner

This year, the Golden Plains Bulldogs are excited to add a new sport! We are having a Cross Country team for the first time since 2002. The team is being coached by Mindy Fleckenstein, who ran for the Bulldogs when she was in high school. There are five runners, three girls and two boys, who have been working hard to get ready for the season. The boys running for the Bulldogs are Juniors Alex Gonzalez and Ethan Weiner. The girls' team will consist of Sophomore Jazline Manriquez and Freshmen Ava Brantley and Emma Weiner.

"I'm excited to try something new!" commented Ava Brantley about starting the season. One of the reasons that a Cross Country team was added is to give kids another option for a fall sport along with volleyball and football. The USD 316 School Board decided that the athletes have to choose to do one sport or the other; they can't do both.

"Some days we train at a harder pace than race pace and go a little farther than the race distance, which is 3.5 miles, to build endurance," said Ethan Weiner about the team's training. "Other days we train at a really hard pace but at shorter distances to work on getting out hard at the start and a strong finish. We also do some sprint work on hills and go on long runs."

Just like every other activity, cross country has to make some changes due to the COVID-19 virus. Some of the changes include wearing masks for the first quarter mile of the race and possibly not having or limiting fans. Most of the decisions about how the meets are going to be run will be made by the school hosting the meet so the rules may be different at each meet.

The runners will continue pushing to improve to prepare for their first meet and the rest of the season. They will be traveling to Goodland on Thursday, September 3, for their season opener. The meet will begin at 5:00 p.m at the Sugar Hills Golf Course.