



The Prez Sez...

Running is not a crime.

We've all seen those "skateboarding is not a crime" shirts. Skateboarding is as much of a crime as running; specifically it isn't. A few months ago former president Nate Koch came up with the above saying as just a badass expression, something we may make into a cool tech-shirt or whatever.

Well, now it has a more personal meaning.

I'm currently taking a class at the Santa Rosa Junior College two days a week. As its track season, I've been hitting the track for workouts when class is done. As it is a public track there really weren't any issues. Sure, there were some classes out there, but from day one I talked to the PE teachers asking permission to be out there, as well as offering to take whatever lanes they wanted, and do the best I could to stay out of their way. I don't want people standing in my lanes, and they don't want people running through their classes. We're all on the same page.

In fact, one of the teachers even had me give a talk to his class, and several students talked to me about running. Not only was I getting my workouts in, but I was able to spread the joy of running, or at least knowledge pertaining to running, to a bunch of students. Things were going good with this time overlap.

Well, so I thought.

After over a month of doing my workouts, and here and there having to go outside my assigned lanes to not run into people just standing around, one of the PE teachers came over to me. Despite only being out on the track for about 10-20 minutes each time I was there, she told me that I had to find a new time to run. I was taken aback. Her reasoning wasn't that I wasn't allowed on the track, but that my being there was dangerous, as I was running too fast and could hit someone. Yes, this happened. Not gonna lie, it did stroke the ego hearing that I was too fast, but that didn't make up for what she was telling me. Because my velocity was such that I could potentially knock someone over (there had been no negative interactions before), I was strongly advised to not run at that time (she admitted she didn't have the right to kick me off).

To be fair, I was informed that I could run other places than just the track, or not run every day, or run at Santa Rosa High School (which is a closed campus and would be illegal for me to break onto during school hours). Yea...

So that day I waited for her class to end, then, with the blessing of the other teachers who were out there who had no problems and were always aware and had great, respectful students, did my workout.

The next time I was scheduled to come out, I decided to wait until the one teacher with whom I talked came out, to see if there was some way that we could all run together. I planned to again offer to run in any lane in which she picked, start and stop at whichever segment of the track she needed, and of course apologize if I was at all quick or rude at our first interaction (I was taken aback by being told I couldn't run, so who knows).

Well, the whole idea of patching things up ended before it began, as a cop pulled up.

The Empire



Runner

A Santa Rosa Police Officer. Gun and all.

Needless to say, my conversation with the aforementioned PE instructor was short, and I figured out I'd now have to run at 7am before class. After, I did have the chance to talk to the police officer, to whom I sincerely apologized for having to be called out for something as ridiculous as this. He seemed to agree, and we shook hands. Mr. unnamed officer: I am again sorry that your time was wasted with such a complaint.

Now, when I finish up my 7am workouts, another PE class comes out. The teacher is, like the rest I interacted with before, awesome. He is excited that there are community members being active, and wants that love of fitness to spread to his kids. I want to stress how great most all of these PE teachers have been, and how much they really care about fitness and the community.

Moral of the story: don't run too fast, or they'll call a cop on you.

Running is not a crime!

Disclaimer: the above, while true, should not be taken as any ill-will towards Santa Rosa Junior College or the Physical Education department. The fact that they keep their track open to the public (during non-ICA practice) is extremely admirable, and they do much for the community.

Run Happy,

Alex Wolf-Root