



South Pine Striders

Health and Safety Policy

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide some guidance to all members of the club and particularly to the office bearers, management committee and the coaching team with respect to maintaining a health and safety framework for the club. The aim is to assist with consistent decision making and provide clear behavioural expectations for all parties.

This health and safety policy sits alongside the club's Members Policy as an association by-law.

2. Definitions

- AA** - Athletics Australia
- H&S** - Health and Safety
- QA** - Queensland Athletics
- RPL** - Recognition of Prior Learning
- SPS** - South Pine Striders

3. Overview

Running is an active outdoor sport which carries with it inherent risks. South Pine Striders training sessions and other organised running events take place in public venues or using public facilities and are subject to environmental factors which can at times be unpredictable. As a result it is important that the club establishes a framework for managing participants' health and safety, setting out the rights and responsibilities of our members and those involved in the club as coaches or committee members. Importantly, this policy sets out processes to be adhered to in case of any incidents that may arise during club activities.

4. Organised Training Sessions

The club offers running sessions on a weekly basis that are overseen by a session leader. The sessions are to be led by a coach with suitable AA administered qualifications (Level 1 Community Coach, Level 1 Run Leader and above). Occasionally members will express interest in taking on coaching duties with the club and will participate in a trial under the guidance of one of our existing coaches. On the rare occasion where no qualified coaches are available to take a session due to personal circumstances a general member of the club may co-ordinate a session - this is generally only organised as a last resort and it will be made clear to the members that the session leader is not a certified coach.

The coaching provided by South Pine Striders is of a general nature only. Coaches are focused on helping runners to enjoy participation in the prescribed session and helping

runners understand the benefit of varied training and session types (interval, tempo, fartlek, etc.). Coaches are not in a position to offer personalised individual coaching or in-depth running analysis. Coaches are not qualified to provide injury management advice and any runners presenting to sessions with complaints of niggles or injuries will be advised not to participate in the session and to seek qualified advice for their complaint.

5. Session Specific H&S Considerations

South Pine Striders offer several regular session types to members, the weekday morning and evening “coached sessions”, and unstructured weekend long runs organised informally by members. There are some important health and safety aspects to consider in each scenario.

a. Coach Led Sessions

Coaches will endeavour to provide a safe training environment but as these training sessions occur in public places and on sometimes busy roadside paths, this can never be considered a 100% guarantee. Runners should always use common sense even in a group training situation and are advised to consider these factors when coming to a coached session. Runners are responsible for their own hydration and nutrition and are strongly encouraged to bring headlamps and reflective wear particularly to our night sessions and winter morning runs.

Session leaders will typically start with a pre race briefing followed by a warm up routine consisting of easy running and some strength, agility and flexibility drills. These are general exercises only and runners with specific areas of concern may want to do their own additional drills prior to the session starting. It is generally advised that static stretches are not performed **before** a session as these can place excess load on muscles that are not yet warmed up.

Minors are encouraged to avoid the unsupervised out and back runs. If an out and back session is scheduled and a minor attends the minor will need to run with an adult guardian to ensure that they are not left alone during the session. The session leader / coach is not in a position to supervise minors for the duration of an out and back run (typically around 50mins).

i. Session Cancellations

It may be advisable for our coach led sessions to be cancelled based on advice from any of the following:

- Bureau Of Meteorology Severe weather warnings
- Government Advice regarding public health and/or safety

- Any other public safety announcements from various official outlets (QLD Police, QLD Fire and Rescue, etc.)

In place of cancellation an altered / reduced set may be offered but this will be at the coach's discretion and as always, runners should consider their personal circumstances when deciding whether to attend a run where these issues may arise (including the safety of driving to/from the run location).

Members are encouraged to check the Public and Members-only Facebook pages for the latest updates on session scheduling and late cancellations. Where possible the session leader will attempt to contact members by text message where an accurate attendance list is available but members should not rely on this for updates.

b. Uncoached “weekend” runs

Runs are often organised by individual members on social media or through direct discussions between members at training. The important distinction is that these are unsupervised, uncoached sessions and members are completely responsible for their own wellbeing when attending them.

Runners are advised to consider heat, exposure to the elements and any other factors when preparing for these runs as they would for any other individual training run. This is especially true in the hotter summer months and storm season. For example runners should consider a few factors:

- Appropriate hydration and nutrition for the length of the run and the prevailing conditions (hot weather, rain/storms, bushfires, etc)
- Be aware of forecasts - rain, wind, storms etc. before setting out
- Running in no/low light, wearing reflective equipment and/or lights
- Carrying ICE (In Case of Emergency) details and a phone for emergency communications
- Situational awareness - as always care should be taken around traffic and in sparsely populated areas, trails etc

c. Other Club “events”

The club will occasionally organise Time Trials, Coaching Clinics and other race-like events. These will be conducted in a similar fashion to coach led sessions where a prescribed race course is set for particular distances (eg 10K, Half Marathon) with markers at turnaround points. All events will be conducted in consultation with the club committee to ensure proper organisation is undertaken, for example:

- Ensuring adequate drink station / water and amenities availability

- Where necessary, informing local councils or booking public spaces
- Ensuring enough volunteers are available to conduct the event safely

A pre race briefing will be conducted to ensure runners fully understand the conditions of the event, the course to be run, and are aware of any hazards or other issues that may be present.

Attendance at these events will be recorded to enable sufficient catering/manning and also to have easy access to emergency contact details in the unlikely event they are required.

6. Rights and Responsibilities

The following section sets out some of the rights and responsibilities applicable to South Pine Striders members, runners at club organised sessions and events, coaches and committee members:

a. Runners (applies to members, trialling / prospective members and pay-per-session attendees)

Runners taking part in club activities are encouraged to adopt a proactive and informed attitude towards their personal health and fitness. We ask that all runners, prior to training with South Pine Striders, conduct a personal fitness evaluation. In some cases, this may include a consult with a GP or other medical professional. Consideration should be given to current fitness, training load, physical strengths and weaknesses and any pre existing conditions or illnesses that may impact running performance or increase risk of injury or incident.

Where a coach deems it necessary, a prospective runner may be asked to obtain a doctors clearance (to be provided in confidence to the club for filing in secure document storage) - this is particularly relevant where a runner discloses a pre existing medical condition or injury that is likely to make running a high risk activity for that individual.

Before the start of a session, runners should advise the session leader of any pre existing health issues or injuries before a session commences, and if necessary discuss an alternative or reduced set. If a runner is advised not to run by the coach it is advised that the runner does not continue to take part. This would only happen in extreme circumstances and is for the protection of the runner's own health.

All runners are expected to advise the session leader if an injury or incident occurs during their run with Striders, no matter how insignificant it may seem.

In some cases the coach may ask the runner to complete a brief incident report which is included as an attachment to this policy. Our coaches are not medically trained and cannot provide advice or diagnosis of injuries, either pre-existing or those sustained during a South Pine Striders session. Runners should use their own judgement on when an injury requires medical diagnosis or intervention and exercise caution if an incident occurs during a session - if in doubt, stop running and discuss the issue with the session leader.

b. Coaches / Run Leaders

All coaches are expected to have completed a relevant AA coaching qualification or have recognised RPL through demonstrated prior skills and experience. Coaches will ensure that their annual membership is up to date in order to have up to date coaches insurance. Coaches will possess a current first aid qualification and carry a stock of basic first aid supplies including cold packs for "RICE" treatment of superficial injuries.

Qualified club coaches will advise run leaders who are being supervised for RPL or as prospective club coaches, who will be provided details of this policy and encouraged to adhere to it.

South Pine Striders coaches are expected to follow the guidelines in this policy for incident reporting and record keeping. Coaches will keep runners' personal information and incident details confidential (general details about the incident will be reported to the South Pine Striders management committee). Incident reports may also be disclosed to Insurance providers for the purposes of making a claim if the need arises.

Coaches will also undertake a brief risk assessment prior to setting up each run session. Any risks that are present, particularly any changes to typical conditions (bad lighting, road or footpath construction works, wet weather) will be discussed with the running group prior to the session starting. This may be as simple as clearing debris off the running path or pointing out trip hazards to the group.

c. Committee and other club officials

The South Pine Striders management committee has an important role to play in promoting and maintaining the health and safety of all members.

- i. Secretary - ensure that QA / QRun membership is maintained with annual fees paid on time, and that the committee is kept aware of any issues related to continuation of the club's public liability and other insurances provided by QA.

- ii. Management committee members - the management committee is expected to support the adoption of this health and policy framework by encouraging the prescribed responsibilities eg. incident reporting and completion of waivers and pre run health screenings. The committee should regularly review all South Pine Striders policies including the Health & Safety policy for currency and updated as needed (eg. every 1-2 years).

d. Parents of minors

Children (specific age limits are specified in the Members Policy) should not be left without a guardian present at our training sessions. Our coaches have general session leader and basic coaching qualifications and are not qualified to be guardians to unaccompanied minors.

At times the number of participants at a session can greatly divide the attention of a coach so for this reason parents or guardians of minors are expected to remain throughout the session.

7. Incident Response and Reporting

It is important that a consistent approach is taken to managing any injuries or incidents that occur at striders training sessions or other club sponsored events. These steps apply to anyone responding to an incident within the club but particularly to coaches and officials (volunteers, etc) at club events.

a. Immediate Response

The basic approach to any incidents occurring at a session or events will be as follows:

1. Notify a coach or other first aider / club official
2. Apply basic first aid principles (eg. RICE) to skill / experience level
 - a. Escalation (if needed)
3. Incident Report
4. Follow Up

b. Escalation and Insurance

In the event of a more serious incident requiring further attention or escalation, the coaches role is to support the affected runner(s) to obtain the

relevant support - be it emergency services (in extreme cases), to manage the issue/injury and to get home or access to further care safely.

Any steps taken should be captured in an incident report as soon as possible.

In the unlikely event of a serious incident, insurance claims would be instigated by the affected member, and handled amongst the member, responding coach/official and the management committee.

c. Incident Reporting

Incident reports should be completed to document any significant injuries, accidents or issues that occur at training, club runs or other sponsored events. The goal of reporting is to concisely document the facts of an incident with the involved parties as soon as possible to ensure accuracy. Incident reports may also be required to support follow up response to an incident including insurance claims.

d. Follow-Up

Any incident requiring an incident response and report should be disclosed to the committee at the first possible opportunity. The coach who responded to the incident is encouraged to check in with the runner(s) in the days following the incident to check in and ensure that the issue is being managed appropriately.

8. Attachment A: Incident Report Form