

## Featured Athlete: Runner Kent Slaney

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Imagine: A six-year-old Kent Slaney dashes through the Escondido Elementary School playground, leaving his playmates in the dust. Brezing through the dreaded mile runs in P.E., and finishing just in time for a nap and his favorite Jamba Juice. Flash to today, Slaney is a key member of both the Palo Alto High School cross country and track and field teams, amazing his community and consistently breaks personal and course records.

According to Senior Kent Slaney, he discovered running at a very young age, but credits his original involvement in the sport to Jamba Juice gift cards.

"I started running with Escondido jogging club," Slaney said. "They were giving out Jamba Juice gifts cards, so I wanted one of those. I then started my first race, and things kept going from there."

According to Slaney, no one in his family had ever been runner, and his sudden growing interest in running gave his parents the idea of signing him up for his first race. He hasn't looked back since.

"My parents did that first race with me, but after that I was on my own and just enjoyed running," Slaney said. "I did it whenever I could."

As a freshman, Kent Slaney broke three season records, landing him in the top 50 running times. As a sophomore, he broke two, and another in junior year at the Lowell invitational. If one were to look at his stats, they would see consistent broken personal records at nearly every cross country meet.

Cross country has a unique point system. The five fastest runners from each team to cross the finish line receive the points that correspond to their place. The first place runner receives one point, the second place runner two, and so on. The team receiving the lowest score wins, according to [Capo Valley's Cross Country guide](#).

Kent recounts the latest invitational and remarks on the teams performance as a whole.

"So far it's been pretty spectacular, both as a team and individually," Slaney said. "At [the] Lowell [Invitational] we did great as a team. We got 41 points, and the next best team got 91. Also, in our first scrimmage with Gunn [High School], I broke a course record by 11 seconds. Looks like it's going to be a really great season," Slaney said.

Each meet has its own set of records from past competitors. Slaney broke a course record for a meet against Gunn, with a time of 10:13 on a 2.2 mile course. Most recently, he has bested his past miles times with his new personal record of 4 minutes and 16.63 seconds, according to his [CA Cross Country Profile](#).

But Slaney is more than just a cross country star; he aspires to pursue a career in STEM.

"I want to major in computer science or electrical engineering," Slaney said. "I enjoy programming a lot, I'd enjoy going into that field. I'm also looking into recruitment options, and have been balancing running with academics."

Kent encourages everyone to give running a try.

"Running is something that when you put your effort into it, you enjoy it so much. You go out with all the problems in the world, and come back and none of them will matter."

