



Sydney Striders Road Runners Club Inc

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Code of Conduct and Disclaimers governing participation in Striders' Runs and Activities, including use of social media platforms

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Introduction

Sydney Striders is an incorporated association registered in NSW under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009*. A lot of information about the club is made available through our website at <https://www.sydneystriders.org.au/striders/>

This document (the **Code**) summarises the key guidelines associated with involvement in Sydney Striders' training (including STaR runs and other training sessions, as described on our website), races, social events and associated activities. It explains:

- what the club aims to provide for these activities,
- what the personal responsibility is of members and visitors who participate in these activities, and
- what the club expects from participants in its activities and any users of its social media.

This Code is also included on our club run calendar, accessible to all participants in club activities, at http://sydneystriders.org.au/striders/content/admin/Code_of_conduct.pdf, to ensure all are able to identify and be aware of their responsibilities.

Code for Conduct – General, including social media

Acts or omissions in breach of the law, by anyone involved in club activities, will be considered a breach of this Code. It follows that, by way of example, harassment, bullying, abuse, intimidation, hazing, sledging, discrimination or vilification based on age, race, sex, disability, sexuality, gender identity or religion – as well as cyberbullying, doxxing, or sharing intimate images online without consent – is not tolerated.

Other wilful actions taken in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the club, which may not necessarily involve a breach of the law, can also amount to misconduct or unsatisfactory conduct in breach of this Code. The club expects that anyone involved in club activities will:

1. act within event rules and in a spirit of good sportsmanship
2. support a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment which focuses on the health, welfare and well-being of participants
3. respect the decisions of officials, coaches and administrators
4. be fair, honest, respectful and transparent in dealings with other participants, volunteers and the committee
5. where an adult and to the extent practical, avoid unaccompanied or unobserved one-on-one activity with people under the age of 18 who are not their children

Members are also encouraged to familiarise themselves with the Club's constitution; in particular:

- a. Section 14 - Resolution of Disputes

b. Section 15 (1) - Disciplining of Members

A complaint may be made to the committee, by any person, that a member of the association:

(a) has refused or neglected to comply with a provision or provisions of this constitution,

(b) has wilfully acted in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the association, including by way of behaviour contrary to the association's Code of Conduct, or

(c) has used, or attempted to use, the association or their membership of it for purposes of carrying on or promoting a professional or commercial activity, whether by advertisement or otherwise, without approval by the committee.

c. Section 15 (2 -6) - Disciplining of Members - process

d. Section 16 - Right of Appeal of Disciplined Member

Members and supporters may post, blog, tweet or comment (including “likes”) in the club’s social media platforms provided that such communications are courteous, respectful and, in the usual course, a factual account of that person’s experience. Members and supporters are not to post material that:

- is abusive, offensive, inappropriate, defamatory, discriminatory, misleading or deceptive, or sexually suggestive;
- is of a nature that may bring the club, any of its sponsors, supporters or commercial interests, the sport of running, or themselves into disrepute;
- is not polite and respectful of others’ opinions (even in times of heated debate);
- is not related to club matters (eg, is effectively promoting other personal, philanthropical, religious or commercial interests) or promotes competing clubs or activities (without committee approval);
- other than where they are an officer of the club and acting in that capacity, implies in any way that they are authorised to speak on behalf of the club or any club activity;
- discloses confidential or proprietary information about the club, or of an event or promotion with which it is associated;
- discloses another individual’s personal information; or
- is inconsistent with the Terms of Use applicable to the Social Media Platform being used.

If any two committee members, or a committee member and the club’s sergeant-at-arms, form the view that a post is not consistent with this Code, that post may be taken down or an instruction issued to the relevant person to take it down or make a correction (without prejudice to the potential for further action under section 15(1) of the constitution). Any failure to comply with a “take down notice” or corrective statement request will be considered a further breach of this Code.

STaRs, other training runs and Club Races

As club runs can exceed 30km over sometimes difficult terrain, sometimes on bush trails and nearly always through public spaces, and activities may occur in varying weather conditions, it is important to understand the respective responsibilities of the club and participating runners, especially in the event of a runner becoming unwell, injured or lost.

The club welcomes visitors to join its weekly runs (STaRs and squad sessions). The expectation is that a visitor is either (a) a person visiting or holidaying in Sydney for a short time, or (b) is a Sydney-based runner who would like to trial the club before joining. For any Sydney-based runner that wants to engage in more than a couple of club runs or training events, it is expected that they will apply for membership to obtain insurance coverage and other benefits of the club of value to them when running with the club on regular occasions.

The club will schedule a calendar of organised training runs and races for the participation of members and visitors. If the club expects significantly adverse weather conditions for a run (including hazardous air quality), it may call off that run on short or no notice. The club will provide a map of the planned route

through its website – this will be accessible in either pdf format or able to be downloaded to a smart-watch. The maps usually are GPS synchronous or include a written description of all key points on the run to assist in navigation for participants. The maps and written instructions may not always reflect the exact route, as particular runs are only used once or twice a year and awareness of any desirable changes to the course by reason of council work, change of traffic conditions, natural causes, random events or the like is not always detected before the run commences.

At a STaR or other organised run, a designated volunteer host may:

- provide spare hard copy maps of the planned route
- if considered desirable and practicable, mark key navigation/turn points on the actual route to assist in runners' navigation on course
- collect car keys from participants who do not wish to run with their car keys
- provide post-run refreshments where runners will be able to retrieve their car keys

In the event of the host becoming aware of any runner not returning in a timely fashion to collect their keys, the host will instigate an escalation process to identify and locate the missing runner. This is usually only possible where car keys left with the host have the Sydney Striders member's badge attached and are used to identify the runner.

1. Participating Runners

All runners (members or visitors) who start and participate in any organised run or training event do so based on an understanding and acceptance of their responsibilities.

Responsibilities for **all runners (members or visitors)** include:

- downloading or otherwise collecting a run map prior to commencing and being able to read and interpret this map independently to navigate the route alone (if required)
- in deciding which group to run with (based on anticipated pace and distance), considering their fellow runners and their own ability to remain with that group for the duration of the run (groups should run together at the same pace and, if they become separated, re-group at the top of hills or other checkpoints)
- remaining aware of their surroundings and other track users (whether walkers, cyclists or other runners), including running in single file or not more than 2 abreast and spaced out on a public path as may be required to accommodate those other track users
- understanding that attempting to run their chosen distance, up to 30km plus, in prevailing and varying weather conditions is a physical challenge that they are prepared for
- assessing air quality and the import of any alerts, particularly if they are in a 'sensitive group' – air quality readings and Air Quality Categories (AQC) are updated hourly by NSW Air Quality and a daily air quality forecast is made for the Greater Sydney Metropolitan Region at 4 pm every day: see <https://www.airquality.nsw.gov.au/>
- wearing appropriate clothing and footwear, consistent with weather conditions and route
- not running with a dog or any other companion animal (both for the safety of other runners and enabling compliance with National Parks or other regulatory requirements)
- where they have chosen to run a 30km+ STaR run, being able to complete it within 3:30 hours and by 9:30am (at latest, unless a later time is specified for an event ("**designated finish time**"))
- abiding by all NSW road rules as apply to pedestrians on public roads; these include, but are not limited to:
 - a pedestrian not travelling along a road if there is a footpath or nature strip adjacent to the road, unless it is impracticable to travel on that footpath or nature strip
 - a pedestrian travelling along a road:
 - (a) must keep as far to the left or right side of the road as is practicable
 - (b) must, when moving forward, face approaching traffic that is moving in the direction opposite to which the pedestrian is travelling, unless it is impracticable to do so, and

- (c) must not travel on the road alongside more than one other pedestrian or vehicle travelling on the road in the same direction as the pedestrian, unless the pedestrian is overtaking other pedestrians.
- upon becoming lost, injured or unable to return to the start by the designated finish time, accessing the nearest house or 'phone and requesting a Taxi / Uber to take them back to the start location as detailed on the run map by 9:30am (the club will bear the cost of any such taxi / Uber fare).

Additional responsibilities also apply, depending on whether you are a member or visitor and the particular activity that you may be participating in.

2. Members – Additional Responsibilities

Members should also:

- ensure their car keys have the Sydney Striders key tag attached and are left with the host
- ensure that their membership information in the club database is current and includes an emergency contact name and phone number
- whenever possible, wear a Sydney Striders club top – apart from club pride, it is much easier to describe this to anyone searching for a missing runner

3. Visitors – Additional Responsibilities

By participating in a run, you accept that you are ultimately responsible for your own safety and ability to run the course on any public or private property involved and understand that:

- the club accepts no responsibility or liability for any event or condition that may occur affecting you during your run
- if you become lost on a run, the club (including the run host) has no idea as to your identity or emergency contact details and so is unable to act in accordance with its usual systems: accordingly, if you do not return via taxi / Uber as detailed above, you understand and agree that the volunteer host may finalise their hosting responsibilities and depart the start/finish location after 10:00am
- you acknowledge that you have read, understood and accept this Code

4. Training groups, including Marathon Training Group (MTG) – Additional Responsibilities

Participants understand and accept that any 'training plan' guidance is provided subject to the further, specific training plan disclaimers in this Code.

5. Six-Foot Track Training Group – Additional Responsibilities

Participants in a Six-Foot Track training group understand and accept that:

- these runs can be additionally challenging, some being run using sometimes remote and more technical bush trails
- these runs can quite often take a considerably longer time to complete than will a standard 30km+ STaR run
- some of these runs have little to no access to water or food supplies on course, and so runners will need to plan and cater to carry their own supplies (use of a hydration pack with 2-3L capacity is suggested)
- each runner needs to "buddy up" with another runner of similar capability and each runner is obligated to remain running with their buddy until the run finishes, to ensure no one is left behind or becomes lost
- some of the longer and more remote runs (eg, in the Blue Mountains, Otford to Bundeena and Claire's Calamity) may require runners to enter their details into a "sign on" sheet, including the name of their nominated buddy, and both runners will need to sign off at the

completion of the run (so the club can be sure that all runners have completed the course safely)

General Disclaimer

Sydney Striders encourages all members and any visitors to exercise together. The club is operated and managed by volunteers and volunteers cannot be held liable for any incidents that occur on a run or other event. All runners participate in any club events at their own free will, at their own risk, and take full responsibility for their actions. Volunteers involved in runs or events may or may not have taken any relevant training or coaching courses. If you require any special assistance, it is your responsibility to notify event leaders and/or volunteers. The club may not be able to fulfil your special requirements.

All members and visitors acknowledge that participating in and volunteering for organized group runs, social activities, races or other events hosted through the club are potentially hazardous activities and may cause injury or even death. Risks involved in club events may include (but are not limited to) falls, contact with other participants, over-training, personal impacts of weather (including from high heat, humidity, pollen, air quality, saturation or cold), and dangerous traffic or road conditions, all of which are reasonably foreseeable by the participant.

Sydney Striders, including each of its officers, coaches, volunteers, members or other associates, assumes no liability for any information contained in this Code or any other publications by the club, nor will it or they be held responsible in any manner whatsoever for any injury (including death) which may occur from complying with or otherwise relying on information within this Code, the Sydney Striders' website, or from participating in any club events.

Training plan disclaimer

Members or other professionals conducting a training event sanctioned by the club may provide a training plan or other advice (written or oral) for the benefit of participants. By participating in that event and accessing such information, each participant acknowledges and agrees that it is provided for informational and educational purposes only and is not a substitute for personalized coaching, specific professional advice, or individualized training programs. Without limitation, this means that each participant acknowledges that:

- *Consult a Professional:* they should consult with a qualified professional, such as a coach or healthcare provider, before beginning the specific activity exercise or program, especially if they have pre-existing conditions, injuries, or specific training goals
- *Assume Risk:* they voluntarily assume any risks associated with following a training plan – any such plan is generalized and may not be suitable for everyone: it is their responsibility to adjust the plan to suit their health and fitness levels, goals and circumstances
- *No Liability:* both the club and the creator of any training plan assume no responsibility for any injuries, health issues, or other damages that may arise (directly or indirectly) from following a training plan
- *Stop if Indicated:* if at any time they experience pain, discomfort, or other adverse symptoms, they should stop exercising immediately and seek appropriate professional guidance