

# Running Through Records

By Alex Taft

In just this school year, 4 school records for running in Cross Country and Track & Field have been broken, and all of them have been broken by the same person: James Schmidt.

James, now a graduated Senior, has been running on the Oak Hills Cross Country and Track teams since his Freshman year. Since then, he has continuously never failed to impress everyone by running unfathomably fast times. He ran his first sub 17 minute 5k (3.1 miles) for Cross Country when he was only a Sophomore; for reference on how insane that is, most Senior Cross Country runners don't manage to run the 5k in under 18 minutes, while meanwhile James is just casually dropping a sub 17:00 5k as a Sophomore. He didn't stop there though, as in this school year's Cross Country season he ran a 15:42.3 5k, setting a new school record that's sure to stand for many years to come. I can't even comprehend how a human being can run that fast; to run that time, he was literally averaging 5 minute and 14-second miles for a little bit over 3 miles in a row. Interested in how he runs so fast, I asked him how he's able to do it. His response goes as follows: "Constant dedication. I have a super strict diet that I have to follow, I try to work out as much as I can, I extensively stretch multiple times a day, all of that jazz." Essentially, it seems that hard work and dedication is what allows James to run so incredibly fast. Maybe I could run this fast if I just put in some extra work (and maybe pop a few steroids). Who knows?



You'd think that being such a fast runner would go to your head, but this isn't the case for James. As someone who has been running with him on an almost daily basis for Cross Country and Track, he's genuinely very humble about his speed. He never really brags too hard about his times even though he has complete rights to brag about them because of how fast they are, and he doesn't have any sort of superiority complex from his achievements. When asked if he could ever see himself becoming an Olympic athlete, he humbly replied, "I'd like to say yes, but I don't believe I'm fast enough for the Olympics." Shooting for Olympic running times is a daring feat, but I have faith that James may be able to do it. He's like a chimp that has been shot up with pure caffeine, and that's not an insult, because chimps are the most terrifying creatures to roam this godforsaken planet. I once saw a video of chimps killing then eating a leopard. Seriously man, if I had to choose between walking up to a hungry lion while wearing a suit made of raw meat or fighting a chimp I'd be slathering on the bristle in mere seconds. Like chimps, chimps are scary, chimps are . . . okay, sorry, back on topic. Basically, James, like a ferocious chimp loaded with caffeine, is terrifying on the course, and with his terrifying speed, I'm confident that he can shoot his way into the Olympics.

All of James's feats are impressive, but what is perhaps the most noteworthy is his breaking of the Oak Hills 800 meter (half a mile) run for Track. The 800 meter record at Oak Hills stood unbroken since 1970, making it one of the oldest records in the school's history, having survived over 5 decades unmatched. . . until James came along. He broke the record that had stood for over 5 decades with an incredibly fast 1 minute and 56 seconds 800 meter run. To make it even more impressive, James has since managed to break his own 800 record multiple different times. His absolute fastest 800 so far was at the Greater Miami Conference Track meet at Ross high school, where he ran the 800 in 1 minute and 53 seconds and got 1st place in the race. This 800 record was also accompanied by a 1 mile run that he also got 1st place in, with a new mile record of 4 minutes and 12 seconds on the same day, which James is extremely proud of. On being asked what his proudest moment as an athlete has been, James states: "My proudest moment as an athlete? Probably the double records at GMC this year." Who wouldn't be proud of taking 1st place in a massive Track meet while simultaneously setting two new school records? It's an understatement to call what James has done impressive, his times are just completely unbelievable. At this year's GMC Track meet, James scored over half of the Track team's points with his high-placing times. I cannot stress how impressive that is nearly enough. With every meet that passes, James just keeps reaffirming that he's going places.

James Schmidt is a freak of nature in all the right ways. With his sheer determination, humble attitude, and positive outlook, he has managed to break 4 Oak Hills running records, those records being the aforementioned 5k, 1 mile, and 800 meter run records, and also the record for fastest 2 mile, with him having run a 9 minute and 11 seconds 2 mile race. It has been a pleasure to run alongside an Oak Hills legend, and I can speak for all Highlanders when I say we wish James the best of luck in his future endeavors as a college athlete.