

Where we train ...

Written by: Pete Colaizzo, Marist College cross country and track coach, updated June 2016

Introduction: Marist College is located in an ideal setting for the training of long-distance runners. Some of the training venues in the Mid-Hudson Valley are considered among the best in the United States. In particular, the Shawangunk Ridge of the Catskill Mountains in Ulster County (in the New Paltz area) is a haven for endurance and adventure sports enthusiasts from throughout the country and the world. Marist College is a short drive away from those sites, as well as a wide variety of similar parks and trails in Dutchess County and Ulster County. This guide is intended to introduce you to some of our training venues on and off campus for Marist College cross country and track. ***Come run with us!***

Workout sites, overview: As you may already know, we do not have track facilities on our beautiful campus at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York. For the track/cross country staff at Marist, this is not a factor in the ability to train and compete as a quality and competitive program. In fact, what we have outweighs what we do not have. And here's what we have:

- **Cross country:** During the fall and other times when conditions permit, a multitude of excellent off-road training sites that offer a wide range of terrain in terms of footing and elevation. The Mid-Hudson Valley of New York is blessed with many county, state and national parks -- all within an easy drive of campus. Our athletes can run off-road seven days a week if they choose.
- **Track and field:** Despite not having a track on our campus, we have access to the track at Vassar College in the Town of Poughkeepsie, located less than 10 minutes from campus. The state-of-the-art, 8-lane facility is available to us, weather and schedule permitting, throughout the school year. It is our primary training venue for track and field.
- **Indoor track:** In addition, during the winter months of January, February and early March, we have access to SUNY New Paltz's 185-meter, 3-lane elevated indoor track three times per week. This track is not equipped for field events or hurdles.

All seasons

- **Walkway Over the Hudson:** A major tourist attraction for our area, the Walkway has been called the "Hudson Valley's Town Square." The longest pedestrian bridge in the world, it was opened in 2009 and has attracted more than one million visitors. For us, it is a pathway to great running loops across the Hudson River, not to mention breathtaking views of the Hudson from more than 200 feet in the air. The Walkway connects the Dutchess Rail Trail to the east and the Hudson Valley Rail Trail to the west. Our athletes use the Walkway almost daily for training. If you are visiting the area, we strongly recommend that you take a walk on the bridge. It is something you'll never forget. For more information, go to www.walkway.org.
- **Hudson Valley Rail Trail:** Upon exiting the Walkway on the Ulster County side of the Hudson River, runners are greeted with the paved, measured and marked Hudson Valley Rail Trail. This trail is maintained year-round, which enables our runners to use it for workouts in all conditions.
- **Dutchess County Rail Trail:** This recently completed trail spans 13 miles from the east side of the Walkway all the way to Hopewell Junction. It is measured and marked, but it is not maintained during the winter months. Our athletes use this trail for long distance runs. In fact, 2014 cross country alum Doug Ainscow ran a marathon on the trail in 2:49:34, in the week preceding his graduating from Marist.



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Cross country/off road and off campus sites

- **Vassar Farm and Ecological Preserve, Poughkeepsie:** Located about 10 minutes from campus, the Farm offers us miles of trails and gravel roads for workouts. In addition, we hosted our season-opening cross country meet there in 2014 and again in 2015.
- **Bowdoin Park, Wappingers Falls:** Located about 10 minutes from campus, Bowdoin Park is the site of the New York State Federation Cross Country Championship Meet as well as the Nike Cross Country National (NXN) Northeast and New York Regional Meets. We use the park for hill, interval, fartlek and tempo workouts.
- **Franklin D. Roosevelt Library/National Historic Site, Hyde Park:** Located about five minutes from campus, our team practices here frequently. Whether it the three-quarter mile upper loop for tempo runs or fartlek workouts, or trail runs to the Vanderbilt National Historic Site and back, the FDR trails have it all for us. And, they are close enough to campus that our athletes will sometimes do their long run up to the trails and back.
- **Roosevelt Farm Lane Trail, Hyde Park:** This trail is located directly across Route 9 from the FDR Library/National Historic Site. Farm Lane is a 3.6-mile gravel trail woods road with rolling hills. The shaded path provides us with an excellent venue for all sorts of workouts.
- **Vanderbilt National Historic Site, Hyde Park:** The grounds of Vanderbilt include a 1-mile riverfront trail that is excellent for timed intervals and tempo runs. In addition, the 3-mile roundtrip from the Mansion down to the trail and back includes several excellent hill climbs for longer, early-season workouts.
- **Wallkill River Rail Trail, New Paltz:** Located about 30 minutes from campus, this rail trail is a soft dirt trail that runs 14 miles from end to end. It is relatively flat and goes through some beautiful farm countryside. It is an ideal spot for tempo (threshold) training and long interval workouts (we have done mile repeats on this trail).
- **Minnewaska State Park Preserve, New Paltz:** Located about 45 minutes from campus, this is a perennial favorite of the team. We go to this park several times during our preseason for long tempo runs on the breathtaking carriage trails in the Shawangunk Ridge of the Catskill Mountains. These trails are considered some of the best running routes in the East. The carriage trails are wide and the footing is excellent. They are at altitude (about 2,000 feet), so it's nice and cool for late summer runs.

On-campus options

- **North Field:** On the north end of our beautiful, Hudson River campus, there is a large expanse of grass that we use for early-season sprint work (track team), as well as strides and other workouts (distance team). A perimeter loop of the field covers a little less than a half-mile in length. We will often do post-run drills and strides here, as well as barefoot training.
- **Quiet Cove:** Adjacent to North Field, there is a small network of trails that we call "Quiet Cove." Our athletes will run here for warm-ups and cool-downs, and well as for short, pre-meet days. It provides us with some soft surfaces on campus.

Summary: There are many options when it comes to training at Marist College. From off-road trails, paved running paths and quality outdoor and indoor track facilities, we offer it all within your reach. **We hope you decide to come run with the Running Red Foxes!**



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