

Biography

2011 marked Greg Walters' 24th season as a cross-country coach at Centennial High School. A graduate of University High School, Urbana and Eastern Illinois University, Coach Walters gained experience at University High (Urbana) and Unity H.S. (Tolono) previous to coming to CHS. From 1988 through 1991 he coached both boys and girls in cross-country and did the same in 2000. From 1992 through 1999 he was in charge of girls cross-country exclusively and has coached the boys for the last 10 years. His girls' XC teams won 4 conference, 7 regional, and 3 sectional titles. From 1996 through 2000 Illinois Prep Top Times consistently ranked the girls in the top 15 in the state, an honor usually reserved for the suburban powers. In addition, they qualified for the state meet 9 times in 13 years. The pinnacle of this success came in 1998 when the girls finished 5th in the state, the 2nd highest finish ever by a downstate school. When Coach Walters took over the boys program they had never won a Big 12 Conference, IHSA regional or sectional title, or qualified for the state meet. In the past six years the boys have won 5 Twin City titles, numerous invitational titles, including Lake Park in 2001, back-to-back conference titles and 3 consecutive regional titles. In 2004 they were sectional runners-up, losing to O'Fallon by 1 point and have qualified for state 2 times.

Greg Walters began coaching track and field in 1983 at his alma mater, University High, Urbana where he served as an assistant to Mike McCullom. Uni won back-to-back boys conference titles in 1984 and 1985 while the girls finished 4th in the state in '84 and 3rd in '85 in Class A.

In 1986 Coach Walters began coaching at Centennial H.S. where he coached both boys and girls in a combined program. In his 1st season he had the luxury of working with Cindy Lawrence who won the high jump at the state meet with a state record jump of 5' 10". In 1987 the boys and girls programs were separated and he became the head girls' coach. While serving in this capacity, Centennial won 7 Big 12 Conference titles and 6 IHSA sectional titles. In addition, Centennial won numerous titles at major invites including those at Downers Grove North, Glenbard West, the North Central Invite, and the Palatine Relays. In 1995 Centennial was undefeated during the regular season, set 10 school records, and produced 8 All-Staters. In 1996 they finished 8th in the IHSA state meet. In 2001 Coach Walters became the head boys coach. Through the 2004 season the boys and girls staffs worked together and coached by event. In 2004 this cooperation produced team titles for both the boys and girls in the Big 12 Conference. Since the 2001 season the boys team has broken 4 school records, claimed its only conference title in the history of the school, produced its 3 best sectional finishes ever, and qualified numerous individuals and relays for the state meet.

During his tenure Centennial has frequently hosted Big 12 championships, IHSA sectionals and several News-Gazette Honor Roll meets for both the boys and the girls. In addition, Centennial hosted the North-Central Invite for 10 years. This meet featured such perennial girls track and field powerhouses as Downers Grove North, Decatur MacArthur, Prospect, LTHS, Naperville North, Conant, Peoria Richwoods, Moline, Evanston, Rock Island, Springfield Southeast, and Chicago Morgan Park. Coach Walters has worked home track and field meets at the University of Illinois for over ten years, including indoor and outdoor Big 10 Championships. In 1997 he worked the NCAA national championships at Indiana University. For many years he also coached summer youth track and field for the Champaign Track Club and was instrumental in creating the Flyin' Prairie Dogs TC when the former was dissolved. He has also been a frequent volunteer for state, regional, and national USATF cross country and track and field championships. Coach Walters has also been active in the Illinois Track and Cross Country Coaches Association serving as a member of the Hall of fame committee and a clinic coordinator for many years. Coach Walters is also a USATF Level I certified coach and has served as secretary, vice-president, and as the president of the South Division of the Association. Coach Walters was inducted into the ITCCCA Hall of Fame in 2008.

Throughout his career Greg has been a major innovator in regard to the implementation of technology to simplify team organization and management, the creation of training plans and the timing and scoring of meets.