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## Wings Relaxes Assistance Standards

*Organization wants to help more Native runners attend regional meets.*

Wings of America is changing the times high school Native runners need to run during the regular cross-country season to qualify for assistance to attend regional championship meets. In addition to being enrolled in a federally or state-recognized Indian Tribe, competitors hoping to make the 2023 Wings National Team must run a seedtime at a Nike Cross or Champs Sports (formerly “Eastbay” or “Footlocker”) regional race to be considered for the all-star squad. Those with the fastest times at the regional meets will be invited to run with Wings at the 2023 USA Cross Country Championships in Richmond, VA on January 21, 2023.

“One of our major goals in recruiting for the National Team is to encourage young runners to step out of their comfort zone and compete in bigger races”, says Executive Director, Dustin Martin. “Now that we’re more than half-way through the regular season, we took a broad look at recent results from around Indian Country and saw only a handful of runners that have run times fast enough to receive race registration and travel assistance from Wings. So we are pro-actively altering the standards with hope that we can help more families get their athletes to the regional meets.”

The amended qualifying times are:

Men’s qualifying time (3-mile and longer courses): 17:40

Women’s qualifying time (3-mile and longer courses): 21:30

The updated qualifying times are each 15-seconds slower than before. Those wishing to apply for assistance to attend a regional qualifying race must complete the free Wings National Team Application available at: [www.wingsofamerica.org/2023wingsteam/](http://www.wingsofamerica.org/2023wingsteam/)

Completing the application will prompt Wings staff to verify the applicant’s 2022 season personal bests and make contact with them to collect information related to registration and travel assistance. Apart from paying for qualified runners’ race registration fees, Wings can provide one night of hotel for runners and their family members prior to the regional meet they wish to run. The organization will also be providing transportation between Albuquerque and Phoenix for runners looking for a ride to and from the Nike Cross Southwest Regional meet on November 19th.

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For more information about Wings of America and the National Team, please contact the organization’s Program Director, Daan Haven, by phone at (928) 349-7221 or email at [daan@wingsofamerica.org](mailto:daan@wingsofamerica.org)