Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department Unveils Sign for Newly Named Rick Rothman Cross Country Course

Legendary Coach Honored During 44th Annual Spanish River Invitational



Seal of Palm Beach County, Florida

BOCA RATON, FL, UNITED STATES, September 23, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- The Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department proudly unveiled the new sign for the Rick Rothman Cross Country Course at Burt Aaronson South County Regional Park during the 44th Annual Spanish River Invitational on September 19, 2026.

The dedication recognizes legendary coach and Delray Beach resident Richard "Rick" Rothman, whose decades of leadership have helped shape high school cross country in Palm Beach County and throughout the nation. Rothman designed and created the cross country course in 2004, and it has since become one of Florida's premier venues for cross country competition positively contributing to our local economy through sports tourism. Today, the course regularly hosts high school, collegiate and USA Track & Field (USATF) meets, as well as numerous regional and national competitions in partnership with the Palm Beach County Sports Commission.

The unveiling took place during the Spanish River Invitational, a cross country meet Rothman founded 44 years ago that has become a longstanding annual tradition in Florida. Rothman was joined by Palm Beach County representatives, Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department leadership and staff, current and former Spanish River High School cross country athletes and coaches, parents, fellow Palm Beach County coaches, friends and community members.

"Rick Rothman's impact extends far beyond wins and championships," said Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Director Jennifer Cirillo. "For decades, he has inspired thousands of young athletes through his passion, leadership and unwavering commitment to excellence. Naming this course in his honor recognizes not only his extraordinary coaching career, but also his vision in designing a course that has become one of Florida's premier destinations for cross country competition. We are proud that generations of runners will know this course bears the name of someone who has given so much to our community and to the sport."



Spanish River Sharks Logo

Over a remarkable coaching career spanning nearly four decades at the high school level, Rothman established one of the nation's premier cross country programs at Spanish River Community High School, leading his teams to seven Florida High School Girls Cross Country State Championships, girls' and boys' state runner-up finishes, more than 150 major championships, and earning recognition as a 117-time Coach of the Year. His contributions extend far beyond the finish line, having served in numerous leadership positions with USA Track & Field, coached multiple U.S. national teams in international competition, coached at Florida Atlantic University, and mentored generations of athletes and coaches. In 2025, Rothman was inducted into the National High School Athletic Coaches Association Hall of Fame, adding to his inductions into the Palm Beach County Sports Hall of Fame, Florida Athletic Coaches Association Hall of Fame, Florida High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame, and Florida Track & Field Hall of Fame.

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> *Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Director Jennifer Cirillo*

"This has been my dream since I came to Palm Beach County in 1981—to have a permanent cross country course," Rothman said. "It was a bonus to be able to design the course, and the greatest honor of my career to have it named after me. I hope this course sees many great performances and creates terrific memories for all those who compete here."

The renaming of the course serves as a lasting tribute to Rothman's extraordinary legacy and lifelong commitment to the sport of cross country. Thousands of runners have competed on the course he envisioned and built, and countless more will continue to benefit from his vision for generations to come.

The Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department, nationally accredited through the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), is recognized for excellence in park and recreation management and provides organized recreational programs and services for people of all ages and abilities. Discover healthy, happy living at www.pbcparks.com and follow @PBCParks and #pbcparks on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

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44th Annual Spanish River XC Invitational Logo



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Rick Rothman

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