Running on the Road with Don White

It’s springtime, the snow is gone (or going) and you want to run. Great!

Trouble is, you prefer running on the trails and they are still knee deep in snow or covered in ice and slimy with mud leaving road running as your only option.

Some basic cautions to running on the road people need to be reminded of are, to me, no brainers.

1. Run facing traffic – that way you can see vehicles coming towards you (and a rule I learned when I was a kid).
2. Wave at every vehicle coming your way – that way the movement of your arm may be enough to get them to see you, a pedestrian, and maybe give you a bit more space (I really like the energetic drivers that give a real wave and not just a head nod, finger wave or a blank stare).
3. Wave at the bus drivers – they really seem to enjoy it.
4. Wear something bright so drivers will notice you.
5. Wear your sunglasses, a billed hat and sunscreen.
6. If you run in the early morning, later in the evening of anytime in low light, wear something reflective (it’s a safety requirement for the night sections of the Klondike International Road Relay).
7. COVID-19 precautions (from Athletics Canada):

* Pay attention! Watch for pedestrians ahead of you and keep a clear path
* Slow down. If someone is using the sidewalk ahead of you, stop running. Walk. Give them time to react to you.
* Keep the recommended distance away from others.
* When the path is clear again, pick up the pace and start running again. If possible, you may wish to run in a recreational area instead of a pedestrian walkway.

I run with my daughter in the Porter Creek/Whistle Bend areas on the roads. I’ve lost friends and acquaintances who were struck by vehicles while on the wrong side of the road (traffic coming from behind) because they didn’t see the vehicle coming and were unable to get out of the way. By running facing the traffic, by waving, by taking appropriate precautions we get to share the road with other runners, kids on bikes, families pushing strollers and vehicles.

Remember the basic rules of running: stand tall, keep your head up, look ahead, land on the balls of your feet, run at conversational pace so you and your running partner can chat and don’t wear earphones (or if you do, keep the music low and preferably keep one ear free).

Enjoy your run!