

# 14-year-old to go the distance for Hays child with heart defect

Cristina Janney | Hays Post | 2022-03-01

<https://hayspost.com/posts/8060b691-c67c-471e-9e1e-91e9baedd96f>

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Dominic Hernandez, 14-year-old runner, William Scott, and his father Cade Scott, Dominic's social studies teacher at Hays Middle School. Dominic will run 48 miles in 48 hours to raise money for the Scott family to travel to California for William's heart surgery. Courtesy photo

By CRISTINA JANNEY

Hays Post

A 14-year-old student is set to run 48 miles in 48 hours to raise funds for a 3-year-old boy with a heart defect.

Dominic Hernandez, a Hays Middle School student, will run his second 48 in 48 starting Friday night.

William Scott is the son of Cade Scott, social studies teacher at HMS. William has a rare heart defect called Tetralogy of Fallot with an absent pulmonary artery.

He will be going into open heart surgery March 8, where doctors will repair and replace parts of his heart. His surgery will be performed at Lucille Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif. Funds raised through Dominic's run will go to William's family to help offset the cost of travel expenses.

Dominic has already surpassed his goal of raising \$2,500 for the family through a GoFundMe campaign. Any money raised above the \$2,500 will also go directly to the family to help cover William's expenses.

Donations will remain open for the GoFundMe campaign until March 10.



William Scott, 3, has a heart defect. He is scheduled for surgery in California next week. Courtesy photo  
Dominic recently had the opportunity to meet William and said you would never guess that the boy had a heart problem.

"He's super energetic. He couldn't stop running around, jumping around, kicking the ball," Dominic said.  
He said William's strength has helped encourage him in his training.

"I thought to go through all these open-heart surgeries and recover at such a young age is just remarkable from my point of view," Dominic said. "He's done all of these big things that I couldn't even dream of."

Dominic will be running his night laps on the dyke in Hays. He'll be running his day laps along the U.S. 183 bypass. Dominic will be running his first lap on Friday with William's dad.



Courtesy photo

He encouraged anyone who wants to join him to run the 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. laps Saturday. Dominic usually can cover four miles in 30 minutes, but since this an endurance event, he will probably slow his pace to about 40 minutes.

Although only 14, Dominic is already training for a half Ironman.

He comes from an athletic family. Both his father and brother are runners, with his father running endurance events. Dominic started running cross country when he was in the sixth grade as the HMS team manager.

Dominic rotates through a rigorous training program of running, biking and swimming. On an average training day, he runs six to eight miles. On days he bikes, he rides for about two and half hours, and days he swims he swims about 1,500 to 2,000 yards.

The 48 in 48 Challenge was spearheaded by David Goggins, a veteran and ultra-marathon runner. The challenge entails running 4 miles every four hours for 48 hours.

Dominic met Goggins through his father, and ran the first 48 in 48 last year with his father and brother. He raised \$250, which he donated to the Hays Fire Department.

To train for the 48 in 48 specifically, Dominic runs after dark and at the end of the day when he's tired.

Dominic has some lofty goals as an athlete. He would like to one day qualify for the Ironman World Championship in Hawaii or complete the Badwater 135, which is ultra-distance and ultra-endurance marathon through Death Valley. The run gains about 10,000 feet in elevation.

Dominic wants to be a professional Ironman athlete, but he is a young man with a head on his shoulders. Athletes can receive a career-ending injury at anytime, he said, so he plans to go to school to become a dental hygienist.