

Answers to questions commonly asked about cross country by parents

Q. Does my child need to be fast to run? What does he or she need to bring to practice?

A. No. Many of our best runners start out slow. Many of our most satisfied runners never ran fast. Your child only needs to bring a great attitude, a willingness to work hard, running clothes, a pair of running shoes, and a full water bottle to each practice.

Q. Where can I get my child fit for running shoes?

A. There are many great places in the area to get fitted for running shoes. The Big Peach, Fleet Feet, and Phidippides. All of these stores will look at your natural gait, and fit you into the best shoe possible.

Q. Is cross country safe for my child?

A. While all sports can pose risks to your child, cross country is extremely safe. As a coaching staff we work hard to eliminate and minimize running injuries as much as possible. It is important that your child follows the coaches' advice; eats well and stays hydrated; follows training regimens and rests when appropriate.

On Monday and Friday mornings (6:00-7:00 am), we will run on the track at Dunwoody High School. Please be sure to wear reflective, light colored clothing and bring a flashlight for race prep mornings.

On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoon (3:30-5:15 pm), we will typically be off campus running routes of various lengths, depending on your child's abilities. It is of utmost importance that your child runs on sidewalks wherever possible, crosses intersections only with green lights and follows the coaches' road safety instructions at all times. Failure to do so will result in track only running restrictions and removal from the team.

Q. Are uniforms mandatory?

A. Yes, everyone needs a uniform in order to compete. Any undergarments such as compression shorts or t-shirts worn under the singlet need to be solid black. Uniforms and team gear are made available for purchase at the beginning of the season. No jewelry of any kind may be worn. Eyeglasses and standard watches may be worn. The general rule is, "if you weren't born with it, you can't wear it." Violation of this rule will result in a disqualification which will impact the team.

Q. How much are team dues?

A. The cost of dues for the first runner (9-12 grades) is \$175. The cost of dues for any additional runners (9-12 grades) is \$150. The cost of dues for all 8th graders is \$125.

Q. How far is a cross country race?

A. All varsity races are a 5k (3.1 miles). JV races are 2 miles. Any 9-12 grader can qualify for Varsity. Only 8-11 graders can be on JV.

Q. Who gets to run varsity, and who runs JV (junior varsity) at the County Races?

A. The DeKalb County races are held at Druid Hills Middle School (Former Shamrock Middle School). The JV race is 2 miles long and the Varsity race is 3.1 miles. Race rosters will be posted by the coaches at practice, usually 3 days before the race. Unfortunately, there is a limit on how many runners can run in a race. While the coaches will try to get every student the opportunity to race at least once, this is not guaranteed.

Q. Is this same at the Invitationals?

A. No. At the Invitationals (the Saturday races that we enter), only the fastest 10 boys and the fastest 10 girls can run in the Varsity race. Other eligible athletes will compete in the “Open” race, which is also 3.1 miles. At some of the Invitationals, we may only be able to enter 7 in the Varsity race. This information will be posted as it becomes available.

Q. What about County Championships and Regionals?

A. The fastest 7 boys and girls will represent Dunwoody at the Varsity County Championships in October. Also, the fastest 7 boys and girls (8-10th graders) will represent Dunwoody at the JV County Championships. Runners may not run both the JV and Varsity County Championships. At Regionals, again the fastest 7 boys and girls will represent Dunwoody in the Varsity race, but there is an open race for everyone else to run in.

Q. Who qualifies for the State Championships?

A. The first six individuals to finish the Varsity race at Regionals qualify for State. The first four teams will automatically qualify for State.

Q. How is team scoring done?

A. Team scoring involves adding the places of the first 5 runners from each school. The object is to have the LOWEST score. For example, if our first five runners finish 1, 4, 6, 10, and 11th, our team score is the sum of those places, or 32.

Q. Should parents come to the meets?

A. Yes, by all means, come to as many meets as you can! It is more fun to watch than you think it’s going to be. Please be respectful of the tent area. This is the athletes’ area to mentally and physically prepare for their race. Parents should set up away from the tent area.

Q. How will the runners get to and from the meets?

A. Buses are provided for all County meets and most Saturday Invitationals. Students must ride the bus to the meet. However, they are welcome to ride home with their parents following the final team meeting with the coach's permission.

Q. Does the cross country team have any fundraisers?

A. We typically have one fundraiser during the season to collect donations.

Q. Where can I find more information?

A. Our website, <https://dunwoodycrosscountry.weebly.com/>, is full of great and useful information.

Q. How can I, as a parent, help?

A. Your help is always welcome. Please contact the DHS Booster Club president to get involved. <https://dunwoodycrosscountry.weebly.com/booster-club-board.html>