

# A PARENT'S GUIDE TO CROSS COUNTRY

Congratulations your son has joined the Cedarburg High School Cross Country Team!

## WHAT IS CROSS COUNTRY?

Cross Country is a team running sport that takes place in the fall on a measured 3.11 mile loop over varied surfaces and terrain. Junior Varsity and Varsity all run the same distance. While we usually practice around the CHS campus, many Cross Country meets are held on dirt trails, park grounds, and sometimes golf courses.

## HOW IS CROSS COUNTRY SCORED?

A cross country meet is scored by each team adding up the places of its top 5 finishers. As in golf, the low score wins. For example, a team that scores 26 points places ahead of a team that scores 29 points, as follows:

<u>Cedarburg</u>		<u>Grafton</u>	
	1		2
	4		3
	5		7
	6		8
	10		9
SCORE	26	SCORE	29

CEDARBURG WINS!!!

A team's 6th and 7th finishers can also figure in the scoring if they place ahead of the other team's top 5 finishers. When that is the case, they become what's known as "pushers" by pushing up their opponents scores, as follows:

<u>Cedarburg</u>		<u>Grafton</u>	
	2		1
	3		4
	6		5
	8		7
	9 (10)(11)		12
SCORE	28		29

CEDARBURG WINS!!!!

Only a team's 6th and 7th finishers can be pushers, regardless of how many of its runners may finish ahead of an opposing team's top 5 finishers.

## LEVELS OF COMPETITION/PARTICIPATION

Cedarburg High School is a member of the North Shore Conference. All meets will be in what is known as an Invitational format, this means there are more than 3 teams competing. Most meets have between 10 and 25 teams competing. The order varies from meet to meet, but all meets have a boys varsity, girls varsity, boys junior varsity, and a girls junior varsity race. Boys and girls run the same distance and course. Usually the races are 20 to 30 minutes apart.

All team members can participate at the junior varsity level. For boys junior varsity race times generally range in the 18:00 to 30:00 minute time frame. Varsity is usually made up of the top 8 runners on the team. Varsity race times are usually in the 15:30 to 18:00 time frame. Who runs on Varsity can change from week to week.

## WHAT IT TAKES TO BE SUCCESSFUL

More than anything else, success in Cross Country takes time... time to learn; time to train; time to sleep, rest, and recover. With the academic responsibilities of being a high school student, most student-athletes are busy all the time. The willingness to devote the time that success demands is called **DEDICATION**.

Being a member of the CHS Cross Country Team carries other expectations and responsibilities. Doing what is expected of every team member is called **COMMITMENT**. Attending team practices every day is one of the commitments we expect. Our goal is to develop team loyalty and individual responsibility and accountability among all our team members. High school sports are a wonderful vehicle for personal growth. We hope that you as parents will appreciate this and support our goals.

Another commitment we expect is **COMMUNICATION** with our coaches. If a problem or illness is to force your son to miss practice or a meet, we expect him to tell us about it personally and in advance. This does not mean relaying a message through a teammate or friend. Many such problems can be solved when there is an open line of communication between coaches, athletes, and parents.

## HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR SON BEFORE THE SEASON STARTS?

We strongly encourage our runners to be on a self-training running program during the summer. Pre-season summer training is essential to build a fitness base for the intensive workouts and races during the season. We will have Captain's runs Monday through Friday during the summer. These are open practices run by our team Captains. They are a great way to get in shape and meet your teammates prior to the official start of the season in August. We will also be holding 5 open practices in which Coach Wagner will run with the boys and do strength training with them. Both Captains runs and Open practices will meet at the light pole behind the CPAC. Check the team website for times or email coach.

As your aspiring young runner begins the first weeks of training, you may wonder what you should expect and how you can assist him as a parent in terms of recovery, eating, sleeping, and mental attitude. As a rule, we don't recommend you change any aspect of your normal routine of home responsibilities, family meal planning, bedtime, and social guidelines. A normal consequence of beginning to train is muscle soreness, which will soon go away. If your son has not participated in sports before, this may persist up to two weeks. They should communicate this to us and we can adjust their training. Any athlete engaged in intensive training and competition can be subject to injury. We can prevent most injuries when our runners tell us about their aches and pains before they become injuries, so we can have them treated by our athletic trainers. A nutritious well-balanced diet is essential for an athlete. Especially on race days, fatty and fried foods and carbonated drinks should be avoided. Small portions of easily digested foods eaten at least 2 hours before competition are best, but water intake should never be limited. Most athletes feel best when they race a little hungry. You may notice an increase in appetite after practice and racing, this is normal. The body needs quality fuel to supply the growing muscles.

**My son has never run before what should he do to prepare for Cross Country?**

1. Run(slow) and walk for 30 minutes. 15 minutes out turn around and come back.
2. Find a friend to join Cross Country with you and run with them.
3. Repeat Step 1 with your new training buddy, every other day until you can run for 30 minutes without stopping.
4. Run 3-4 days a week in June, then run 4-5 days a week in July and August.
5. Quit or drastically reduce your consumption of Soda and Fast Food.
6. Ride your bike, Go swimming, Go for a Hike, Play Soccer, Play any sport you want outside!
7. Get at least 8 hours of sleep every night.

## **CROSS COUNTRY VOCABULARY**

Invitational Meet: A meet between multiple teams.

Top 7: The scoring members of a Cross Country team

Course: The marked and measured route of the race.

Starting Box: Designated area to which a team is assigned on the starting line.

False Start: Leaving the starting line before the gun sounds.

Pace: Running speed over a particular distance.

Surge: A tactical increase in pace during the race.

Kick: A burst of speed at the finish of the race.

Pack: A group of runners in close proximity.

Personal Record (PR): Best-ever race performance.

Spikes: Lightweight running shoes with detachable spikes used during races.

Trainers: Running shoes designed for long wear in daily training.

Warm-up: A running and stretching routine that gradually warms up the body for intense running.

Cool-down: A jogging/walking routine that allows the muscles to purge themselves of lactates and the body to gradually lower its temperature back to normal.

WOD: Workout of the day. A daily training session.