

NASHVILLE YOUTH ATHLETICS

Welcome to Nashville Youth Athletics! Cross Country season is upon us and we are excited you decided to join the fun! We want to thank you for signing up and volunteering your time. We are committed to bringing you quality programming year after year, but we couldn't do this without the support of our community, so thank you!

Expectations

Cross Country is growing in popularity and this is most likely due to its accessibility. Most anyone can run with no need for special equipment or courts, alone, with a team, and most importantly, for the rest of their life! One of the wonderful things about XC is that athletes can have great success at the team level, as well as the individual level, and experience improvement week after week. It's important to tap into what that success feels like for your child and encourage it. It may be place, time, not having to walk, taking on a leadership role, or just feeling better and stronger each day. All our athletes grow in so many ways over the course of a season. It's also important to remember that this can be difficult, the distances daunting, and we may not feel great every time out. But these are great life lessons: never give up, set goals and reach them, and when you work hard at something, it always pays off. That may be the biggest success of all. Knowing that you went out there and gave it everything you could (NO REGRETS!). This alone will be a great source of pride for everyone. They may not all earn college scholarships in athletics, but the life lessons they acquire through youth sports will stay with them forever.

Cross Country is an endurance sport. This is something that has to be trained for over time, ultimately resulting in physiological adaptation. Young children are used to short bursts of activity followed by periods of rest. In XC, they will learn how to pace themselves, how to listen to and be in-tune with their bodies, and push themselves further and harder than they may have thought possible. This ability doesn't happen over days, but rather months and years of training (another great reason to start early). Over the next several years they will grow and change drastically. As we build the foundation of distance running, we will also be adjusting to accommodate physical as well as emotional changes. It is important to have patience and preach patience. It's important to take each day one day at a time and realize that success is the result of small gains overtime. We will do our best to help them develop all of these skills, just keep encouraging them that *it only gets better*.

Another important fact to note is that, in Cross Country, times are irrelevant. Courses can vary in distance and difficulty. There is no governing body within the sport for distance and conditions (terrain), so race times will vary greatly. If we were to take down the clock, we could still score a Cross Country meet. Leave the timing for the track, where the environment and conditions should be reproducible from meet to meet. It is also good to keep in mind that there will not be college scouts out on the course. We are trying to develop a love of the sport, not get signed to a D1 school as a 6th grader. 😊

Scheduling

For those of you signed up with a school team and have coach in place, rosters have been handed out to coaches and they will be in contact with you about practice time and place. For those who do not have a school team or are homeschooled, we can either find you a team that is close to your house or you can run on your own. If you choose to practice on your own, you can check out our Coaches' Page on the website for sample workouts and advice.

Race Day!

It is important to hydrate your athletes the *prior* to the day of the meet. Trying to make up hydration on race day only leads to full, sloshy bellies...not so good for racing. Drink regular amounts of WATER (not sports drinks) leading up to the race and to eat a balanced carb/protein rich meal that is low in fat and salt 2-4 hours prior to the race. A small healthy snack for energy about 30 minutes before race time can be a good idea also (granola bars, bananas, nuts) if hungry. For better muscle/body recovery post race (and hard workouts), have snacks on hand that have a 3:1 or 4:1 ratio of carbs/protein. The sooner they eat these (0-30 minutes after), the better (crackers and cheese, PB&J, chocolate milk, fruit and cheese, and protein bars are some good examples). This and hydration helps to rebuild muscle and aids greatly in recovery.

On race day, we advise that you arrive no later than 45 minutes prior to the start of the first race. This will allow ample time to park, check in at the clerk's tent (where you will get your race number) and find your team's area. We pride ourselves on running an efficient meet so you can have fun and be on your way as soon as possible. All races will start ON TIME. The course will open 1 hour prior to the first race of the day for warm up/preview runs. Runners will also want to stretch and take a warm up run before they hit the starting line.

Please go over the Meet Etiquette & XC Rules Document (on the website under the coaches' page) with your kids. *It is vitally important that we all understand and comply with the rules and etiquette we have established for the meets.* This will ensure that everyone is able to perform at his or her best, and have an enjoyable experience. At times, spectators can forget where they are on the course or why they are out there (kids first!). This can unintentionally ruin someone else's race experience. Stepping in front of athletes on the course can be dangerous for competitors. Please be aware of the boundaries. If there are any problems, please allow coaches and meet managers to address it. We expect full compliance in this. We want this to be an enjoyable and encouraging experience for everyone, from the first athlete to the last. Please stick around and continue to cheer on everyone and encourage your children to do the same. Camaraderie among all athletes is a beautiful and uplifting thing.

Finish Chute

The finish chute is designed to get runners safely across the finish line and placed in their correct finish order. PLEASE do not disrupt this! Runners will cross the line and be funneled into the chute. They MUST keep moving; no stopping at the line! DO not high 5, hug, give water, or otherwise distract them until they are completely out of and away from the chute. It can greatly disrupt the results. We know you are proud, and you absolutely should be, but please refrain from engaging with them until they are clear of the chute.

At the race we will have an area set up with fluids for the athletes only. We will also have port-o-lets (PWP). Please allow the athletes to have first access. If there is a runner waiting in line, please let them go ahead of you. Thank you for your understanding.

Results

Each athlete will receive a participation ribbon. The top 10 athletes per gender per division will be given place ribbons. Top 10 ES results (and team results) will be announced after the finish of the ES Boys race. Awards will be given then. We will post results on the side of the black trailer after awards are handed out. The same goes for MS results. All results will also be posted on the NYA website the evening after the race. You have 24 hours to contest a result. After 24 hours they will be posted to MileSplit and cannot be changed.

Lost Child Policy

We will be at area parks in open fields. There will be a couple hundred people present at any given meet. It is important to instruct your children, if they get separated from you, or their coach, they are to meet at your team area. If no area exists or there has been a miscommunication, please instruct them to find the NYA tent and let an official know. We will keep them safe and make an announcement over the PA system until the child is claimed. When claiming a child, verification from the child must be provided and you will be asked to provide proof of identity to be recorded by the meet director

Inclement Weather Policy

Practices– Each participating school (coach) may either hold or cancel practice at their respective sites at their discretion. It is the individual coach's responsibility to inform parents of practice cancelation policy.

Meets –If weather forecasts call for threatening weather please do not assume we will cancel the event. Meet officials will be out at the course the morning of each meet and will assess the weather status and course conditions as it stands at the meet course. Please do not call or email to find out if the meet will be cancelled. If there is any cancellation or time adjustment of the meet it will appear on TWITTER, @NashYouthAth, Facebook, and Instagram. You may also “opt in” to text alerts about weather in your account on the registration site, SIPlay.

If there is lightning in the area the meet be delayed for 30 minutes to allow weather to clear. If at this time there is still lightning in the area, we will delay an additional 30 minutes. If after two 30 minute delays lightning remains in the area, the meet will be canceled. There are no scheduled make up meets.

Heat Policy: please visit the coaches' page on the website for detailed info.

If you all have any other questions or there is something I didn't cover that you are unsure about, please contact me. hollee@nashvilleyouthathletics.org

I know this is quite a long welcome letter but you all are our XC family. If we can establish a great environment together, we can continue to bring you programming that will meet or even exceed your expectations for years to come! Thanks for jumping on board. It's going to be a GREAT season!

Hollee & Brandon