

Donegal High School Cross Country Team Expectations

Team Participation

Donegal Cross Country is a no-cut sport, which means that no one will be dropped from the roster due to performance level (race times). However, the program is not intended to be a jogging club or exercise group. All athletes participating in the program will be expected to demonstrate a high level of motivation and commitment, and a sincere desire to test and stretch their limits and learn to compete in a sportsmanlike manner.

- Junior High athletes are expected to learn the sport and grow in their abilities throughout the program with the goal of completing a two mile course without walking.
- Varsity athletes will be expected to demonstrate the ability to *run* 3.5 continuous miles to compete and to remain in the program.

Behavior and Discipline

Always conduct yourself as though your coach or parent is watching you. Cross country team members are representatives of Donegal High School, and as such are expected to display sportsmanlike conduct and respectful behavior. Any discipline problems will be dealt with by the coaches according to school policy.

Practices

Practices will be held weekdays, starting promptly at 3:30 PM and will end by 5:45 PM. There will also be voluntary Saturday practices for varsity runners, with times announced in advance.

Attendance

In order for Donegal Cross Country to be successful as a team we must practice together on a regular basis. The coaches believe this helps foster team unity, good work ethic, and sportsmanship. Therefore, we have adopted the following rules for attendance:

- Practice begins promptly at 3:30. Athletes are expected to be on time, dressed, and ready to begin practice at 3:30. Attendance will be taken.
- Athletes are expected to make a 9-12 week commitment to the team. During the season, the team takes precedence over all other extracurricular sports and intramurals. You may have a job, but it should not interfere with practices or meets.
- If you will be absent from practice, please communicate this to the coach as soon as possible. Acceptable absences are: illness (absent from school), family emergency, doctor appointments (try to arrange around practice if possible), and school sanctioned events or trips. Work, detention, homework, forgetting clothes or shoes, missing the meet bus, and lack of a ride to practice are all considered unexcused absences. *Athletes who accrue more than two unexcused absences will be dismissed from the team.*
- If you are unable to participate in workouts due to injury, report to the training room before practice starts, then join the team at the beginning of the scheduled practice for the team meeting, stretching, and any additional instructions from the coaches.
- Athletes must attend practice in order to be eligible for meets. Athletes who miss practices before an upcoming meet may not be permitted to compete, but will still be required to attend the meet to support their team mates and assist the coaches.

Meets

Participation in meets is the purpose of the Donegal Cross Country Team. Athletes are expected to be available for every meet! Generally everyone will compete, but some meets are by invitation only, and are limited to 7 or 8 runners.

- Athletes are expected to travel on the bus to and from regular meets.
- For **invitational** meets, all athletes **must** either return to the school with the team, or travel from the meet with their parent only. No exceptions will be made as per school administrative policy. Parents transporting their own children after an invitational meet will be required to check out with the head coach before leaving the meet.
- Athletes receiving a meet award will be required to wear their team warm ups or jersey, or a T-shirt displaying the school name during the awards presentation.

Varsity Letters

It is the belief of the coaches that lettering athletes display commitment, strength, and dedication to the Donegal Cross Country program as well as their own individual performance. Accordingly, we have adopted the following qualifications for Varsity Letter eligibility:

- A varsity athlete must place in the team's top seven finishers in five meets of the season and qualify to run at the League championship meet (Boys – under 21 minutes and Girls – under 25 minutes). However, coaches reserve the right to award a letter to any otherwise non-qualifying athlete who is exceptionally hard working and determined, and who exhibits good sportsmanship throughout the season.

I (Athlete name) _____ have read the above expectations (and lettering policy) and agree to abide by the guidelines and consequences as outlined.

(Athlete signature and date)

(Parent signature and date)