

# ***FALCON CROSS COUNTRY***

## **Team Handbook**

An Information Resource  
for Parents and Athletes



***The Most Successful Sport in CPHS History***

# FALCON CROSS COUNTRY

## • **ATHLETE CHECK LIST** •

The following is a list of things to take care of before the season begins on **MONDAY, AUGUST 15th, 2011**

—1. **ATHLETIC CLEARANCE FORM.** Due 1st practice day. Athletes will not be allowed to practice with the team until a parent has filled out all information on this form, and obtained physician signature. This means making an appointment for a physical ASAP! Blank forms are available in the CPHS main office or online at [www.cphsboosters.com](http://www.cphsboosters.com).

—2. **ELIGIBILITY.** Each grade report period. Athletes will not be allowed to compete as a member of the team without having achieved the minimum academic standard for interscholastic sport participation. This requires a 2.0 GPA for the most recent grading period. Incoming freshmen students must have a 2.0 GPA from their last quarter of 8th grade.

—3. **TEAM FEES.** Sport Contribution Fees, Transportation Fees, and Team Participation Fees are all due on the first day of practice. Please get your apparel orders in by August 18<sup>th</sup> so the correct sizes can be ordered.

—4. **GETTING IN SHAPE!** Athletes must show up to the first day of practice physically prepared! Consistent (5 to 6 days a week) running during the off season will make a huge difference for you during the competitive season. It is virtually impossible for an athlete to make significant progress without having run prior to the season. We just can't emphasize this enough! Get out and run at least 2 to 4 miles a day, 5 to 6 days a week during the entire summer!!!

—5. **RUNNING CAMP.** (Optional) This is a 5 day camp for all athletes of all ability levels! It is July 24 – July 29th, and is a great way for teammates to gear up mentally & physically for the approaching season. If you are interested in going to running camp, please refer to their website at [www.runninaway.com/](http://www.runninaway.com/) for more information.

IF YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH #1 THROUGH #5 ON THIS LIST BEFORE THE SEASON BEGINS YOU WILL BE SET TO HAVE A FUN AND SUCCESSFUL CROSS COUNTRY EXPERIENCE!

REMEMBER: THE CROSS COUNTRY TEAM IS OPEN TO EVERYONE!

**THERE ARE NO CUTS!**

# FALCON CROSS COUNTRY

## • *Sport Specific Competition Rules* •

### UNIFORMS

Cross Country competitors must wear school issued racing uniforms. Additional garments (compression shorts or athletic bras) must be solid WHITE and worn beneath the uniform.

**ALL Jewelry items**, including rings, nose or ear rings, necklaces, bobby pins, hair clips, bracelets, **ARE NOT ALLOWED IN COMPETITION!!!** However, watches may be used in competition.

### DISQUALIFICATION

Athletes may be disqualified for the following infractions:

- Uniform violation.
- Failure to follow directions of meet personnel.
- Use of profanity.
- Causing a competitor to break stride.
- Impeding or interfering with a competitor.
- Physical contact with a competitor.
- Failure to run designated course.

### RACE DISTANCES

Varsity race distance for DFAL, NCS, and CIF competition is 3 miles or 5k. Scrimmages and Invitational meets sometimes vary, but are never less than 2 miles or longer than 5k.

Frosh-Soph and Junior Varsity race distance for DFAL competition is 2 miles.

Invitational meets can vary from 3k to 5k, but are typically 2 miles.

### RACE SCORING

The top 7 finishers for each team are factored into the final team score. Teams with fewer than 5 competitors are "incomplete" and those finishers are deleted from scoring.

The summation of the top 5 finishing places for each team represents the team scores. The lowest score wins. In the event of a tie, the 6th finishing place for each team determines the winner.

Invitational and Championship competition is scored using team finishing places against entire race field. DFAL center meet competition is scored using head to head scoring between each team.



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## DIVISIONS

There are 3 divisions of competition in High School Cross Country: **Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Frosh-Soph.**

The Falcon Cross Country Program places athletes in divisions based on the following criteria:

**Varsity:** The top 7 fastest athletes regardless of grade usually compete in this division. Invitational and post season competition limits team size to 7 runners. However, DVAL dual meet rules allow teams to run as many as 10 athletes in Varsity competition. Fielding more than 7 runners in Varsity competition is done at the discretion of the coach usually for the purpose of providing experience for future Varsity athletes, run-offs between athletes competing for a Varsity position, or as reward for exemplary conduct by veterans.

**Frosh-Soph:** This division is restricted to Freshmen and Sophomores only. The top 7 fastest Frosh or Soph athletes usually compete in this division. The exception to this would be if a Freshman or Sophomore were placed on Varsity. Invitational competition sometimes limits team size to 7 runners. However, most often there is no limit to number of entries in Frosh-Soph competition.

**Junior Varsity:** There are no grade restrictions or team size limitations for this division. However, a school must field a Varsity team consisting of their top 5 or more runners before a Junior Varsity team can be entered. Junior or Senior athletes not among the top 7 fastest on the team compete in this division. Freshmen or Sophomores may also compete in this division, usually to provide better depth or to balance race fields.

## POST SEASON COMPETITION

**Varsity:** Complete Varsity teams automatically qualify for the DVAL Championship and NCS Championship meets. Varsity teams must finish in the top three at the NCS Championship meet to advance to the CIF Championships. The top 5 Individuals NOT on a qualifying team may advance from NCS to CIF competition if they finish in the top 12.

**Frosh-Soph & Junior Varsity:** Frosh-Soph and Junior Varsity teams automatically qualify for the DVAL Championship meet. These divisions are NOT contested at the NCS or CIF level.

## FINAL DVAL STANDINGS

Final season league standings for each division are determined by combining equally weighted results from regular season DVAL Center-meet competition and those of the DVAL Championship meet. There are NO tie breakers.

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## • **LETTER REQUIREMENTS** •

### **FROSH-SOPH & JUNIOR VARSITY REQUIREMENTS:**

**Athlete must finish a minimum of 6 races and attend a minimum of 45 practice sessions to be considered for a Letter Award:**

Only athletes that complete in at six races and attend at least 45 practice sessions during the fall season are eligible for a Cross Country Letter Award. Athletes that do not reach these minimums will receive Participant Awards.

Achievement of one of the following automatically earns Letter Award provided the athlete has competed in six races and attended 45 practice sessions.

- **Top 7 finish on any team in 4 or more races**
- **Two Mile Time: 13:00 (boy), 15:30 (girl)**

### **VARSITY REQUIREMENTS:**

**Athlete must finish a minimum of 4 VARSITY races and attend a minimum of 45 practice sessions. Only athletes that complete in at four VARSITY races and attend at least 45 practice sessions during the fall season are eligible for a VARSITY Cross Country Letter Award:**

Athlete must achieve a minimum 3-mile time: 18:00 (boy), 21:30 (girl). Only athletes that achieve the time standard on a certified 3 mile course during the fall season are eligible for a VARSITY Letter Award. (5K conversion accepted)

Achievement of one of the following automatically earns VARSITY Letter Award provided the athlete has competed in four VARSITY races, attended 45 practice sessions, and achieved the minimum VARSITY time standard:.

- **Top 7 finish on Varsity team in 4 or more races**
- **Top 5 finish on Varsity team at DVAL Championships**
- **All League Varsity 1<sup>st</sup> Team selection**
- **Top 5 finish on Varsity team at NCS or State**

ATHLETES THAT **QUIT** THE TEAM FOR ANY REASON, OR ARE **DROPPED** FROM THE TEAM AS DISCIPLINARY ACTION, OR **FAIL** TO ACHIEVE THE MINIMUM ACADEMIC STANDARD FOR PARTICIPATION **FORFEIT ALL AWARDS.**

# FALCON CROSS COUNTRY

## • *General Team Rules* •

**XCStats.com Athlete Profile:** Each athlete is expected to register on the XCStats.com web site as a member of the College Park High School Team. This includes entering athlete and parent email addresses, setting up competition goals, and using the training log feature. Post race feedback will be provided to athletes following every competition. Athlete progress, training feedback, and weekly announcements to both athletes and parents will be provided through this system. **MAINTAINING A CURRENT XCSTATS.COM PROFILE IS A REQUIREMENT OF TEAM PARTICIPATION.**

**Practice Attendance:** Each athlete is expected to attend all primary practice sessions Monday through Friday. Every effort must be made to schedule time so that there are no conflicts with daily practice. If a valid reason for missing practice exists (illness or emergency), the athlete must notify the coach prior to the practice that will be missed. **MISSING PRACTICE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTIFICATION WILL RESULT IN SUSPENSION FROM COMPETITION.** It is at the discretion of the coach to determine whether or not athletes that are ill and unable to complete practice sessions 48 hours prior to a competition date will be allowed to race. In the interest of safety, the coaching staff reserves the right to hold out of competition any athlete that is unable to satisfactorily complete a preceding workout session.

Before school and Saturday practice sessions are optional. Athletes invited by the coaching staff to participate in the before school and Saturday sessions choose to do so in addition to the Monday through Friday required sessions. Attendance at these additional sessions does not impact an athlete's standing on the team.

**Punctuality:** Each athlete is expected to arrive at practice and competitions on time and ready to run. **SECOND TIME LATE WILL RESULT IN CAMPUS BEAUTIFICATION. IF LATENESS BECOMES CHRONIC ATHLETE WILL BE DROPPED FROM THE TEAM.**

**Practice Apparel & Equipment:** Correctly fitted running shoes, appropriate length running shorts (3" inseam or less) **AND SWEAT PANTS** are required at practice. Basketball, street shorts or other long shorts are NOT acceptable. A sports watch with a split timing function is also required at practices. **CHRONIC FAILURE TO ATTEND PRACTICE WITHOUT APPROPRIATE APPAREL AND EQUIPMENT WILL RESULT IN DISMISSAL FROM PRACTICE.**

**Competition Apparel:** Athletes must wear team issued College Park gear at all competitions. Other colors, insignias or slogans are NOT acceptable. Undergarments worn beneath the team issued uniform must be solid white in color. Team sweat pants are to be worn at all competitions. Athletes are required to wear sweat pants before and after racing. Do NOT wear uniform or sweat pants at school or for any other purpose.

**Conduct:** Falcon Cross Country athletes represent the premier athletic program at CPHS. They are representatives of the school and the community. Each athlete is responsible for continuing our tradition of exemplary conduct. Support teammates, make a positive contribution to the sport, and act responsibly in every situation. Problems must be handled in a mature and rational manner. Communication with the coach is essential. **FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE STANDARDS WILL BE DROPPED FROM THE TEAM.**

*Falcon Cross Country Athletes will be held accountable to these rules without exception*

# FALCON CROSS COUNTRY

## • *Running Shoes: A Priority* •

Even in the most casual of 30 minute workouts your feet may hit the ground forty-eight hundred times! And the force on impact can easily exceed several times your own body weight. So shoes may be the last things you think about, but they are the first thing protecting you from a miserable season of chronic overuse injuries.

If you plan on putting in the time to do Cross Country (about 170 hours over the course of a season), then take a moment to make an educated decision about your gear.

Go to a real running store and tell the sales person you need a quality shoe that fits your specific running characteristics. Have them examine your old shoes and your feet in order to evaluate your foot strike. Tell them about any chronic soreness or past injuries. And for goodness sakes, ask the salesperson questions! Ask them to watch you walk barefoot. Ask them to explain your foot strike. And don't forget to let them know you're on a team.

You usually get what you pay for when it comes to running shoes. The top line running shoes sell for \$90 to \$120. But avoiding a nasty thing like shin splints because you spent a few more dollars on the right shoes is worth it.

However, don't drop all your cash on the most expensive pair of shoes without regard to your specific needs! The best way to go about it is to find the best possible shoe for YOU.

Try on several different shoes before a purchase. If possible, take a run around the block to get a true feel for the support and fit. Keep in mind that everyone's feet are different. A shoe that is great for one person might not be right for another, so be picky!

We recommend you purchase shoes at a running specialty store. The running store that sponsors College Park Cross Country Athletes is Fleet Feet Pleasant Hill. **They offer our athletes 20% off all merchandise in the store during the entire season.** Your service at Fleet Feet or any other running specialty store includes a thorough foot strike analysis, where the person helping you asks that you take your shoes off and walk barefoot, or that you run on a treadmill while a video camera records your gait cycle. If you ask for a foot strike evaluation and they don't know what you are talking about, **DO NOT LET THEM HELP YOU!**

**45 Crescent Drive,  
Pleasant Hill  
(925) 827-4772**

**FLEET FEET**  
*Sports*

# FALCON CROSS COUNTRY

## • **Mandatory Equipment** •

**REQUIRED ITEMS:** The following items are required at all practices and competitions.

- Water Bottle
- Running Shoes (specifically fitted at running specialty store)
- Sweat Pants
- Running Shorts (NO basketball or long shorts!)
- Digital Watch with Split/Lap Time Capabilities
- Locker Room Lock (always lock up your gear)
- Nutritious Post Workout Snack

**RECOMMENDED ITEMS:** These items are not required, but recommended for serious athletes.

- Racing Flats
- Foam Roller (for self massage)
- Golf Ball (for self massage)

## • **Team Apparel** •

Team singlets and shorts are provided for the season at no charge. These items are high quality micro-fiber garments. Please care for them as follows: **WASH IN COLD. HANG DRY.** Failure to follow these instructions will result in damage. Athletes will be charged replacement cost (\$50 each piece) for lost or damaged garments.

New team T-shirts are created each year for the season. Team sweats are Asics Black warm-up pants. These items are ordered through the APPAREL ORDER FORM.

These are the same sweats used for the Track & Field Team. If the athlete has already purchased a pant for previous seasons there is no need to order again, unless a replacement or extra item is desired.

Falcon Cross Country and Track & Field plan to continue to use the same style of sweats as long as they are available in the future. This means that athletes will NOT be required to order new sweats for their participation in future seasons of either sport.

### **ADDITIONAL APPAREL RULES FOR COMPETITION:**

College Park Cross Country athletes are required to wear team issued singlet, shorts, T-shirt and sweats at all competitions.

Athletes are required to wear College Park team gear at all competitions. Other colors or insignias or slogans are NOT acceptable. **ATHLETES MAY NOT WEAR COLORS OTHER THAN PURPLE, WHITE AND BLACK** when representing the College Park cross country team at competitions. Apparel with slogans or insignias not related to College Park Cross Country are NOT allowed.

### **ADDITIONAL APPAREL RULES FOR PRACTICE:**

Athletes are encouraged to purchase running specific apparel for practice sessions. These may include synthetic fiber shirts, shorts and socks. Synthetic fiber running products are designed to transfer moisture and help regulate optimal body temperature. Athletes are also expected to wear shorts no longer than 3 inches at the inseam during practice sessions. Appropriate running shorts are typically 2.5 inches at the inseam to provide necessary range of motion. Compression shorts are also appropriate. Long/baggy basketball style shorts are **NOT** acceptable.

# FALCON CROSS COUNTRY

## • **PARENT INVOLVEMENT** •

Falcon Cross Country **DEPENDS** upon the involvement of parents who are interested in the success of their student-athletes. With your help we are able to maintain a safe and supportive environment in which every athlete has the opportunity to experience the rewards of our sport. Please do not hesitate to get involved!

I realize the pressures and time constraints parents may have with work, as well as the myriad of responsibilities related to raising teenagers. Many of you are already actively involved in other aspects of your athlete's life. The sacrifice you make to take part in Falcon Cross Country, no matter what role you choose, will make a difference for these athletes.

### Involvement Opportunities

1. Volunteer to help out at one of the home meets at Hidden Valley Park (course or chute monitor, setup, tag taker, etc.).
2. Volunteer to work a shift at the Ed Sias Invitational **Concession Stand**, or volunteer to food and supplies for the concession stand on **September 10th**.
3. Volunteer to help out at the Lafayette Team Fundraisers on **September 18<sup>th</sup>** and **October 30<sup>th</sup>**.
4. Help your student-athlete be safe and healthy. Good running shoes fitted by a trained professional are a must. Eating the right foods, drinking lots of water, and getting enough sleep are essential. Help them make Cross Country a **PRIORITY** in their life.
5. Attend Awards Night.
6. Perhaps volunteer to Coordinate a team Pasta Feed in October?
5. Be sure your athlete has added your email to his/her XCStats.com profile so that you receive the frequent performance updates, team announcements, and other vital information through the course of the season. Please ask your athlete to show you his/her XCStats.com profile!
6. Parent **DRIVERS** will be needed for car-pools for varsity practice sessions and competition at the NCS meet course in Hayward the first two weeks of November. Exact days and times will be announced at a later date.

### Four Essential Elements For **SUCCESS**

1. **Health** –You can't run if you're not healthy. To be successful you must take care of your body!
2. **Consistency** –Improvement comes from training every day of the season **AND** the off-season!
3. **Progression** –Intensity & volume of training should increase each year that you run.
4. **Patience** –Stick with it through the ups and downs. Progress is made over the course of years, **NOT** weeks.

