

# Alvord Bulldog Cross Country

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## *Alvord Bulldog Cross-Country*

Welcome to Alvord Boys Cross Country! What follows on the subsequent pages is general information about the boys cross country program at Alvord Middle and High School. This is not an exclusive packet that covers all aspects of a cross country program but hopefully enough to get you and your child started in being a part of this program!

Here is what follows: Cross Country Philosophy, What is Cross Country, and Tentative Schedules.



**First Official High School Practice August 3, 2020 @7:00am High School Track.**

Middle School practice will begin on the first day of school.

**After school starts, high school practice will begin @6:15am unless otherwise specified.**

**It's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog.**

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## **CROSS COUNTRY PHILOSOPHY**

It doesn't matter what your goal in life is; you must develop a sense of purpose. To participate in a sport, to study and train is to believe in something. It is the quest for excellence and the never-ending belief in yourself that challenges you to strive and to overcome. During the process, individuals become transformed and aspire to new heights of achievement. You must develop goals and a total commitment, because then, and only then, will you develop a deeper perspective of life in general.

Choose a goal and work toward it. Later, it can be modified, changed or abandoned for a better one, but make a decision, decide to decide, plan to plan. If you do not have goals in life or athletics, you may find yourself frustrated and eventually emotionally drained.

People who excel in their endeavors invariably are the one who, early on, had determination and clear-cut goals and habitually directed all their energies toward fulfilling them. The decision to go after a goal is the key to success. The determination to stay with it is what brings out the quality of excellence.

As you go through school, you must remember that your main purpose in attending Alvord High School is to do the best possible academic work you can because this is your preparation for a lifetime profession. Like athletics, if your preparation is poor, your chances of succeeding in this competitive world will be poor.

### ***Objectives for Cross Country Runners***

1. To get an education
2. To give your total effort in practice and competition
3. To give unselfishly towards your teammates
4. To make the most of what you've got
5. To be totally honest in all your dealings
6. To be loyal to your school, coaches, teachers, teammates, and family
7. To be prompt
8. To be courteous
9. To be emotional and enthusiastic

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## What is Cross Country?

Cross Country (i.e. "CC", "XC", or "Cross") is a TEAM sport held in the fall where athletes race across various terrains. Parks, golf courses, and wooded areas or fields are favorite venues to host a meet. Some courses are flat, where others are hilly. In junior high, the typical race distance is 2 miles or 3200 meters. In high school, the race distance will be a 5k.

## The Cross Country Team

Believe it or not, Cross Country is just as much a team sport as basketball, football, or baseball. A Cross Country team consists of 5 to 7 runners.

## Scoring for Cross Country

A Cross Country race is scored by each team adding the place of their top 5 finishers. A runner simply scores their race place. The scoring system is similar to golf, in that the lowest scoring team wins. For example, a team that scores 26 points will beat a team that scores 29 points (see below). Fifteen points then, is the best possible score (a perfect score) for a team ( $1+2+3+4+5=15$ ).

Alvord Cross Country

1  
4  
5  
6  
10

---

26

Poolville Cross Country

2  
3  
7  
8  
9

---

29

Bulldogs win the meet!!!

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Now, the reason we race 7 athletes instead of just 5, is because if either of our 6th or 7th place runners place in front of our opponents top 5 finishers, they push up our opponents' score. See below for example:

Alvord Cross Country	Poolville Cross Country
2	1
3	4
6	5
8	7
9	12
(10)	(32)
(11)	(40)
<hr/>	<hr/>
28	29

As you see above, had Alvord not had its 6th and 7th place finishers in front of Poolville's 5th place finisher, we would have lost the meet. But, because they pushed up the score, Alvord won the meet! Needless to say, the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> place runners are very important. In the event of a tie after scoring the first 5 runners, the tie is broken by adding the 6<sup>th</sup> runners (sometimes even the 7<sup>th</sup> runner too) on the tied teams.

***\*\*Moral of the story...ALL runners are extremely important to a Cross Country team!!!***

## Cross Country Meets

Cross Country meets are very fun and exciting for both runners and spectators!! I like to refer to meets as "pay days" to the athletes, because they get a chance to see all their hard-work pay off. Please allow your child to have the best opportunity to do their best by allowing them to warm up with their teammates before the race and to focus on the task at hand. After a runner finishes their race, he or she is expected to cheer on the rest of their teammates while they finish. After each member is finished with the race, the team will complete a cool down "slog" and stretch TOGETHER. Cool downs are crucial to being not only a great runner, but a great athlete! Watch any elite athlete, after their race or game, THEY COOL DOWN. Unfortunately, this important factor is often neglected, therefore doesn't yield the physiological benefits it can and should have. Cool downs help bring your body temperature and heart rate back down to normal levels, remove lactate acid and other waste products produced during the race from the muscles and bloodstream, and finally allow the muscles to relax to reduce the chance of muscle soreness. The best time to cool down is done 5 to 10 minutes after completion of a race or workout.

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## Cross Country Equipment

Cross Country is one of the cheapest sports there is! All you need is a t-shirt, shorts, socks, and shoes. Most of the expense comes from the shoes. Please insure that your child has a good pair of running shoes. This will reduce the chance of injury both now and years down the road. When the foot strikes the ground, the force is 3 to 4 times one's body weight. So, a female weighing 100 pounds is exerting over 300 pounds of force to each foot every time it strikes the ground!!! This is why it is crucial to purchase a good pair of running shoes every year. A good rule of thumb, you're going to get what you pay for. I suggest sticking with brands that are made for running such as Asics, Brookes, Mizuno, etc. Most sporting goods stores will carry these brands. Please beware of the commonly advertised running shoes such as Nike. Most of the time these shoes are NOT for distance running (heel to toe foot strike), but rather for sprinting (toe strike). You'll notice the lack of heel and arch support.

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## Hydration: Water is your Best Friend

It is extremely important to remain hydrated as a runner. First off, we will be practicing in the late afternoon where temperatures reach over 100 degrees. Running and exercising in these high temperatures is fine, as long as one prepares the body. We want our blood's viscosity or thickness to be low so the oxygen can be delivered more quickly throughout the body. This will help in cooling the body as well. A blood's thickness is determined by how much fluid one consumes. Low blood viscosity is good, meaning the blood is liquefied enough to travel quickly through vessel walls full of oxygen and other important nutrients. Hydration is not something that can happen overnight, but is a process that should take place weeks in advance. Increasing the fluid consumption the night before a workout or a race will not prepare you. You MUST drink several days before to allow the physiological changes to take place.

Water is the best hydrator! Gatorade and other sports drinks are fine too (contain electrolytes and other key minerals lost in sweat), but not at the expense of drinking good, old H<sub>2</sub>O! Coke, tea, and coffee, yes are liquids, but actually cause dehydration due to their diuretic affects and sugary makeup.

Here are some helpful ways to remain hydrated throughout the season:

\*Always carry (don't forget to drink it though!) a water bottle with you throughout the day, even during class. Every class (every 50 minutes) you should be drinking 1 water bottle.

\*Your urine should be clear to a pale yellow. If not, hydrate, Hydrate, and HYDRATE!!

\*Two hours before training or competition: Drink 8 to 16 oz. of fluid.

\*During training: Drink 4 to 6 oz. of fluid

\*After training or competition: Drink 16 to 20 oz. of fluid (Great time for sports drink!)

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## Pre-Exercise Eating-Workouts

There are recommendations for what the best foods and timing the consumption of those foods before exercising. However, every individual is unique and trial and error will have to be done to see what meets each individual's needs. For morning practices, a small meal/snack should be consumed to help power through the workout. A meal high in carbohydrates and low in fat and fiber are best such as a granola bar, banana, plain bagel, or dry cereal.

Before races, a meal should be eaten at least 3 hours before warm up begins. Look for foods that are high in carbohydrates for energy, low to moderate protein, and low in fat and fiber to slow down digestion. Waffles with syrup, toast, and/or fruits are ideal before morning races, but again, the best foods that work for you are from trial and error.

## Post-Exercise Eating- Workouts/Races

Your body has a specific time period (2 hour window) after exercising when you are more able to effectively absorb nutrients. Zero to Forty-five minutes is the best time to have at least a snack or sports drink. At this point, your muscles are more sensitive to the absorption of nutrients. Forty-five minutes to two hours after exercising you should consume a nice sized meal or larger snack. Reach for foods that are high in carbohydrates and protein, and also don't forget to RE-HYDRATE!

\*\*Chocolate milk is one of the best recovery meals/drinks because it is so high in protein... and better yet, it tastes so good too!

**Once schedules are finalized, they will be given to athletes and posted on the school website.**

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