



# **PH Cross Country TEAM HANDBOOK 2019 Season**

**Contact Information:**

**Coach Stahl – Cell – 816-582-8521**

[pstahl@pleasanthillschools.com](mailto:pstahl@pleasanthillschools.com)

**Coach Ortiz– Cell – 816-804-0003**

[jscott@pleasanthillschools.com](mailto:jscott@pleasanthillschools.com)

**Remind 101 Updates:** Please subscribe to receive important text reminders and updates in case of inclement weather, changes in schedule/location, and other team building activities.

- Subscribe to text alerts by going to <https://www.remind.com/join/phhxc>
- Do note, this is a one-way messaging service that allows me to message all athletes and parents who are subscribed but cannot receive texts.

**Facebook:** More detailed information and updates, race results, photos, and videos. Search “Roosters and Chicks Distance” or visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1497479023833006/>

**Team Website:** <http://pleasanthillxc.weebly.com/>

## **Pleasant Hill Cross Country Runners**

### **Philosophy and Objectives:**

Our philosophy is born from a desire to engage as many dedicated athletes as possible at all skill levels, so that each student-athlete has the opportunity to participate and be involved in the pursuit of self-improvement as individuals, athletes and a team. We emphasize teamwork, work ethic, goal setting, sportsmanship, academics, commitment, dedication, integrity and honesty, while teaching form and technique, overall conditioning, pacing, tactics and strategy. We provide a consistent layout in training and variety of locations coupled with hard work. We also believe it is important to incorporate fun activities on a regular basis for enjoyment, team building, unity, camaraderie and to provide successful experiences for each athlete.

Through participation and involvement in a sport program that is both team and individually oriented, student-athletes will gain lessons to carry with them throughout their lives. Ultimately the goal is to instill the desire and motivation for hard work, goal setting, commitment and the ability to see a goal to its completion, the ability to push and challenge yourself, the value of teamwork and involvement. In a sedentary world, we also hope to promote the desire for a lifelong active lifestyle.

“The sport of cross-country is the ultimate of physiological difficulty, aesthetic simplicity, and ascetic ingenuity. There are few rules. No ball. No fancy equipment. No basket, net, or goal. There can be no bad bounces. No lucky breaks. No time-outs. No instant replay. Just you and your teammates against the course. The clock. The competition. Strength to endure comes from the camaraderie of the struggle. These things make cross-country special.”

### **Academic Expectations**

Each cross country runner's scholastic achievement is of the utmost importance. Athletics are a privilege for those who are making acceptable academic progress. Student grades are monitored by the athletic department and the coaching staff weekly. Students who are struggling or need help are highly encouraged to visit Coach Stahl's room in the morning as a study hall to complete work and receive help. An athlete will not compete in any competition until they are passing all of their classes.

### **Conduct**

The Pleasant Hill Cross Country Team members represent Pleasant Hill High School and the community. Each athlete is responsible for exemplary conduct. Support your 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 your coach is essential. If an athlete is unable to live up to these standards, they will be dropped from the team. Additionally, under no circumstances are athletes or parents allowed to dispute rulings with meet officials. Athletes and parents must maintain their composure and let their coach deal with the situation. Failure to follow this protocol is grounds for disqualification from competition and suspension from the team.

## **Team Rules and Expectations**

1. Practices will be held Monday through Friday at 3:00, once school starts.
2. It is expected that each athlete will be at practice and ready to start on time. Each athlete will stay until their practice has concluded. If a runner is late or leaves practice early without prior approval and communication with the coach they will receive a strike. Following the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike that athlete will miss the next meet. Each subsequent strike after three will result in missing another meet.
3. All athletes must attend regularly scheduled workouts unless previously excused by the coach personally. The coach must be notified at least 24 hours in advance for all absences unless the athlete is ill and misses that day. Unexcused practices will lead to being ineligible for the next meet or dismissal from the team.
4. Injured athletes are expected to attend workouts and will be given alternative workout activities or assignments to help assist the team.
5. Team uniforms are issued to each runner. The runner is responsible for the uniform during the season of sport and must maintain and return all items by season's end in good condition allowing for normal wear only. Athletes will be charged for all lost or damaged items.
6. Team uniforms are to be worn for team meets only and not for personal use or practices.
7. Each participant must have passed a physical exam by a doctor of his choice during High School eligibility.
8. To participate in practice or in any activity, each student must be in attendance for the full school day of the practice or event. For Saturday meets, this attendance rule applies to the Friday before.
9. Anyone using alcohol, tobacco, vaping, or illegal drugs will be dismissed from the team.
10. Anyone convicted of a flagrant or chronic violation of civil or criminal law will be removed from the team.
11. All athletes will be expected to behave in a manner that is acceptable as a representative of Pleasant Hill High School Athletics at all workouts and contests. This includes the following:
  - Athletes may not use profanity or make derogatory comments or actions toward themselves or other runners.
  - Athletes must demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times in both workout sessions and competitions.
  - Athletes must behave in a manner that is responsible to the team effort and not demonstrate individual concern over and beyond consideration for the team.
  - Athletes must continuously show respect for all equipment and facilities available for their use. Locker rooms and contest sites must be left in the condition they were found prior to team use.
12. All district rules apply, please review the district handbook.
13. Each team member is expected to remember that they represent their team not just at practices and meets, but at school and in the community as well.
14. Team activities, dinners and other functions are often hosted by families of team members. It is expected that athletes will be courteous, clean up after themselves, thank the hosts, and respect the hosts property. Disregarding this rule may lead to expulsion from these activities or the team depending on severity.
15. You are required to follow all rules of the road while running on sidewalks and roadways. Run on the left side of the road, use crosswalks to cross the street, use bike paths and sidewalks when they are available and ALWAYS ASSUME THAT THE CARS DON'T SEE YOU!

## **Equipment Needs For Cross Country**

**Proper Running Shoes** are a must. Running shoes have evolved over the years and now it is possible to purchase shoes that will protect your feet and prevent injury. With the mileage that we will be running, having running shoes that are specifically designed for distance running is a necessity. A pair of running shoes will last an athlete about one season before they will need to be replaced. Running with shoes that are broken down will significantly increase the risk of injury.

If you are in need of new running shoes I highly recommend visiting KC Running Company in Lee's Summit. They will record you running on a treadmill via an ipad and analyze your form and gait allowing them to select the best running shoe to keep you healthy. If you mention you run for Pleasant Hill they will also give you a 20% discount. A portion of your purchase will also return to Pleasant Hill High School and be deposited into an activities account.

KC Running Company: 1555 NE Douglas St, Lee's Summit, MO

Racing Spikes are also highly recommended. A quality pair of **Racing Spikes** will cost around \$60-80 and will last for several seasons if cared for properly.

A **Running Watch** is an absolute necessity. The training plan we use is based on scientific research that requires that almost every run be precisely timed out. Runners are responsible for bringing a running watch to each practice. Relying on others to time your runs shows a lack of responsibility. Be responsible, be prepared for every practice. Running watches can be purchased for as little as \$7 or \$8 at a Wal-Mart, Target or a similar store.

**Supplying water** for practice is the responsibility of each athlete. We will also have water, but it is good to rely on yourself. Dehydration is a serious problem for runners particularly early in the season when it is hotter. Runners should have water with them at each individual practice. Do not depend on others to supply water for you.

**Cold weather gear (sweats, pants, long sleeves)** are required whenever the temperature goes below 60 degrees. You can decrease the risk of injury by keeping your legs covered on cooler days. Coach Scott or Coach Stahl will give permission for athletes to remove this gear when deemed safe and appropriate.

## **Attendance**

Each athlete is expected to attend all practices. Roll will be taken every day. Every effort must be made to schedule time so that there are no conflicts with the cross country team. The first unexcused absence will result in suspension from the next competition; the second will result in missing competition for the following week; the third will result in expulsion from the team. The only excusable absences are:

☞ **Illness or emergency** – must be accompanied with a parent note upon return to practice.

☞ **Academic** – must be accompanied with a parent and teacher note upon return to practice. Athlete must have also tried to meet with the teacher before school and or at lunch.

☞ **Medical Appointments** – Please try to schedule these away from practice times.

☞ **Punctuality**: Each athlete is expected to arrive to practice and competitions on time and ready to participate. After the third tardy, each tardy will count as an unexcused absence along with the consequences.

## **Practice Format**

Practice begins at 3:00 pm. Practice will be held every day regardless of weather.

- Hydrate properly throughout the school day to avoid dehydration even in cooler weather.
- Athletes are expected to jog to the track with their gear and complete an 8 minute warm up.
- The team will then complete leg swings, toe taps, and leg calf raises.
- The team will be broken up into training groups and assignments given.
- Always use the sidewalks, when available. If there are no sidewalks, use the left side of the road facing traffic.
- Always run with a partner.
- Cross the highway only at the stop light. Any other method is too dangerous!

After our workouts:

- After each workout you will need to have a 2 lap cool down. Some days a longer cool down will be assigned.
- Stretching will commence as a team with each stretch being held for 20 seconds.
- Core work, plyometrics, and other activities will be completed to strengthen our bodies, prevent injuries, and get a leg up on our competition.
- Replenish fluids and electrolytes and eat a healthy balanced snack.

## **Meet Format**

**At home:**

- Get plenty of sleep the night before a meet.
- Pack your bag for the meet the night before. Make sure it includes:  
Uniform, spikes, flats, sweats, extra clothes, snack and anything else you want to take (book, pillow, homework, headphones, etc...)
- Eat a light, healthy breakfast before weekend meets approximately 3 hours before your scheduled race time.
- Bring snacks for after school meets.

**When we get to our destination:**

- Walk the course. Look for the shortest path with the safest footing, places of difficulty, and unusual turns. Visual your race and plan places to attack and pass other runners.
- Warm up at least 45 minutes before your race. The warm-up includes:
  - 10 minute jog, stretch, 5 minute jog, leg swings and leg drills.
  - Put on spikes and practice strides/starts.
- Keep your sweats on until the starter tells you to remove them.

**After the race:**

- Give me your place card. Put your sweats on. Give yourself a few minutes to catch your breath without sitting down. Rehydrate then complete a 10-15 minute cool down jog followed by stretching or using the hand rollers.

**Leaving a meet:**

- All athletes will use school transportation to return home from a meet. Under rare circumstances exceptions will be made ahead of time as needed. If preapproved, you may only leave the meet with a parent or grandparent.
- We may stop to eat so it is a good idea to bring money for food.

# **Supplementary Toolkit and Information for Parents and Athletes**

## **BEING A SPECTATOR AT A CROSS COUNTRY MEET**

Be prepared for any type of weather. Meets are run in rain, snow, heat and cold. Lightning will delay or cancel a meet on the spot but other conditions are just part of the challenge.

It is difficult to watch Cross Country from a stationary point. Be ready to move quickly and wear walking/running shoes. You may want to watch the start, and then move to another point along the course to cheer as runners pass by, then move to another part of the course, and finally make it to the finish line as the runners end their race. Look at a map of the course if possible and pick out good places to cheer from. Often, your voice is best heard by the runners when you cheer from a place where few spectators are- the runners can use inspiration at these typically more difficult spots on the course.

Your presence at the meets is greatly valued by the runners and coaches.

### **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 their finishers are deleted from scoring.

The summation of the top 5 finishing places for each team represents the team scores. The lowest score wins. For example, a team that scores 26 points places ahead of a team that scores 29 points.

Pleasant Hill High School	1st, 4th, 5th, 6th, 10th = 26 points
Opponent	2nd, 3rd, 7th, 8th, 9th = 29 points

In the event of a tie, the 6th finishing place for each team determines the winner- and if still tied, the 7th place runner.