



Welcome Letter - Cross Country – 2019

Dear Parents:

If you are new to us, we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the Florence Track Club. If you are returning for another season with us, welcome back!! Last season, we saw over 150 athletes joining us for our track and field season, and many going onto the USATF Regional and National Championships. As for our cross country season last year, we had 26 athletes qualify for Region and 15 athletes qualify for Nationals in Reno, NV! We currently have 5 scheduled meets prior to the State meet, with many returning athletes this season, and some exciting times ahead!

We will try to follow our schedule as closely as possible. We will run at West Florence HS, McLeod Health and Fitness center, and at Freedom Florence. When we practice at West Florence HS, we have been asked to make sure to park only in the parking lot and NOT in the grassy areas. If there are changes, we will announce them both down on the field with the group, and on our announcements page on the website. We will also be e-mailing out Newsletters and updates in an effort to make sure all are informed as well as possible, so please be sure to check your email!

This year, we will be hosting a meet at Freedom Florence on September 28th. We will gather at 1:00 and the meet will start at 2:00 pm. More details about this will be coming out soon!

Many of our returning athletes already have uniforms which they have purchased from previous seasons. For those that do not, we have uniforms for sale for \$15. Please let me know if you need one. If you are writing a check, make it out to the Florence Track Club, and provide it to Heather. Uniforms *should* be worn to all meets, and *must* be worn for the USATF Jr. Olympic State meet, and subsequent meets. No refunds!

We are handling the team shirt a bit differently this season as well, as several parents have requested to be able to purchase these to support their child. The team shirt will be a white (when it starts!), long-sleeve cotton shirt. These will be tie-dyed as part of our tie-dye/swim & pizza party. If you would like to purchase a shirt for yourself and have it tie-dyed, you will need to have it ordered and paid for by Thursday, Sep. 13th. The shirts will be printed with the FTC logo on the front and an emblem and sponsor recognition on the back. They are free for the athletes, but a cost of \$10 is associated with the shirts for other family members. You can pre-order these on-line on our <http://www.florenctrackclub.com> website announcements page – but pay by check or cash by Thursday, Sep. 12th. See Heather Burroughs to purchase one of these.

Since cross country is an all weather sport, please assume that we will meet when scheduled. Practice is **cancelled only** when thunderstorms are threatening, or if it's been raining all day. The **announcements page** on our <http://www.florenctrackclub.com> website has a link to rainedout.com, which is used to notify athletes about updates and weather cancellations. Be sure to sign up for this service as this is the only method used to send out updates on weather related practice cancellations. We try to post the cancellation at least a half hour to an hour before practice. We will also use the Links page to post a weekly newsletter, full of information about upcoming meets, any coaches concerns, volunteer opportunities, etc. Email will also be used for announcements and newsletters.

We do understand that situations may occur during the year that may prevent your child from being out here at all times but we do encourage that they come out and participate with the team as much as possible. Be sure your child has sweats to wear as the cold weather can set in quickly in the evenings. Also, please make sure they bring water to drink.

Practices will be starting at 6:20pm and ending at 7:45pm for the first 2 weeks. This schedule will shift towards the end of September as the evenings begin to see darkness come earlier and earlier. Pay close attention to the schedule dates and times! On Sept. 17th, our practice time shifts to a start time of 5:20pm. Please arrive on time for practice so that participants may warm up prior to the start of running.

Although we will practice as a team, cross country is essentially an individual sport which requires self discipline. Therefore, progression will be the responsibility of the athlete. We will be here to help that progression but we can only help if they show up. It is also important that you ensure that your child arrives promptly to practice or meets and has a way home after practice. Our practices will normally last about one hour. The coaches will not be expected to provide taxi services for your children. Please be safe with drop off and pickup. At the High school, drop off and pickup will be in the High School parking lot. At McLeod Health & Fitness, we will be meeting at the backside of the building, nearest the gate to the Rail Trail. At Freedom Florence, we meet by the pond off the back parking lot.

We will jump into conditioning from the beginning. The goal for our program is to have each child prepared for the state meet in November. Please do not get discouraged if your child is unable to compete right away. Cross Country is a sport that takes time and perseverance. As long as your child follows the schedule along with some work on his/her own, there will be a notable difference from the beginning of the year to the end. We will also track their times throughout the season to see their improvement.

The following table shows the distance that your child will be training for depending on their age division. Age is based off how old they will be on Dec. 31, 2018. Sub-Bantam (6-8), Bantam (9-10), Midget (11-12), Youth (13-14), Intermediate (15-16), and Young Men or Young Women (17-18).

<u>Division</u>	<u>Distance</u>
Sub-Bantam	2k
Bantam	3k
Midget	3k
Youth	4k
Intermediate	5k
Young Men/Women	5k

Last but not least, we want to thank you and your child for taking an interest in our program. It takes a very special child to want to compete in middle to long distance running and I commend each one of you for coming out. If you should have any questions during the year please do not hesitate to ask. We certainly want to keep the lines of communications open to all involved. Also, if you would like to help, please let us know. We are eager to have all the help that we can get and it is especially a bonus if you have participated or coached Cross Country before! Thanks again for bringing your child out to us.

Heather and Willie Burroughs – FTC Head Coaches (317-289-6429)