

# **ST. ANTHONY VILLAGE CROSS COUNTRY TEAM HANDBOOK**



**“RUNNING IS THE GREATEST METAPHOR FOR  
LIFE, BECAUSE YOU GET OUT OF IT WHAT YOU  
PUT INTO IT.”**

Team Website: <http://savhscrosscountry.webstarts.com/index.html>

Twitter: [@StAnthonyCC](https://twitter.com/StAnthonyCC)

**Coaching Staff:**

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Assistant Coach – Michelle Mussell: [mmussell@stanthony.k12.mn.us](mailto:mmussell@stanthony.k12.mn.us)

**Program Philosophy:** The philosophy of the St. Anthony Village Cross Country program is to inspire an environment where athletes learn and appreciate the nuances of distance running and the sport of Cross Country. In this environment we strive to attain a positive yet motivating atmosphere; one that all athletes, regardless of skill level, can appreciate and use to reach their fullest potential. Our goal is to teach lessons that will not only help our runners athletically, but most importantly will also help develop skills necessary for success in life.

**Rules & Expectations:**

- Be a true student/athlete – the student part comes first.
- Be prepared to work hard.
- Be willing to work as a team.
- Keep a POSTIVITE attitude.
- Be willing to help others.
- Always be working towards individual improvement.
- Follow all High School League, St. Anthony, and team rules.
- Inform coach and/or captain of any problems.
- Represent St. Anthony Village and yourself in a respectful manner.
- No Swearing
- No Jewelry
- Be on time to all practice & meets
- No Hazing
- Listen to the Coaches & Captains
- HAVE FUN!!!

**Eligibility:** A runner needs to accomplish the following in order to be eligible to participate on the CC team:

- Complete all forms from the Athletic Office & pay all registration fees
- No substance abuse (drugs, alcohol, tobacco)
- Academics – maintaining at least passing grades
- Behavior – proper, respectful conduct in and out of the classroom
- Attendance – student/athletes must be in school and on time to class every day

**Attendance:**

- Absences from practice or meet must be cleared with a coach. Any absence from a meet should be cleared twenty-four hours prior to the meet (except due to illness).
- It is not okay to have another student/athlete give a message to a coach.
- If injured, an athlete is expected to report to the coach for treatment or alternative workout at the direction of the coach.
- For our Saturday practices (10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade only) runners get 1 personal day that does not count as an unexcused absence.
- The first unexcused absence will result in a warning.
- The second will result in a minor suspension of one meet.
- The third will result in steps being taken toward major suspension.
- Three unexcused absences will disqualify the athlete from receiving a letter award.
- Athletes must have 90% attendance in order to qualify to earn a letter.

**Team Placement:** Placement for a runner in the Varsity, Junior Varsity, or any other designated race will be determined by a number of factors. The primary factor is a runner's time. Other factors may include practice attendance, attitude, work ethic, and running experience. The final decision comes down to the coaching staff.

**Lettering Policy:**

A Varsity Letter can be earned by achieving any one of the following:

- Running on the varsity team at the Region 5AA meet
- Senior with at least 3 years of participation
- Running in around 80% of varsity races (2014 would be 7 meets)
- Meeting the Letter Standards – **Boys 5k: 18:29, Girls 5k: TBD** - at least 2x during the season.

AND

- Have 90% attendance
- Meet all the Rules & Expectations of the SAV CC program

\*All final decisions on lettering end up being the decision of the coaching staff.



**What is Needed?:** The number one thing to remember when preparing clothing for CC practices and meets is to **BE PREPARED.** We all know Minnesota weather is goofy, so having a variety of different clothes to wear in your locker or gym bag is very important. If the coaching staff feels your dress for the day's practice or meet is inappropriate we will send you home.

**Other equipment needed:**

- a. Proper Running Shoes (worn out shoes, or inappropriate shoes can cause injury)
- b. Digital wristwatch with stopwatch capabilities
- c. Running spikes (for meets, not required, but recommended)

We will discuss the equipment in detail at our parent meeting, please feel free to ask the coaching staff any questions about recommendations or concerns. Many running stores around the Twin Cities area (Run N Fun, Mill City Running, etc...) will give discounts to HS runners if you mention it.

**Transportation:** Student/athletes are expected to travel on team bus to and from meets— unless alternative transportation is designated by the coaching staff. If it is necessary to have different travel arrangements, the student/athlete and their parent/guardian need to follow the St. Anthony Athletic Department guidelines.

**Fundraising:** Fundraising is an essential part to our program. It is how we are able to afford our jerseys, equipment, and other necessary aspects of our program. During our fundraising events we expect full participation from the student/athlete to help ensure fundraising success.

**Locker Rooms:** We have access to the 'pool' locker rooms by the lower gym in the HS. Runners NEED to bring their own lock to lock up valuables. Items have been stolen in the past, and if left unlocked more valuables are sure to be stolen in the future.

**Additional Fees:** A few of our Cross Country traditions are taking a Coach Bus to our Swain meet in Duluth and also having Pasta feeds before some of our 'bigger' meets. In order to meet the expenses of both of those traditions we typically have a fee for the runners to pay. In the 2013 season \$50 paid for the bus trip and three large pasta meals. If runners and their families will have trouble paying this fee, please contact Mr. MacLeod, there are some funds available in our activity account to help.

**Parent/Guardian roles and expectations:** Parent/Guardians are expected to help support their student/athlete to help their success as a cross country runner. Any issues to which a parent/guardian may have about their student/athlete may be brought up to the coach at any time *other than before or during a practice or meet.*

\*Please refer to the Athletic Department's handbook for any other policies you might have questions about.

## **Section and Conference Affiliation**

### **Section 5AA**

Centennial High School

Osseo High School

Coon Rapids High School

Anoka High School

Blaine High School

Mounds View High School

Maple Grove High School

Irondale High School

Fridley High School

Champlin Park High School

Park Center High School

Rogers High School

Spring Lake Park High School

St. Anthony Village High School

St. Michael-Albertville H.S.

Totino-Grace High School

### **Tri-Metro Conference**

Academy of Holy Angels

Brooklyn Center

Columbia Heights

Concordia Academy

DeLaSalle

Fridley

Saint Agnes

St. Anthony Village

St. Croix Lutheran

Visitation School (girls only)

# How in the Heck Does a Cross Country Meet Work?!

## A Spectator's Guide to Watching a CC Meet

### Scoring

Races are much more exciting when you know which team is winning. The first thing to know about cross-country is that the team with the low score wins the meet.

In Cross Country meets, the top seven runners from each team are awarded points based on their overall finishing positions. In other words, the winner of the race is awarded one (1) point; second place is awarded two (2) points; and so on. A team's score is the total of the points earned by its first five finishers. The team with the lowest score wins.

#### EXAMPLE:

Team A's top five runners finish 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup>. **Team A's score = 1+3+6+9+11 = 30**

Team B's top five runners finish 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup>. **Team B's score = 2+4+5+7+8 = 26**

Even though Team A took two out of the top three Places, **Team B wins, 26-30.**

In the case of a tie between teams, the 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> runners are the tiebreakers. For example, if two teams are tied at 29, the officials would then look at how the 6<sup>th</sup> runners finished. If team A's 6<sup>th</sup> runner finished 15<sup>th</sup> and team B's runner finished 17<sup>th</sup>, then team A would win.

### Watching a meet

When you arrive at the meet, ask us to see a map of the course. First, locate the start and finish, then try to scout central points where you can see as much of the race with as little moving around as possible. Do not expect the attention of your son or daughter once we get to the meet. The athletes need time to warm up on the course, be briefed by their coaches, and prepare for the race with their teammates.

During the race, you can move from point to point along the course to cheer the runners as they pass. Be careful, however, to stay off the runners' path and out of their way. Rules also forbid running alongside a competitor to pace or encourage him or her.

At the finish of the race, the runners file through the finish chute. It's OK to greet them then, but they may have to turn a place card into their coach ASAP so scores can be tabulated. Our runners have other responsibilities after the race. We expect them to jog and cool-down as a team and actively support their teammates who have yet to race. Some runners are more spent than others after a race. Typical symptoms of their effort and fatigue are breathlessness, general weakness, rubbery legs, glassy eyes, salivating, and sometimes nausea. A mistake parents sometimes make is to take their sons or daughters off by themselves to try and take care of them. Please do not do this! Our coaches are experienced in dealing with these

symptoms, trained in first-aid, and responsible for their care. To aid recovery, water is the best thing to drink immediately after a race.

Expect the possibility of some disappointment by your athlete after the race if his or her team did not win, and/or if he or she failed to achieve all goals. Athletes may need some emotional space afterward from both you and their coaches. Later on, they will need verbal support rather than criticism.

Once an away meet is over, if your son or daughter came on our bus or van, please do not take him or her home with you without checking with the coaching staff first. We are legally bound by state law for athletes' safe transport to and from the meet. A note with a parent signature is required. Also, students cannot typically leave right away after their race is over, unless they have a pressing commitment (band competition, ACT or SAT, etc.) We often have information to provide afterwards and again, we want everyone to stay and support their teammates.

### **How to Cheer for Distance Runners**

Runners like to have spectators cheering for them, since it helps them muster the courage to see a race through to its end. It means a lot to a runner when you are out there cheering in inclement weather! However, in their fatigued and vulnerable state, runners tend to prefer certain kinds of encouragement. Here's a concise summary to help you "say the right thing" when you see your runner come along with hair plastered to his or head and mud up and down his or her back:

#### **Good**

- Positive statements using the runner's name:  
"Go Jason!"  
"Great job, Chris!"
- Anything positive about the runner's form or position in the race, as long as it is at least marginally believable:  
"Looking good!"  
"You're looking great!"  
"Way to go! You're running a great race!"
- Anything that directs their attention to maintaining their form:  
"That's it, stay relaxed!"  
"Stay smooth!"  
"Open up!"  
"Drive your arms!"
- Anything that focuses their efforts on a single attainable goal:  
"Work this hill!"

#### **Bad**

- Appeals to run faster, move up, or pass people who are obviously better runners:  
"You're too far back!"  
"Faster, faster!"  
(especially bad early in the race)  
"Get up there"  
(when "there" is at the front, and the runner doesn't belong up there)
- Attempts to downplay the (considerable) remaining work required:  
"Only a mile to go!"  
(I HATE this one)  
"You're only 30 seconds behind!"  
(Making up half a minute in a 5K race is essentially impossible unless the other guy falls in a hole or is attacked by wild dogs.)

## Nutrition & Health

Nutrition is an extremely important factor in Cross Country. It can make a huge difference – any runner serious about improving and having success in this sport will take the nutritional considerations very seriously. The nutritional and health aspects of CC will be discussed on a regular basis during the season.

-Sleep: On average every 200 calories you burn off additional to your regular day you require 20 minutes extra of sleep to properly recover. Despite very busy schedules, you must find time to get an adequate amount of sleep.

-Iron: Iron's role in binding oxygen makes this mineral extremely important to all distance runners. Iron depletion can cause even the most fit of athletes to experience abnormal exhaustion, increased blood lactate, slow recovery, declining performances, heavy legs, muscular tightness, loss of motivation, and substantially increased risk of injury. This is especially true for female runners. Make sure you have enough Iron in your diet (red meat, broccoli, etc...).

-No Pop: I'll repeat that – NO POP! Pop is the enemy for a distance runner. Besides the unhealthy aspects of the sugar and chemical contents of most pops, the carbonation is the true enemy. Carbonation slows down or even stops the absorption of Iron in one's body, which as from what you read above, would not be good at all. It can also lead to lactic acid buildup which is the culprit of 'heavy legs.'

-Diet: Minimizing the amount of fast food & junk food you eat and increasing the amount of 'healthy' foods you eat will make a huge difference on your energy level and ultimately your running performance. If you are on a special diet, please inform the coaching staff.

-Hydration: Water intake is crucial to your performance and health as a distance runner, you should be sipping (not chugging) on water all throughout the day. Light yellow urine is the sign of proper hydration. For every pound of water weight someone loses, they should take in at least 24 fl. ounces of water to replace that. Dehydration can not only cause you to be much slower – it can also cause severe medical issues.