

SAINT JAMES SCHOOL CROSS COUNTRY

Welcome to Cross Country at Saint James School. Cross Country is offered to all students from grades 5-8.

Elementary and middle school students generally run a race distance of 1.9 miles. Cross country is a sport that requires commitment, endurance, and a willingness to train beyond the few months of the actual season. Since the season begins as soon as school resumes, it is important to come prepared. Below I have outlined a summer training program that I would encourage anyone who is interested in running this September, to follow.

Beginning runners need a base of general fitness before they begin to undertake training specialized for racing. All beginners should focus on establishing a solid base of endurance, flexibility, and strength. Injuries in young runners happen most frequently when they try to rush their training. It would also be helpful to find friends that you can train with over the summer.

Those of you who are consistently running more than 10 miles a week can start at week five and progress from there. My top returning middle school runners should be starting the fall season with mileage between 15-20/week. It is important to stretch before and after each run. Also, make a habit of doing crunches and push-ups each day. Your core strength will make you a better racer this fall. It is essential to train with running shoes that are in good condition. Training in old shoes can lead to injury.

A little background on myself.....I have been running competitively since high school and my transition to coaching has been thoroughly enjoyable. It began at Boston University, continued on to the University of Vermont, and then at UConn. Now I have the privilege of coaching the fine young students of Saint James.

1st practice: Tuesday, Sept. 4th at 2:00pm. All forms and the activity fee must be in turned in to the school office before the first practice. Practice will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00-3:30pm (with a few exceptions). Our meet schedule will consist of weekday meets and some Saturday Invitational meets for our Middle School runners.

I look forward to working with each student and am excited about our upcoming Fall Season!

Sincerely,

Coach O'Neill

Summer Practice Schedule for Cross Country Runners:

Weeks 1 & 2 (7 miles/week) Sunday: 1-2 mile jog at a steady pace Monday: Rest Tuesday: 1-2 mile jog (at a pace you can talk with a friend) Wednesday: 20 minutes light walking Thursday: 2 miles jogging/ walking equally mixed (5 minutes jog/5 minutes walk) Friday: 1 mile jog Saturday: Cross Train - ex: biking/swimming

Weeks 3 & 4 (9 miles/week) Sunday: 2-3 miles at a steady pace Monday: Rest of cross train Tuesday: 2 miles jogging with a brief walk if needed Wednesday: 1 mile jog Thursday: 2 miles steady jog (try to have your 2nd mile a bit faster than your first) Friday: 1 mile jog Saturday: 20 minutes brisk walking

Weeks 5 & 6 (12 miles/week) Sunday: 3-4 miles at a steady pace Monday: Rest Tuesday: 2 mile jog Wednesday: 1 mile jog Thursday: 3 miles (try to go the distance without walking) Friday: 2 mile jog / finish with 3x30 second sprints Saturday: Light jogging and some short walking for 20 minutes

Weeks 7 & 8 (15 miles/week) Sunday: 4 mile run Monday: Rest Tuesday: 3 mile jog (try to run your 3rd mile at a faster pace) Wednesday: 2 mile jog (time yourself) Thursday: 3 miles at a steady pace/after you finish run 3x30 second sprints Friday: 2 mile jog Saturday: 1 mile run (attempt to race the mile)

Weeks 9 & 10 (20 miles/week) Sunday: 5 mile run (find a safe, shady route) Monday: 3 miles Tuesday: 4 miles Wednesday: Cross train or rest Thursday: 5 mile run Friday: Rest Saturday: Find a local 5k race