

St Alphonsus Athletic Association

Cross Country Coaches Handbook

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Expectations For A Catholic School Coach

- Accepts his or her ministerial role as a Christian role model on and off the field of play.
- Understand the rules of the game and instructs his/her players regarding same.
- Controls his/her emotions both during a game, and upon game's end.
- Speaks in a manner and tone appropriate for his or her position.
- Realizes players never purposely make mistakes and never ridicules.
- Concentrates on coaching and lets the officials call the game.
- Is fair and does not show favoritism.
- Sets realistic practice and game schedules, being prompt at the beginning of practice and punctual when ending practice for consideration of parents and family obligations.
- Knows when and who to substitute, according to the team structure, diocese guidelines and game scenario.
- Never permits an ill or injured player to practice or play.
- Insists that a team practice with the same enthusiasm and skill as demonstrated during a scheduled game.
- Gives ALL players the opportunity to improve their skill sets during practice through drills, scrimmages and direction.
- Within the game scenario, is aware of the diocese guidelines for playing time for the specific level of play, and uses that awareness within the roster of the team.
- Never deliberately humiliates an opponent by running up the score.
- Insists that players accept victory with modesty, and defeat without alibi.
- At the final whistle of the game, takes into consideration the emotions and frustrations of everyone, thus limiting post game criticism, leaving detailed comments for the next practice.
- Realizes a team's reputation is built not only on its playing ability, but also on its sportsmanship, courtesy, and manner.

Signature reflects the coach's understanding of these basic elements. When violation of any of the above expectations occurs, the principal and pastor will be notified, and appropriate actions will be discussed and enforced.

(Printed Name)

Coach

(Signature)

SAAA Representative



St. Alphonsus School

201 Church Road, Wexford, PA 15090 724-935-1152 FAX: 724-935-1152

Cross Country Coach Roles and Responsibilities

Cross Country Coach Roles and Responsibilities

January

- Submit application for field use and pavilion rental at Pine Park. Will need \$100 (get from Treasurer) and Certificate of Insurance which you can get from the Church Secretary.

March

- Track & Field and Cross-country share certain items like uniforms, walkie-talkie, megaphone, stop watch, cones and clipboards. Give those items to the Track & Field Coach as they will be needed as Track & Field comes into season.

May

- Must attend scheduling meeting of the North Area Coaches to set schedule for fall season.
- Prepare the practice and meet calendar in Excel
- Create Excel spreadsheet for recording times and Meet results

June

- Track & Field and Cross-country share certain items like uniforms, walkie-talkie, megaphone, stop watch, cones and clipboards. Get those items from the Track & Field Coach now that their season has ended.
- Submit Field use application and Certificate of Insurance (obtain from Church Secretary) to the AD office at North Allegheny High School for use of the fields surrounding Marshall Middle School.
- Contact Paul at laphotos-pa.com (412) 487-7624 and set a date for individual and team pictures. Typically scheduled for the second 1/2 day of school during the first week back from summer vacation.

July

- You will receive a list of those students that have registered for Cross-Country. Send a letter of introduction and the season schedule.
- Send your runners a document with tips for running.
- Start practice by the third week of July.
- Typically practice will consist of Marshall Middle school on Tuesday evening, Pine Park on Friday morning and an optional speed training session on Sunday night at Pine-Richland High School track.
- Prepare label with each runner's name, school and division listed.

August

- Get approval from school Principal to allow the runners to keep water bottles in their locker so they can hydrate all day particularly on Meet and practice days.
- Should schedule require it school principal must also be contacted to arrange for early dismissal. This is often required for the varsity Fox Chapel Invitational the 3rd week of September.
- Send families procedures for dismissal on Meet and practice days.
- Send out parent assignments excel spreadsheet for jobs when we host a Meet.
- Get a parent volunteer to coordinate snack for team provided on Meet days.
- Give Snack Parent a printout of the team to mark down families who have paid the \$5 per child snack fee.
- Two weeks prior to pictures, confirm with photographer and pick up photo envelopes from school office and distribute to runners at practice.
- Distribute uniforms
- Send email regarding the slippery Rock and Fox Chapel Invitation's. Parents must respond if their child will run or not by the first Friday of September.
- Hold two practice meets at the end of the month so new runners can experience racing conditions and parents can be trained in the various jobs.
- Prior to one of your last home meets, schedule an 8th grade recognition. Here is some information about this process.
 - Communicate to the team when the 8th grade recognition is. Ask for a parent volunteer to coordinate the process. Have the parent volunteer coordinate the following:
 - The 7th graders should make some signs to be posted at the venue to recognize each player.
 - Purchase a carnation or a rose for each player to be handed to them during the ceremony.
 - Purchase balloons so that each 8th grader and their parent can walk through.
 - Send out an email with a list of questions that each 8th grader must answer and return to the coach. A list of these questions is included.
 - At the recognition, introduce each player and their parent's one at a time. Have them come forward to accept the flower and walk towards the spectators. At this time the coach should be reading the answers to the questions the 8th grader previously provided.
 - It is the coaches option to introduce or not introduce the 8th graders from the other team, however the SAAA does NOT reimburse the cost of flowers for the visiting team and therefore does not recommend that they are provided.

October

- Let the SAAA know if any Diocesan Championships were won so the banners can be updated.
- Give any Diocesan Championship trophies to the SAAA to be included in the trophy case. A plaque with the winning names and the coaches maybe added at the SAAA expense. Keep it under \$20.

Cross Country Coaches Meeting

Coaches Meeting Agenda and Talking Points Cross Country

The purpose of the following document is to clarify and set coaching expectations of you as a Coach. Please ensure you take the time to read and understand this information as it is critical to the SAAA and your success as a Coach or Assistant Coach at St. Alphonsus. Please reach out to a Board Member should you have any questions or concerns.

SAAA Expectations

The SAAA has set specific coaching expectations so that we have consistency across our program. We expect that our coaches will understand and adhere to these expectations.

Coach Requirements

- Complete the following clearances as communicated:
 - [Diocesan Centralized Database Application](#) and a signed copy of the Pastoral Code of Conduct (at the end of the application process);
 - A Certificate of Attendance for the Protecting God’s Children Seminar–enrollment at [Virtus.org;Pennsylvania Criminal background check/clearance](#)
 - [Pennsylvania Child Abuse clearance](#)
 - A Certificate of Attendance for the “Play Like a Champion” coaching seminar that is required by the diocese.
- It is your responsibility to ensure all the paperwork has been turned into the school. The school office is your point of contact to ensure all requirements have been met.
- Review and sign Expectations For A Catholic School Coach

Assistant Coach Selection

- It is the responsibility of the Head Coach to ensure all clearances are in place prior to selecting and committing the Assistant Coach position.
- Please ensure all paperwork has been turned into the school. Unless this has been done, they cannot be an Assistant Coach.
- Once you have selected your Assistant Coach, please send an email to info@stalsaa.org indicating who you have selected as your Assistant Coach(es).

Rankings

- This will be determined by accurately recording the running time of each team member through the course of the season. However, decide at the beginning of the season how to rank runners if they are close, e.g., average time, number of head-to-head victories. If parents and runners know how close decisions are made before-hand, there will be less controversy and hurt feelings later.

- At the conclusion of the regular season, the top seven JV boys, top seven JV girls, top seven varsity boys and top seven varsity girls will compete for their respective team championships.
- All other runners will participate in either an open JV race or an open varsity race in which they can win individual awards by gender.

St. Alphonsus requirements

- Grades
 - It is the policy of St. Alphonsus that no student may participate in school sports unless they maintain acceptable grades this includes games and practices.
 - You will be contacted by the school should you have someone on your team not meeting the threshold.
 - You can support your players by reminding them how important it is to keep their grades up.
- Student absences
 - No student is allowed to practice or run in a meet on the SAME DAY they missed the entire school day. If they missed on Friday they CAN run or practice on a Saturday.

In-season Sports

- Cross country will take the priority over winter sports until cross country season is over.
- Cross country coaches should work with the basketball coaches to find a time that will work for basketball tryouts as tryouts will occur while cross country is still in-season.

Practices

- There will be two-to-three practices per week during the preseason and once-or-twice per week during the season.
- The coach must coordinate with the parents to ensure that the run is supervised throughout the course.
- Practices normally occur at Marshall Middle School or Pine Community Park, and Sunday night “speed” training occurs at the track at Pine-Richland High School.
- Participants are encouraged to run on their own on off-days.

Communicating with the Parents

- Within two weeks of your first practice you should hold a parent meeting. During this meeting you can set expectations for the season and answer any questions. Prior to the meeting please send your agenda in advance to the parents and copy the Board. You should have the agenda at the meeting to hand out as well. Please plan for this meeting to last at least 30 minutes with the possibility of it going longer based on questions.
- We have provided a copy of a parent meeting agenda that you can use as a guideline and edit the information that is specific to your team.
- You should select a parent to coordinate the many jobs that the parents must perform during meets throughout the season. This parent is responsible for scheduling others parents for each assignment and communicating that information throughout the season.
- We ask that coaches communicate with their parents at least once per week. The most effective approach is sending an email every Saturday or Sunday that reminds the parents about the next week schedule of activities.

- Great communication with parents is essential to a strong athletic program and team. Please do your best to always keep the lines of communication open. Should you find yourself in an emotional and escalating conversation with a parent, please excuse yourself from the conversation and contact the Board. Nothing good will come from having a heated argument with a parent. Contact the Board and let us assist you.

Communicating with the Board

- We require a Board Member to be present at your Parent Meeting. Prior to setting the meeting date, please reach out to a Board Member of your choice to ensure they can attend your meeting. Once you have ensured that your Board Member is available you can communication the date and time to your parents.
- Please feel free to copy the Board on communications that you feel the Board should be aware of.
- You can contact the Board directly at info@StAlsAA.org . Any email sent to this address goes to all Board Members.
- Please let the Board know when your diocesan championship is and the results. We will make sure this information gets out to the school so we can help support attendance.
- Let the Board know if you win a Diocesan Championship so that we can update the banner in the gym.
- Please notify the Board should there be any incidents. Incidents would include anything unusual like upset parents, serious injury or other concerning behavior.
- If you should win a Diocesan Championship trophy, you can have a plaque added to it with all the names of the players and coaches. The target price for this plaque should be under \$20. The Trophy should be brought to school then given to a Board Member so that it can be placed in the Trophy Case. Section Trophy should be given to a Board Member to be added to the trophy case.
- We encourage all of our coaches to attend the monthly SAAA meeting. Please do your best to attend when you can most importantly during season.

General Information

Concussions

- Educate yourself on detecting and reacting to a possible concussion.
- Review the attached concussion evaluation tool call Impact and keep it with you.
- Be ready to quickly detect a possible concussion and seek the appropriate medical attention and contact parents. Should there be any delay in medical attention be sure the child is always supervised and in a quiet area as movement and excitement can cause further damage. Sitting on the bench does not qualify as a quiet area.
- Correctly responding to questions does not necessarily mean there is no concussion. If something seems wrong it probably is. Error on the side of being too cautious.

Team Photographs

- We will coordinate one day for photos to be taken, which usually occurs at Pine Community Park. The SAAA will notify the Coach and the Coach must notify their parents.
- When notifying parents be sure to tell them what they should wear, the scheduled time and stress the importance of arriving 15 minutes early.
- Order forms will be given to the coaches to hand out at practice prior to the photo date.

Emergency Contact Forms

- The Board will provide each Coach with an emergency contact form for each child.

- Please be sure to read through the forms just in case a child has a condition you need to be aware of. Please keep in mind that this is confidential information which shouldn't be shared with anyone except medical personnel.
- Please keep these in your coaches bag in case of emergency

Weather Decisions

- Meets
 - Decisions to cancel a meet due to weather should be a joint decision between the home and away coaches. If you see weather is looking bad reach out to the Coach from the other team. We realize that meets are run in the rain, but if lightning is anticipated, please don't wait until the last minute to cancel as this can inconvenience a lot of people.
 - Keep in mind that some schools don't allow their students to participate in meets on days when school is cancelled due to inclement weather. This is NOT the policy of St. Alphonsus.
 - If you would like any partnership feel free to reach out to any member of the SAAA Board, Sr. Mariella or Father Murphy.
- Practices
 - Use your good judgment to decide if you should cancel a practice. Feel free to reach out to a Board member if you would like a second opinion. When holding a practice on a day with bad weather, make it clear to parents that it is their decision as to come or not based on what they see out their window. You should tell parents that there will be NO consequences to their child if they feel it is not safe enough to drive or if it is too wet or cold.

Uniforms

- Singlet's are provided to each runner and must be returned at the end of the season.

Equipment

- Each coach will be provided with an "equipment" bag with a first aid kit and cones.

Tournaments

- The Athletic Association will reimburse up to two tournament entry fees per year.

Assistant Coach

- It is critical that assistant coaches have roles and responsibilities.
- Please take the time to determine what roles your assistant coaches will have and communicate those expectations to them and the team (and parents).
- Coaches can get very busy during a meet, so having multiple assistant coaches can be very valuable.

Gifts or Team Purchases

- Coaches are not allowed to provide gifts or coordinate the purchase of team apparel or other team related items without the approval of the Board. It doesn't matter if the items are donated or being paid for by a third party or a parent. Under no circumstances is this allowed without Board approval.
- Keep in mind that we are managing many different teams and when one team receives something that another team doesn't there are hurt feelings and consequences.

End of Season

- All JV, 4th, and 3rd runners should have an end of season party. The SAAA will provide you with \$10 per player towards the cost of a party. In the past, the party has been held at the Treesdale Community Center..
- All 4th grade through JV coaches should contact the Awards Coordinator for end of the season pins and pennants.
- Varsity does not have an end of season party that is supported by the SAAA. Instead there will be a varsity banquet and the end of the school year.

Contact Information

- A list of all contact information can be found at www.stalsaa.org.

Parents Meeting – Cross Country

- **Goal of Program**
 - Develop fundamental running skills.
 - Improve physical fitness
 - Work hard, work as a team and have fun.
 - Be competitive
- **Uniforms**
 - Each runner will receive a singlet.
 - Will be received on DATE.
- **Parent Commitments**
 - Expectations of Parents and Student Athletes
 - Please hand this out during the meeting and have parents sign and return to you during the meeting or at the next practice.
- **Meets**
 - *Home Meets* –
 - Please be at the meet ready to start (stretching complete) 30 minutes prior to start time.
 - Home meets will be on DATE at the LOCATION.
 - *Away Meets* -
 - Please be at meets ready to start (stretching complete) 30 minutes prior to start time
 - I will provide you with a detailed schedule of our home and away meets by DATE.
- **Practices**
 - There will be two-to-three practices per week during the preseason and once-or-twice per week during the season.
 - The coach must coordinate with the parents to ensure that the run is supervised throughout the course.
 - Practices normally occur at Marshall Middle School or Pine Community Park, and Sunday night “speed” training occurs at the track at Pine-Richland High School.
 - Participants are encouraged to run on their own on off-days.
 - If for any reason your child must miss a practice, please let me know at least 24 hours prior to the practice. Understand that I plan the practice based on the number attending.
 - Always bring water to practice.
 - Should I need to cancel a practice due to weather I will reach out to you via email at least 2 hours prior to the start-time.
- **Rankings**
 - This will be determined by accurately recording the running time of each team member through the course of the season.
 - Runners with very close running times will be ranked based on PICK YOUR METHOD AND TELL THE PARENTS NOW.
 - At the conclusion of the regular season, the top seven JV boys, top seven JV girls, top seven varsity boys and top seven varsity girls will compete for their respective team championships.
 - All other runners will participate in either an open JV race or an open varsity race in which they can win individual awards by gender.
- **Parent Responsibilities**

- During all meets and practices, we will need parent volunteers to be stationed throughout the course to insure the run is supervised.
 - For all home meets ALL Parents must ensure ALL trash is picked up prior to leaving the course.
 - Identify a parent volunteer to coordinate the jobs.
- **Miscellaneous**
 - If for any reason your child will miss a meet please notify me at least 24 hours prior.
 - Please have your child on-time for every practice and meet. Additionally, please make sure that they are picked up on-time as well.
 - Parents are always welcome and encouraged to attend practice.
 - Concussion Awareness. Impact and pre-concussion testing.
 - Siblings of players must be supervised by a parent during practice.
 - Team pictures will be taken on DATE. Wear your singlet.
- **Communication**
 - Again, please let me know at least 24 hours in advance if your child can't make a practice or a meet.
 - You can always contact me as follows:
 - Coaches Name
 - Coaches phone number
 - Coaches email address
 - Please feel free to contact me with any questions, concerns or suggestions at anytime.
 - Should you have any specific concerns, I ask that you give me an opportunity to address and resolve it prior to taking the issue to the Board or Sr. Mariella. My goal is to support every player and family in the best possible way. If you feel that I am not doing that, please give me the opportunity to resolve it.
 - Lastly, please be reminded about the 24 hour rule following a meet. This rule is in place to allow for a “cooling” period should there be an issue during a meet that you are concerned about. Once the 24 hours is over, please reach out accordingly.

I look forward to working with your child this year and hope it will be a positive experience for everyone.

Cross Country Meet Results

Meet Attendance		Pre-Season Best 1.6	9/8 A @	9/10 H	9/13 A @	9/18 Opt	9/21 H	9/24 Opt.	9/28 A	10/1 H	10/4 A
Varsity Girls	9		Alpha w/ CDTA	HR, Aquinas St. Seb 1.6	St. Alexis Pine 1.5	SRU Inv 1.5	St. Ter. & Alpha 1.6	FC Inv V Only	at HR Ellwd Cty	SPP, Kil, Ursula 1.6	Bonnie w/ St. Seb
Mary	Smith	16.33				Y		Y			
Sue	Jones	15.45		Y	Y						

Cross Country Meet Duties

Meet Jobs 2010

Friday September 10th, 2010 vs. Aquinas, Holy Redeemer & St. Sebastian

Stop watch boys	Smith		circle times boys	Taylor
Stop watch girls	Jones		circle times girls	Harris
finishline cards boys	Thomas			
Place Spotter boys	Brown		Collect cards boys	Bell
finishline cards girls	Roethlisberger		Collect cards girls	Ham
Place spotter girls	Polamalua			
Course Marshal pond	Miller		record times boys	Lambert
Course Marshal stop sign	Keisel		record times girls	Swann
Course Marshal road	Clark			
End of meet pavilion & Bathroom Check:		Pouncey		

EXPECTATIONS FOR PARENTS OF STUDENT ATHLETES

- * Accepts his or her role as a Christian parent who is watching and enjoying a sport.
- * Enrolls the child into the sport, with the realization that being part of a team is a commitment to both practices and games by both the child and parent(s).
- * Insists that the child enter into the sport with enthusiasm even if the child is not a gifted player.
- * Sees to their child being prompt for all practices and scheduled games, and is prompt when picking up a child at the end of practice.
- * Does not permit a child who was absent from school to attend practice or a game within that same day.
- * Understands that children must perform in their academics to be eligible to play. Poor report card grades equal removal from practice and games even if these practices or games are in preparation for a tournament.
- * Understand that excessive detentions may lead to removal from practice and games even in preparation for a tournament.
- * Grades can and should be monitored by parents via School Tools.
- * Does not encourage a child who wishes to miss a practice to use the excuse of illness. Understands that s/he is NOT the coach and must be supportive of the coach.
- * Controls his/her emotions both during and after games.
- * Speaks with the coach privately regarding any topic of concern, (i.e. equal playing time, a biased call, etc.) in regards to their own child ONLY.
- * Never shouts at the coach or steps out of the bleachers to approach a coach while the game is in session or immediately following the game. Abides by using a 'cooling' off period before contacting the coach. (i.e. 24 hour rule)
- * Realizes that sports at St. Alphonsus are meant to be instructional, developmental and preparatory, but are only a part of the elementary school program.
- * Realizes that the best gift s/he can give a child is the good example s/he sets as a parent.
- * Helps his/her son or daughter to see an injustice, accept a missed call, work through hurt feelings and deal with all facets appropriately.
- * Agrees that sports are one facet of a child's life and not a life threatening or life altering event.
- * Never ridicules the Home Team, the Guest Team or the coaches in public.
- * Lets the officials call the game despite their disagreement with a call.
- * Being disrespectful or physical in any way to players, visitors, coaches, or referees at either home or away venues is cause for dismissal from the Ryan Center.
- * Knows that every child of every sport is an integral part of a team which represents St. Alphonsus School. No one who contributes to defamation of the school's name in any way may continue to belong to the sports' program.

Printed Name

Parent(s)

Signature



St. Alphonsus School

201 Church Road, Wexford, PA 15090 724-935-1152 FAX: 724-935-1152

Running Tips

Fuel

- *Drink lots of water every day; especially days that you will race
- *Avoid fried foods on race day
- *Avoid dairy products just before you run
- *Try not to eat, **at least**, a 1/2 hour before you run
- *1/2 hour to hour before you run eat, 1/2 a banana, 1/2 an energy bar, some pretzels/crackers, or 1/2 a bagel
- *Don't drink too much just before you run---you don't want water sloshing around in your stomach
- ****Following these tips will help avoid cramping or side stitches when you run**

Posture

- *Stand tall with your shoulders back and down
- *Arms should be bent at a 90 degree angle and working with your legs; try not to swing them in front of your body or side to side. **Think of a train engine.**
- *Hands should be relaxed, not balled into tight fists
- *Concentrate on steady breathing---big breath in thru the nose, then out thru the mouth; avoid quick, shallow breaths as you may become light-headed
- *If you need to take a walk break, count to 30 and then start back up. As your legs get stronger, shorten the walk breaks.

Getting Started

- *Walk for 5 minutes, do a light jog for 3 minutes, then some light stretching for a few minutes
- *Run for 20 minutes
- *Walk 3 minutes to cool down
- *Stretch
- **It is important to run 3 times a week to build up and maintain your endurance

Core Strengthening

- *Do 12 push-ups,
- *Do 20 abdominal crunches; lay on back, knees bent, hands behind neck---use your abs/your core, to pull upper body/shoulders slightly off the floor, hold for one second, then release, repeat 20 times---**do not pull on your neck---use those abs!**
- *Do a plank and hold for 30 seconds. A plank involves holding your body in a push up position (back flat/straight), with forearms resting on the floor.

****Add more repetitions as you get stronger****

****Remember---slower is better****

St. Al's 8th Grade Recognition

Parents Name:

How long ran cross-country at St. Al's:

Other favorite activities:

Favorite St. Al's memory:

High School attending:

Last thoughts:

Concussion Evaluation Tool

On-field Cognitive Testing

Orientation

Ask the athlete the following questions.
 What stadium is this? What month is it?
 What city is this? What day is it?
 Who is the opposing team?

Anterograde amnesia

Ask the athlete to repeat the following words.
 Girl, dog, green

Retrograde amnesia

Ask the athlete the following questions.
 What happened in the prior quarter/period?
 What do you remember just prior to the hit?
 What was the score of the game prior to the hit?
 Do you remember the hit?

Concentration

Ask the athlete to do the following.
 Repeat the days of the week backward (starting with today).
 Repeat these numbers backward:
 63 (36 is correct) 419 (914 is correct)

Word list memory

Ask the athlete to repeat the three words from earlier.
 (Girl, dog, green)

*Any failure should be considered abnormal.
 Consult a physician following a suspected concussion.*

The Best Approach To Concussion Management

Concussion Signs and Symptoms Evaluation

Signs observed by staff

- appears to be dazed or stunned
- is confused about assignment
- forgets plays
- is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- moves clumsily
- answers questions slowly
- loses consciousness (even temporarily)
- shows behavior or personality change
- forgets events prior to hit (retrograde)
- forgets events after hit (anterograde)

Symptoms reported by athlete

- headache
- nausea
- balance problems or dizziness
- double or fuzzy vision
- sensitivity to light or noise
- feeling sluggish
- feeling "foggy"
- change in sleep pattern
- concentration or memory problems

Symptoms may worsen with exertion
 Athlete should not return to play until symptom-free

www.impacttest.com