



PROGRAM HOTLINE - 865-304-8381 / CHRIS KANE – 865-385-6237

PROGRAM EMAIL – KNOXVILLEYOUTHATHLETICS@GMAIL.COM

Eligibility

Open to all boys and girls of Middle school age (grades 6, 7, 8) or Elementary School Age (grades 3,4 and 5). We realize that certain school districts have different grade designations for Middle School and Elementary School but we will need to adhere to one standard. The program is open to all public, private schools and homeschooled athletes. Middle School athletes must compete in at least one regular season meet in order to be eligible for the championship meet. Home schooled and or individuals who do not have schools participating may compete as unattached, part of a school team closest to their normal public school zone or as part of a recognized home school cooperative. The same applies to elementary school.

Distances Run

Middle School - 2 miles for Boys and Girls / Elementary School - 1 Mile

Practice Times

These times are at your discretion. We recommend that you practice a minimum of 2-3 times a week in order to fully prepare the kids to complete a 2-mile (or 1 mile for Elementary) course comfortably. Your initial goal should be to promote positive fitness goals with performance issues taking a back seat to participation. There will be a guide published on the coaches' page to help you with sample training programs.

Knoxville Youth Athletics Weekend Group Runs

Optional weekend (Sunday) group runs will be held each week starting August 27, 2017. Schedules of these runs are available on the main ES / MS Page. All individuals and teams and parents are encouraged to come out for an easy run on the courses that you will run the following Monday or Tuesday. This is a great way to preview the course while getting out with your teammates and parents to enjoy a healthy run. All group runs are lead by Knoxville Youth Athletics Staff. Fluids are the responsibility of the individual athlete / parent.

Insurance

Practice and Meet Insurance coverage provided through the USATF (USA Track and Field) our sport's governing body. Individual accident medical coverage (pays as overage to primary parent coverage) is provided as part of Registration Fee.

Costs

\$ 28.50 per athlete for the entire season (one meet or all 6) – Made payable to Knoxville Youth Athletics. Program fees are due at the first meet when you pick up your bib numbers. If you require a receipt for your meet entries please email knoxvillyouthathletics@gmail.com with your request prior to the first meet. For those athletes who are not able to afford the program costs a fee waiver may be granted. Please contact the program director for details. The program fee will cover the following operational costs:

- Security for all meets
- Porte-Johns
- Course Preparation - marking

- Practice Insurance for athletes
- Event insurance and liability insurance for coaches
- Individual accident medical coverage for the athlete
- Bib numbers, Bib Chips and pins
- Awards
- Fluids and cups at meets
- Office supplies
- Bib Chip Timing and Results
- Course supplies – Marking / Flagging / Finish line
- PA System at all meets

Concessions will be available at all meets and the official program shirt will be on sale at each meet for \$18.00. Please encourage your kids to purchase one. All proceeds go towards keeping our program costs to a minimum.

Meets

Elementary Meets will generally be held on Monday's - with the exception of 9/2/17 - Saturday (first program meet) and (Labor Day) and when we will run on Wednesday 9/6/17). The final meet will be the ES Championship Meet 10/2/17. Allow for ample time to get to the meet site and for parking. If at all possible try to car pool so that we can keep parking problems to a minimum Six meets total. Please check the schedule for meet start times, as they will change somewhat according to the meet location and available light towards the end of the season. Most meets should be over by 7:45 PM

Middle School Meets will generally be held every TUESDAY with the exception of 9/2/17 - Saturday (first program meet) and will end with the MS Championship Meet 10/3/17. Six meets total. Allow for ample time to get to the meet site and for parking. If at all possible try to car pool so that we can keep parking problems to a minimum. Please check the schedule for meet start times, as they will change somewhat according to the meet location and available light towards the end of the season. Most meets should be over by 8:30 PM.

REGISTRATION – All teams and individuals must register and submit their rosters online by August 30, 2017 (midnight). All fees may be paid online or at the first meet. **If you are a member of a team the coach will process your registration. If you are unattached or not competing with a team you must process your registration by August 30, 2017.** Registration Link can be found at the main program page or under the registration header (click programs) off of the main Knoxvilleouthathletics.org website.

Where do I direct parents to find out information about the program?

1. On KYA Front Page (knoxvilleouthathletics.org) go to main header “Programs”. Scroll down list and click on Elementary – Middle School Cross Country. This will bring you to the main info page for your parents. This page has everything they need to know and download.

How do I get to the coaches page?

1. Follow the steps listed above in # 1
2. First Link on Info Table is Coaches Page – Click this link and you will be taken to the Coaches Page. Scroll past the season schedule and you will find all the important info links you will need as a coach in the program – a screen shot of the table you will see is below – TAKE TIME NOW TO REVIEW ALL THE LINKS IN THE TABLE!! – It will save tons of questions later.

IMPORTANT DATES	IMPORTANT COACHES INFORMATION LINKS
	SEASON SCHEDULE / COACHES INFO PACKET
7/24/17	7 PM - New Program / Team Information Meeting - Provision Health and Performance
IMPORTANT	PLEASE FILL OUT Coaches Online Contact Form / Current Coaches Contacts Thru 8/9/17 (if you are not on this list please fill out)
	Fleet Feet - Knoxville - Cross Country Team Nights - Team Discounts
8/3/17	ES-MS Coaches Meeting 6:30-8 PM - Provision Health and Performance
8/13/17	ES-MS Coaches Clinic - 3-5 PM - Provision Health and Performance Clinic Notes
8/14/17	Online Registration Opens 8/14/17 Click >> SIGN UP ONLINE
8/30/17	ALL REGISTRATIONS FOR THE PROGRAM are DUE in the Online System
	ONLINE ENTRY INSTRUCTIONS
	Meet Volunteer Online Sign Up
	Coaches Training Aids
	Elementary School Starting Box Assignments (as of 9/6/17)
	Middle School Starting Box Assignments (as of 9/5/17)
	Cross Country Spectator / Coaches - Athlete Etiquette
	CLICK HERE (Knox Co Public Schools Only) to request facility use approval
	KYA Liability Insurance Policy (Knox County Schools)
	KYA Liability Insurance Policy (General)
	Medical Information Form (PDF)
	Health and Accident Policy Coverages (PDF)
	Health and Accident Claims Forms (PDF)
	Inclement Weather Policy (PDF)
	Heat (practice policy (PDF)
	Coaches Training Aides
	Lost Child Protocol
	Bib Numbers Explained
Deadline 9/29/17	Check Team Rosters Prior to 10/2/17 Elementary Championships

Starting Line / Finish Line and Cross Country Etiquette

Cross Country Spectator, Athlete and Coach Etiquette

In an effort to ensure that every runner is given an equal opportunity to complete our cross country courses safely while giving parents and spectators ample opportunity to view the participants, Knoxville Youth Athletics has developed simple guidelines for parents and spectators to follow during the meet. Please take time to go over these simple rules and pass them along to your family members or meet guests.

Course

Coaches, Parents and spectators are welcome to view runners on the course however the course is set up **for the** runners. Please be aware of caution tape, flagging, red traffic cones and painted lines. These are used to outline the course boundaries. Spectators should stay outside of the course boundaries and never cross over the course while a race is in progress. Crossing in front of runners no matter what place they are in is both hazardous and disrespectful. Wait till the ENTIRE FIELD has passed before you cross over a course boundary. Once your runners race is over please do not use the course to exit the competition area until the race is completely finished. Use caution when walking around course boundary markers so as not to alter their placement or direction. This could effect the direction the runner takes on the course.

Assistance

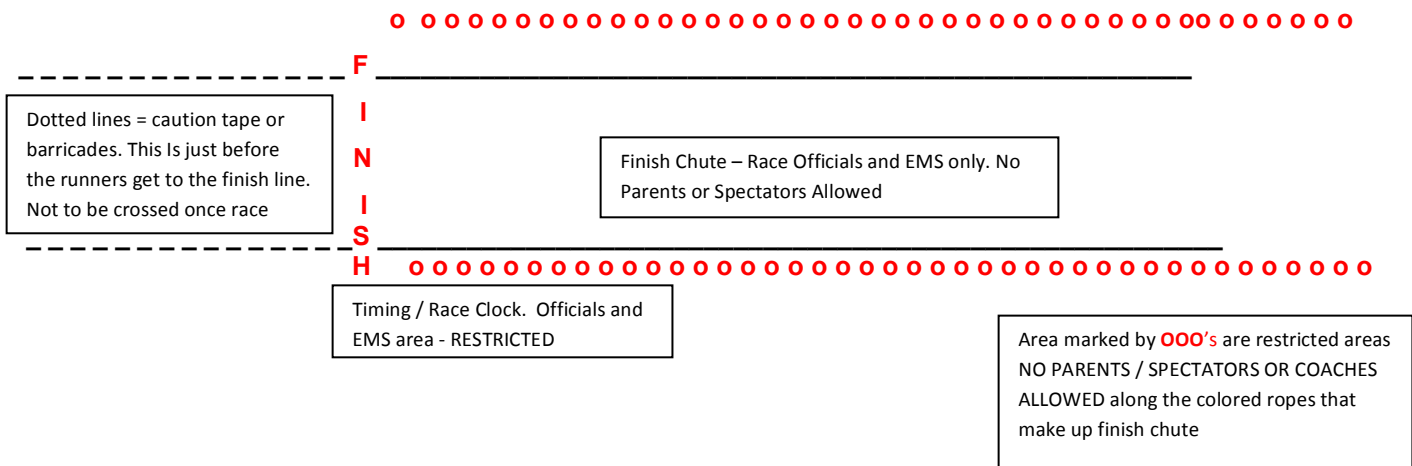
Pacing or running, biking along side of an athlete during a race is prohibited. If an athlete needs special assistance due to a disability please make sure race officials are aware of this prior to the start so accommodations can be made. Providing fluids during the race outside of that provided by officials is not allowed unless a participant is in physical distress.

Starting Line

In order to insure a safe and equitable start for participant's, all parents, spectators and coaches will not be allow to gather in front of the starting line for any reason. Team pictures, coach's last minute instructions will take place behind the athletes.

Finish Line

KYA finish lines are generally set up in the following manner. Please pay close attention to the areas where parents, spectators and coaches are not allowed to stand or gather. Notice where the finish clock is located and make sure all runners and spectators have a clear view of the clock – i.e. do not stand in front of the clock blocking its view.



Participant Etiquette

All runners should show respect for each other on the course and in the finish chute. Though starts will be crowded please make sure your runners do not shove, trip or push other runners. Extending hands and arms for balance or to prevent collisions are within competitive boundaries. Intentional acts of shoving, tripping, pushing or unsportsmanlike conduct will result in a disqualification from the race and a meeting with KYA Director, school coach, parents and athlete. Runners are not allowed in any form shape or manner to intentionally impeded the forward progress of another runner. This is most especially true when running in to the finish line. Athletes must keep arms and hands in towards their body and they are not to be used to block someone's progress to the finish line. This to will result in disqualification from the race. Please encourage your athletes to act like they have crossed a finish line before – grandstanding, cartwheels, etc. are discouraged. Once the finish line is crossed all runners should stay in line and in order not passing or shoving in the chute.

Knoxville Youth Athletics Elementary / Middle School Cross Country Program Inclement Weather Policy

Practices – Each participating school (coach) may either hold or cancel practice at their respective sites at their discretion. It is the individual coach's responsibility to inform parents of practice cancellation. As a general rule we will run in the rain. If there is lightning in the area practices should be delayed for 30 minutes to allow weather to clear. If at this time there is still lightning in the area – practice should be delayed an additional 30 minutes. If after 2 – 30 minute delays, lightning is still in the area, practice should be canceled.

Meets – In general terms meets will run as scheduled. If weather forecasts call for threatening weather please do not assume we will cancel the event. Meet officials will be out on the meet course the morning of each meet through the start of the meet and will assess the weather status as it stands at the meet course. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE KNOXVILLE YOUTH ATHLETICS HOTLINE the day of the meet to find out if it will be held. If there is any cancellation of the meet it will appear on the TWITTER feed located on the front page of the Knoxville Youth Athletics Website (www.knoxvilleyouthathletics.org) no later than 1:30 PM the day of the meet. You may like us on Facebook at Knoxville Youth Athletics where weather cancellations will be posted and follow us on twitter - @KnoxYouthAth. These are the ONLY locations it will be posted. As a general rule we will run in the rain – even driving rain. If there is lightning in the area the meet will be delayed for 30 minutes for weather to clear. If at this time there is still lightning in the area – the meet will be delayed an additional 30 minutes. If after 2 – 30 minute delays lightning is still in the area, the meet will be canceled. Cancelled meets will not be made up or rescheduled.

KNOXVILLE YOUTH ATHLETICS – ELEMENTARY / MIDDLE SCHOOL CROSS COUNTRY – LOST CHILD PROTOCOL

We are very fortunate that so many kids are involved in our fall cross-country program and are seeking a healthy lifestyle through running. This also means that at an average meet you can have as many as 4000 people (parents and siblings included) in and around the start-finish-course area. While each team in our cross country program may have set up a protocol for their respective athletes to return to a central meeting point after the conclusion of a race, Knoxville Youth Athletics is encouraging coaches and parents to please inform your children that if they are unable to find their coach or parent after the race to report directly to our concessions area (where our fluids / snacks and program t-shirts are sold). ***Coaches / Parents should make sure that all athletes are aware of where this area is located prior to the start of the race.*** Our concessionaire will be able to make sure an announcement is made over the PA for parent / coach to retrieve their child / athlete. Our concessionaire also has a cell phone by which contact can be made with the coach or parent. In order for this to work effectively we recommend that your athlete / child know your cell number so it can be called. Regardless we will continue to make announcements over the PA until a lost child is reunited with their parent or coach. You will be required to fill out a sign out form when you pick them up and a picture will be taken for security purposes

Participant Bib Numbers

Each participant will wear a bib number on the front of his or her shirt or jersey. Bib numbers are unique to the participant and should not be given to another runner to wear. Please pay close attention to pinning the bib on correctly as show in the diagrams below.

- > Middle School Runners will wear Bib Numbers in all races
- > Elementary School Runners will wear Bib Numbers in all races
- > DO NOT SUBSTITUTE OR SWITCH BIB NUMBERS BETWEEN TEAMMATES OR ATHLETES !!!!!

PIN

PIN



1729

www.RoadID.com

PIN

PIN

DO NOT PIN
HERE
HOLE HOLE

Name (Last) _____ (First) _____ Please Print - Use Ballpoint

Mailing Address/Team _____

Sex (M/F) _____ Age _____

* 1 7 2 9 *

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No. 1729



RAFFLE/DRAWING
(If applicable in this event)

DO NOT PIN THIS HOLE

Each bib will have an RFID (Radio Frequency ID) tag attached to the back of each bib in only one of two of the locations shown below - DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES PUT A PIN THROUGH THE RFID TAG.

START: 7 AM on Del Norte Avenue near Figueroa Street (across from McDonald's) in Monterey.

PARKING: At the Casino & Convention Center or Del Norte prior to 5:30 AM or at Monterey Peninsula College or Del Norte Shopping Center from 6:00 to 8:30. Shuttles will depart for the start every 15 minutes.

RETURN SHUTTLES: Take the Recreational Trail from the Casino & Convention Center area back to Figueroa St. (start area) and shuttles will return to Monterey Peninsula College or Del Norte Campus between 8:30 AM and 1 PM.

CORRALS: Your corral letter is located on the front of your bib. Please line up in the corral assigned to you. The race starts in 1/2 mile from 1 to 3 minutes apart. The 1/2 mile race line begins when the USA starts across the start chip mat.

BIBS & TIMING CHIPS: Your bib must be pinned to the front of your shirt or shorts and visible. Your timing chips are located on the back of your bib. Do not remove them.

SWEATS: Sweat bags may be dropped off at two locations at the start. Look for the orange truck on either side of Del Norte Ave at the bib pickup tent and on Figueroa at the bike parking lot (back side). They may be returned to you at the award handing area located near the run area's food tent at the finish.

AWARDS: Begins at 10 AM at Casino & Convention Center. Please head to the Maritime Museum. In the event of rain, it will be held in the Star-back Forum on the 3rd floor of the Monterey Conference Center.

IMPORTANT MEDICAL INFORMATION - For your safety and protection fill out this form now! You will need this for your race day.

WRITING RELEASE OF MEDICAL INFORMATION:
I hereby authorize the disclosure of medically related information concerning my health, injuries, musculoskeletal ailments, or other conditions that may occur in the course of participating in this activity and to allow that information to be provided to a family member, friend, or other official of the Big Sur International Marathon.

NAME _____ AGE _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____ PHONE _____ AT HOME?

MEDICAL HISTORY (Injuries, allergies, medications) _____

WHILE ON THE MONTEREY PENINSULA I AM STAYING AT (hotel, home, etc.) _____

BY WEARING THIS BIB NUMBER IN THE BIG SUR HALF MARATHON OR A RELATED EVENT I ACKNOWLEDGE AND AGREE TO THE WAIVER BELOW:

Waiver of Liability: I agree that the Big Sur Half Marathon or Monterey Bay (BSHM) is an inherently dangerous activity that carries a significant risk of injury or death. I understand the risks of any injury or death that may occur and agree to participate in this activity. I agree to hold the Big Sur International Marathon, its officials and all other participants harmless, including myself, for any and all injuries or damages that may occur in the course of participating in this activity. I understand that I am waiving my right to sue or bring a lawsuit against any person or organization, including the Big Sur International Marathon, for any injury or damage that may occur in the course of participating in this activity. I understand that I am waiving my right to sue or bring a lawsuit against any person or organization, including the Big Sur International Marathon, for any injury or damage that may occur in the course of participating in this activity. I understand that I am waiving my right to sue or bring a lawsuit against any person or organization, including the Big Sur International Marathon, for any injury or damage that may occur in the course of participating in this activity. I understand that I am waiving my right to sue or bring a lawsuit against any person or organization, including the Big Sur International Marathon, for any injury or damage that may occur in the course of participating in this activity.

2017 SEASON SCHEDULE

Regular Season Meets are shaded in grey with direct links to maps and directions found on the KYA Website.

Championship Meets highlighted in yellow

Date	Time	Event / Activity	Location	Driving Directions	Course Maps Videos	Additional Information
7/24/17	7:00 PM	Informational Meeting for those interested in starting a program at their school	Provision Health and Performance	Map		
8/3/17	6:30 PM	Coaches Meeting	Provision Health and Performance	Map		Season Organizational Meeting for Team Coaches
8/13/17	3 PM 5 PM	Coaches Clinic	Provision Health and Performance	Map		Learn from area experts
8/27/17	6 PM	Group Run	Victor Ashe Park	Directions		Open to all parents / participants preview of course Saturday at the Victor Ashe Park Fall Classic
9/2/17	See Meet Web Page	Victor Ashe Park Fall Classic First Meet for both ES and MS Cross Country Program - Entry Fee Included in Program Fee	Victor Ashe Park		ES-Map ES-Video MS-Map MS-Video	ES / MS / HS College Division Races - Meet Info Parking Map
9/3/17	3 PM	Group Run	Cove Lake State Park	Directions		Open to all parents / participants preview of course that will be run on Monday and Tuesday
9/5/17	6:15 PM	Second MS Cross Country Meet	Cove Lake State Park		MS Map Video	6:15 PM - Girls Start 6:45 - Boys Start
9/6/17	6:15 PM	Second ES Cross Country Meet	Cove Lake State Park		ES Map Video	6:00 PM Girls Start 6:15 PM Boys Start
9/10/17	4:00 PM	Group Run	Walters State Sevier County Campus	Google Map		Open to all parents / participants preview of courses that will be run on Monday and Tuesday
9/11/17	6:15 PM	Third ES Cross Country Meet	Walters State Sevier County Campus		ES Map Video	6:15 PM - Girls Start 6:30 PM - Boys Start Parking Plan / Team Area
9/12/17	6:15 PM	Third MS Cross Country Meet	Walters State Sevier County Campus		MS Map ES X2 Video	Parking Plan / Team Area
9/17/17	5 PM	Group Run	TBD	Directions		Open to all parents / participants preview of course that will be run on Monday and Tuesday
9/18/17	6:00 PM	Fourth ES Cross Country Meet	TBD		ES Map Video	6 PM - Girls Start 6:15 PM - Boys Start

9/19/17	6:00 PM	Fourth MS Cross Country Meet	TBD		MS Map Video	
9/24/17	3 PM	Group Run	Leisure Pools Forks of the River	Directions		Open to all parents / participants preview of course that will be run on Monday and Tuesday
9/25/17	6:00 PM	Fifth ES Cross Country Meet	Leisure Pools Forks of the Rive		ES Map Video	6:00 PM - Girls Start 6:15 PM - Boys Start
9/26/17	6:00 PM	Fifth MS Cross Country Meet	Leisure Pools Forks of the Rive		MS Map Video	
10/2/17	5:30 PM	Area ES Championships	Victor Ashe Park			Elementary School (ONLY) - 5:30 PM Qualifier for the Tennessee State ES Cross Country Championships - Meet Info Parking Map
10/3/17	5:30 PM	Area MS Cross Country Championships	Victor Ashe Park	Directions	Map	Middle (ONLY) Race - 5:30 PM Qualifier for the Tennessee State MS Cross Country Championships Meet Info Parking Map
10/21/17	10:30 AM	Tennessee State Elementary School Cross Country Championships	Victor Ashe Park	Directions	Map	Meet Info
10/21/17	12:10 PM	Tennessee State Middle School Cross Country Championships	Victor Ashe Park		Map	Meet Info
10/24/17	4:30 PM	First Practice - Post Season Cross Country Program - Elementary and Middle	All Sites			Program Info
10/30/17	4:30 PM	First Practice - Post Season Cross Country Program - High School Non-State Qualifiers	All Sites			Program Info
11/6/17	4:30 PM	First Practice - Post Season Cross Country Program - High School State Qualifiers	All Sites			Program Info
11/11/17	11:00 AM	KYA Youth Cross Country Invite	Victor Ashe Park			Middle School and Younger Meet Inforamtion
11/17/17	6 PM	Hoka One One Postal Nationals - Tennessee presented by KYA	Hardin Valley Academy			Meet Informaton
11/18/17	8 AM	Cross Country Coaches National Youth Championships	TBA			For Middle School and Younger
11/25/17	8 AM	Footlocker South Regional Cross Country Championships	Charlotte, NC			

Victor Ashe Park Fall Classic

Hosted by Knoxville Youth Athletics the Victor Ashe Park Fall Classic will be held 9/2/17. This is a great opportunity for kids to run against athletes from out of town and even out of state. There are divisions for Elementary, Middle, High School and College teams and individuals. If you have registered for the program and paid your program fees your entry into this meet has been paid for.

Knoxville Youth Athletics – Tennessee State Elementary and Middle School Cross Country Championships – 10/21/17

Join 1500 other Elementary and Middle School runners from across the state to vie for a state team and individual titles. In order to qualify for the state meet your team must place in the top 5 (or have placed in the top 25 individually) in the Area MS Championships held at Victor Ashe Park 10/3/17. Elementary School runners by placing in the Top 5 Teams (and top 30 individuals) at the area ES Championships held at Victor Ashe Park on 10/2/17.

Knoxville Youth Athletics Post Season Cross Country Program

At the conclusion of the Elementary-Middle School Cross Country Program participants who are interested may continue their Cross Country experience by taking part in Knoxville Youth Athletics Post Season Cross Country Program. Starting October 24 boys and girls ages 8-18 will practice 3-5 x a week at Hardin Valley Academy and Victor Ashe Park. The Knoxville Youth Athletics Team will compete in three races leading up to three season end cross country championships. Call Bobby Holcombe @ 865-643-2840.

Course Descriptions / Directions – (One course remains to be finalized – please check website for more information.)

Victor Ashe Park

The course will start and finish on the soccer fields just below the concession stands and rest rooms. Course boundaries will be mowed-in by the City of Knoxville Parks and Recreation Department. A 10 meter path has been laid out through all wooded areas. Wide open starting area with a flat start. Course will be rolling. Rest rooms will be available at the park concession area and supplemented with porta-johns. The park is located adjacent to Badget Field access to the park will be off of Bradshaw road and not Badget Field. **Directions:** Off of I-640 take the Western Ave. exit. Follow Western Ave West (towards Oak Ridge) .3 miles to Ball camp Pike - take a right at the light by Wendy's Restaurant and follow Ball Camp to Bradshaw Rd. Take a right onto Bradshaw and follow 1 mile to the entrance to the park on left. Bear left when entering park to the XC parking area, please follow parking instructions given by security officers.

Cove Lake State Park

Cove Lake State Park course has been used annually for high school cross country meets as well as a local summer road race. The MS course is mostly grass and rolling. There is an exterior and an interior loop. There are 3-4 paved bike path cross over and a concrete bridge crossing of about 40 meters. Some may want to stick with non-spiked shoes. The ES course is a single grass loop mostly flat. Both races start in the open field below the restaurant and finish in the outfield of the softball field. **Directions:** Take I-75 North (from Knoxville) to exit 134 (for 25W). Bear right off exit and proceed on 25W past stoplight for .8 mile, the entrance to the park will be on your left. Please follow security and parking volunteer instructions once in the park.

Leisure Pools / Pickle Island New for 2017. Held on the site of Leisure Pools Headquarters commonly known as Pickle Island. Leisure Pools is located in the Forks of the River Industrial Park. Take 1-40 either direction and get off at the Strawberry Plains exit. Follow Strawberry Plains to Gov. John Sevier Hwy and take a left. Follow to Gov. John Sevier Hwy to National Dr. Turn onto National Drive by the Pilot Station and follow National Dr. to the parking area for the course.

Walters State Community College (Sevierville, TN)

New in 2015 the Walters State Community College course brings the KYA ES/MS Cross Country Program to Sevier County. The elementary course is a single loop 1-mile course running around the periphery of the Walters State Campus. The middle school course is a two loop 2-mile course utilizing the base 1-mile loop of the elementary school course twice.

Directions: From Knoxville take I-40 E to Exit 407 towards Sevierville, Pigeon Forge (RT 66 Winfield Dunn Pkwy). Follow 66 into Sevierville at stoplight at 411. Turn left and follow 411 past Sevier County HS to Old Newport Hwy there will be a Wiegles on your left before you turn right onto Old Newport Hwy. Follow signs to Walters State Community College.



THE LONG TERM APPROACH TO COACHING YOUNG DISTANCE RUNNERS

PATIENCE! Ah what a virtue. We all strive to be more patient in our daily lives. Patience with our co-workers, ourselves our spouses and with all those around us. However when we don the sacred mantle of coach and couple this with parental expectations patience quickly gets flushed down the commode. The temptation to focus on short-term results is great. With weekly meets and end of season championship meets coaches often get drug into the euphoria of weekly team results, runners personal bests and rankings. There is no question as a coach that you want to find a way to motivate your kids by showing improvement, keeping parents engaged by their child's success and keeping your team focused towards helping each other. Unfortunately for most distance runners success does not happen overnight and keeping your distance runners sights on the future is much better in the long run than having them and you be too concerned with what happens week to week. Here is what I have come to know in over 28 years of working with young distance runners.

- 45% of your team will not be able to chew gum and walk at the same time every new season you start. Moreover with current obesity rates and the concurrent lack of physical readiness of many Elementary and Middle School students newcomers to your team will not likely be able to complete 400-600m of running without stopping.
- Of the remaining 55% most will not be consistent with their running throughout the year. Some will have participated in other sports throughout the year, which is great. Others may have just turned into couch potatoes. In other words you cannot take for granted that your kids will be ready to tackle a season or even finish the first race when pre-season practice starts.
- Most young runners first experience with running in our society has unfortunately been punitive. Running suicides in Basketball practice. Drop a pass – make a fumble – incomplete a pass > “take a lap”. Penalty laps, extra sprints for being late or missing practice. The list goes on and on. One of the most fundamental human locomotive activities outside of walking has been turned into drudgery by sports coaches near and far. Make any sense to you?
- Solid aerobic development is not something achieved in a summer or fall but something that is built over years of consistent, measured training.
- Young North African distance stars are not overnight sensations. They have grown up in high altitude environments using their legs as the predominant mode of transportation in their daily lives. They have done so at a very early age. By the time they have reached mid to late teens they have cobbled together an aerobic training base that takes most Western runners till their mid twenties to obtain. They are most often not burdened with the luxuries of Western life such as computers, I pads, smartphones, TV's, comfy couches, personal trainers and the Internet.
- One cannot be personally contacted by a college coach until after July 1st of the summer prior to ones senior year in HIGH SCHOOL – they are not looking at elementary and middle school runners! An elementary or middle school champion does not guarantee high school, college or post collegiate success. There is plenty of time to reach for these lofty goals –for now enjoy the ride and hidden benefits that come with being a healthy, well rounded distance runner.
- Local road races are NOT the proper environments to teach young runners the joys of running, much less the rigors of competing against ones peers. Leave your local 5K's to those who run them most often – moms, dads and other adults seeking self-satisfaction and fitness. Most kids do not need to be running road races till their athletic careers are over. Sure one 5K in the summer to see how your summer base training is progressing is fine – but entering your child into numerous local

road races will only lead to the long term demise of their ability to compete against their peers while taking away the fun they might have in later years as adults in entering these events.

- Stop worrying about the clock and the distance of the course in cross-country races. There is no athletics governing body that certifies the distance of a cross-country course – EVEN THE IAAF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS! Courses distances are estimates at best. Course difficulty varies greatly from one course to the next thus making judgments about improvement based on time meaningless. Take down the clock in a cross-country race and you can still score the meet. Place of finish is of paramount importance and allows you to make judgments on improvement from race to race more effectively. The clock is only relevant when you get to the track – certified distance, reproducible surface and accurate timing.

Knowing the above to be true I have found it much better to nurture younger runners so that they first and foremost love the activity. Remember, many already are pre-conditioned to think running as both painful and devoid of fun. Running is an activity that can benefit each and every one of your athletes for decades. It may not lead to athletic success and reward, but it will set them on path of healthy living that will endure far beyond a tarnished medal or trophy. Each day of running is a small building block placed upon a foundation of your distance running “house” that will take 10-15 years to build. During this 10-15 year period your athlete will undergo profound physical and emotional changes. Just navigating through the changes encountered by most during their adolescent years is daunting at best – throw athletic expectations on top of this and for some it can be too much. Some respond to these physical and emotional changes better and quicker than others. This further underscores the need for patience and balance when dealing with young runners. Give them the proper perspective about their running early (as well as their parents) so that you can better equip them to navigate the changes that lie ahead for them in the years to come.

I have been fortunate to have both of my children “grow up” with running. With two parents who ran competitively in college and after it would have been easy to spoon-feed our kids running to the point of nausea. Yet we took a “hands off” approach to exposing them to a sport we dearly loved and continue with today 44 years after taking our first running steps. They both ran middle school cross-country with our youngest taking part in the first KYA elementary school cross-country races. They both ran summer track and field, elementary – middle school track and field. They also had separate dreams of playing in the NFL and the NBA. They gradually played their way out of those two sports to come to realize that this running thing might be something they were good at. No pushing – no shoving just an exploration of the sport by dipping their toes in the water and letting them choose. Were there times when running mom and dad could have been sent to “proud parents time out”? – YOU BET!! Yet through it all we wanted them to enjoy their running, knowing that there were benefits they could enjoy long after the crowds had disappeared and individual – team honors faded into obscurity. How has this approach worked out? Well the verdict is not in yet and only time will tell – so far so good. **I say all this to save both coaches and parents sleepless nights worrying about things that in the end amount to little when looking at the long road that is the life of a distance runner.**

Youngest Son

Elementary School Cross Country Runner

Elementary School 800 Champion

Middle School Cross Country Runner – Top 10 at Area Championships

Middle School Track Champion 800

Member of High School State Cross Country Championship Team

Running in College – ETSU

15:16 – 5K on the track / 25:30 - 8K

32:24 – 10K on the track

NCAA Regional Cross Country Qualifier

Oldest Son

Elementary 800 Champion

2X Middle School Area Cross Country Champion

3X Middle School 1600 Champion

High School State Cross Country Champion

Footlocker National Cross Country Finalist

Ran Collegiately - NC State

All- ACC Track and Cross Country

2X NCAA All-Region Cross Country

3X NCAA Cross Country National Finalist

13:59 – 5K PR Track

2016 US Olympic Trials Marathon Qualifier (1:04 Half-Marathon)

Marty Sonnenfeldt

Director

Knoxville Youth Athletics



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- **VIP treatment** if coach signs up for Team FIT Night (limited availability)
- **XC Kickoff Party** open party to all teams (date and details to come)
- Hassle-free coupons, details and information that you can share with athletes and parents
- Discounts only apply to purchases made for athletes

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Questions? Contact: staff@fleetfeetknoxville.com, phone: 865-675-3338