



Cross Country 2026 Welcome Letter

Hello Parents! I am excited about another season of cross country!

PRACTICES:

- Our first practice will be Thursday, Sept. 3 at 5:45pm at the Florence Sports Complex Track, followed by a Parents' Meeting at 7:00pm.
- Participation in practices and meets is strongly encouraged but is not mandatory.
- Mondays at Freedom Park (1515 Freedom Blvd)- meet by the pond at the back of the parking lot that is next to the gymnastics building
- Tuesdays at Florence Soccer Complex (3701 W Palmetto St)- meet in the parking lot by central building
- Thursdays at Florence Sports Complex (1200 Jennie O'Bryan Ave)- meet by the track shed
- Practice will last 1 hour 15 min. Practices will start at 5:45pm and end at 7:00pm for the first few weeks. This schedule will shift as sunset comes earlier! Please be on time for athlete pick up at the end of practice. We do not want to be waiting around with kids after dark.
- Any changes to practice will be announced on the SportsYou app. Since cross country is an all-weather sport, please assume that we will meet when scheduled. Practice is cancelled only when there is the threat of lightning. We try to post cancellations at least 30 minutes to an hour before practice.
- Only Parent Volunteers who have completed the city background check will be allowed at practices.
- Bring water to practice.
- Go to the bathroom prior to practice. Some of our practice locations do not have accessible facilities.
- No ear buds and athletes cannot run with cell phones in their hands. If they want to keep track of their times then they need a watch. We are not responsible for electronics brought to practice.

MEETS:

- We will be hosting a meet this year on Oct. 24th. We will need lots of volunteer help to put this on.
- The big meet of the year is the State Meet. All athletes are eligible to compete even if they haven't run in other meets. Athletes must compete in the state meet to qualify for the regional or national meets.
- Travel to the meets is each athlete's responsibility but carpooling may be an option with other parents.
- Parents are responsible for their athletes while at the meet. Coaches have other duties at meets, so while they may assist, it is the parent's responsibility to get your child warmed up and to the starting line.
- Athlete misconduct will result in meet suspension per the City and FTC Discipline Policy.
- The following table shows the distance that your child will run based on their age group. Their age is determined by how old they will be on Dec. 31, 2026.
- All athletes must have a birth certificate on file with the city before they can participate in practice.

Age	Birth Year	Distance	Mile Equivalent
6-8	2018-2020	2K	1.24 miles
9-10	2016-2017	3K	1.86 miles
11-12	2014-2015	3K	1.86 miles
13-14	2012-2013	4K	2.49 miles
15-16	2010-2011	5K	3.1 miles
17-18	2008-2009	5K	3.1 miles

UNIFORMS:

- As part of your registration, each athlete will receive a 2026 XC Team T-shirt (this is not the uniform).
- The uniform is the Florence Track Club singlet (royal blue tank top with yellow lettering). It is the same as previous Cross Country seasons and the ones used by Track & Field.
- The uniform singlet should be worn to all meets and is required for the USATF Junior Olympic State meet and subsequent USATF meets.
- Athletes may wear any shorts or pants they prefer (most wear black) and may wear a short-sleeve or long-sleeve shirt under the singlet if they choose.
- There will be a Team Store where you can purchase the uniform singlet for \$13. You will also be able to purchase the 2026 XC Team T-shirt (for friends and family) as well as several cold-weather long-sleeved options. Details and links will be posted on SportsYou.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS:

- We are very much in need of parent volunteers to help out with practices. You do not have to do any coaching, this is mainly for supervision and safety purposes. If you want to run with the team and get your own workout in that is great! But we need help to hold a stopwatch and keep track of kids as well.
- Parents are not allowed to attend practices and be around the athletes unless you have had a background check completed by the city. On the website where you registered your child for cross country there is an option for parent volunteers. <https://florencesc.myrec.com> The deadline for this is September 13th.
- Parent volunteers will also receive a free 2026 XC Team T-shirt.

SPORTSYOU:

- The main source of contact will be through the SportsYou app.
- Download the app and use access code RP6FNJE8 for Cross County. Note that this is a different team than Track & Field.



- Update Notification Settings under your Profile and Account Settings. Be sure to select New Posts.
- Subscribe to Calendar under your Profile and Account Settings. This will sync the cross country schedule with your personal calendar on your phone. This is very helpful with the different practice locations and changing practice times as the season progresses.
- We will sign up for meets through the app as well. When I create a post about a meet you can comment on the post if your child is going to participate.
- I will post pictures throughout the season under the Media tab. If you take pictures at meets and want to share them let me know and I will make you a "photographer" to have access to upload pics.
- There is a chat feature where you can text me or other team members. You may also reach me by cell.

We want to thank you and your child for taking an interest in our program. Middle to long-distance running is very challenging, and I commend each child for coming out. The goal for our program is to have each child improve as the season progresses. We also love running and want to make running fun for your child as well. If you have any questions during the year, please do not hesitate to ask.

Thanks again!

Jennifer Patchett
FTC Cross Country Head Coach
jpatchett29@gmail.com
517-414-7947