



HEARTS Cross Country Information

What does HEARTS sports offer?

We offer Christ-centered sports programs for Christian home-school students. We are members of the Lake Effect Conference (LEC) as well as the Ohio Christian School Athletic Association (OCSAA). HEARTS sports teams are one way we challenge and encourage home-school students to honor God in all things, and to grow in their walk with Jesus through athletics. Although this sport is relatively new to the HEARTS athletic program, we have experienced success at various meets and our team continues to grow! As an ACSI member school, HEARTS athletes are eligible for the ACSI Distinguished Student award.

What is HEARTS Cross Country?

HEARTS Cross Country is our middle school and high school boys/girls program for HEARTS for Jesus Christ. Middle school team members run a two mile race. Senior high school team members run a 5 kilometer (3.1 miles) race. Both the middle school boys and girls and high school boys and girls practice together and encourage each other throughout the season.

What teams are available and how many participate?

Middle school (gr 7-8) girls and boys and high school (gr 9-12) girls and boys. You need at least 5 runners to have a team, but 7 is the ideal number. If we don't have enough for a team, runners compete individually in the open races. Since there is no minimum or maximum number, everyone on the team participates in all meets.

When does the season start and end?

- Our first official practice is the beginning of August and the last meet of the season is the middle of October.
- A group of runners try to run through the fall and spring as their schedules permit.
- We typically have 6-8 meets a season and practice 3 times a week, sometimes in the morning and sometimes in the evenings. The runners are expected to run on their own as well, averaging 5 days a week of running.
- There will be a season kick-off meeting and a season-end banquet. The banquet, typically in November, will include all the fall sports.

Where are the practices and meets?

Practices have been held in Avon Lake, Westlake and Rocky River. We attempt to find locations that are central to the team members, typically running at local parks. The meets are in the greater Cleveland area and typically include many schools. Some of the bigger races have over 100 runners competing.

How much will this cost?

For HEARTS members, costs typically run \$75 per student to participate, and \$16 for a uniform. Team members provide modest black shorts to go with the uniform jersey. As always, we attempt to keep costs down, and raise needed funds in other ways through parent-initiated fundraising activities. Fees are calculated based on the number of team members divided by the cost to operate the program, so they may vary some from season to season.

You must be a HEARTS member to participate in our sports programs. Membership options include a basic membership (\$250), which covers all sports, ACSI, social and testing for a school year, or full membership which includes Friday classes and access to all HEARTS programs.

How can I help?

Each family is expected to help by signing up for ministry assistant positions (MAP). There will be a sign-up at the start of the season and everyone is required to help. Typical responsibilities include coordinating lunches and bakes sales, taking team photos, ordering the uniforms, helping at the sports banquet, and coordinating team booster activities.

Additionally, there will be fundraising and/or booster activities throughout the year. A typical Cross Country fundraising event is Friday bake sales during HEARTS classes. Each family provides baked goods and the team members work the sale. At least one adult will oversee the event and handle the money. Parents are encouraged to develop fundraising efforts for HEARTS programming.

What should I do if I am interested in joining the Cross Country team?

- Send an e-mail to the HEARTS Athletic Director (bev.johnson@heartsforjesuschrist.org)
- If you are not a member of HEARTS, you will need to complete the HEARTS membership process. Begin at HEARTS web page: <http://www.heartsforjesuschrist.org/> On the left under *Helpful Links*, select *Information Request*. Fill out this form and submit. Someone from HEARTS will contact you.
- There will be a \$50 non-refundable deposit for team members. It can only be refunded if the single sport of interest to a sport-only family does not go forward due to inadequate sign-ups to form a team.
- Once you have notified us, look for e-mails and other announcements that will get you ready for the season.
- There will be forms to complete, one of which requires a current physical. Your child will not be eligible to participate until all the forms have been received.