

2019 Madison Memorial Girls Cross Country - Frequently Asked Questions:

Where can I find out more about Madison Memorial Cross Country?

We have a team website: www.jmmgirlscc.weebly.com. **Get to know this site.** It is where all meet information will be posted and where you can find answers to ANYTHING CROSS COUNTRY related. Also, feel free to join our Facebook page ([JMM Girls Cross Country 2019](https://www.facebook.com/groups/198249726868902/)). <https://www.facebook.com/groups/198249726868902/>

What is cross country?

Cross country is the sport of distance running. Cross country races are run over varying terrain, usually parks or golf courses. Beginning in 2014, all girls races are 5,000 meters (about 3.11 miles). A typical time to finish this distance for high school girls will be between 18-32 minutes.

Most events feature both varsity and junior varsity races. Usually the top 7 runners from each school will race in the varsity race and everyone else will compete in the junior varsity race. A few meets throughout the year are scored by grade level.

One of the great things about this sport is that everyone gets to participate in most of the races. As long as one follows all of the team rules, there are no cuts! Cross country combines the best features of team and individual sports. Cross country is a team sport, but every runner has her own individual goals. Times are less important in cross country than in track because every course is different. Everyone can and should be proud of a solid effort regardless of their statistical result.

I heard all you do in Cross Country is run. Is that true?

While it is true that much of our sport depends on running, we usually spend about 30-60 minutes per practice actually running. The rest of the time is spent on things such as: core muscle strengthening, team talks, stretching, weights, stations, games, team building activities, and of course socializing. We will work plenty hard and a lot is expected of each athlete, but we don't forget to have fun!

How many members are on the team?

A LOT! This answer changes every year depending on graduating seniors and incoming freshman numbers. In 2013, our team had 106 student-athletes, our **LARGEST TEAM EVER**, and the **LARGEST GIRLS TEAM IN THE STATE!** In 2014 through the 2018 season, we had 92, 98, 99, 91 and 78 team members respectively.

How long are the practices and what are they like?

Practices begin Monday, August 19th at 8 a.m. The first week we practice at 8 a.m. Monday through Friday and they'll last until 10:15 a.m. Beginning August 26th and continuing through the remainder of the season, practices are generally from 4-6 p.m. A typical day would look something like this.

- 4 pm warm-up run, dynamic warmup, stretch, announcements
- 4:25-5:25 workout (3-8 mile run in groups)
- 5:25-5:45 post workout core routine, water, recover, strides, push-ups, team talk
- 5:45-6:00 Ice bath, stretch, socialize

Who are the coaches?

The Head Coach is Paul Chellevoid and this will be his 12th season at Madison Memorial. Prior to coming over to Memorial, Paul coached three seasons at Madison East High School and one season at Omro High School. The assistant coaches are Katie Kornaus, and Brian Genskow, both in their fourth season of coaching cross country at JMM. Learn more about the coaches under the "Miscellaneous Info" tab on the website.

Should I be training in the summer to prepare for the season?

Regardless of what your goals are for the season, you need to be running at least a 3-4 times per week prior to the first day of the season. It is too difficult on the body to just step into a practice and not expect to get injured. The legs, shins and hips are the areas that seem to need the summer training the most in order to handle the daily grind of the season. A recommended training plan for each athlete will be available starting June 18th.

What can I do to prepare myself in the summer?

Run! Actually, run, eat well, get enough sleep, increase flexibility, cross-train, stretch, ice etc... Madison Memorial has a running group called Memorial Mileage Club that meets Monday – Friday mornings at the High School near the entrance of the field house at 8:00 a.m. From here, groups of runners both girls and boys tackle different length runs in groups of similar running abilities and paces. Typically we have 10-30 athletes on the girls team that attend every day. I'd love to see those numbers increase to 40-50 by the end of July! If that group and time don't fit in with your schedule, don't use it as an excuse not to run. You still need to arrange a time of day that works for you. Feel free to organize mini run groups at different locations and times based on your summer schedules.

What are races like?

Most of the meets you run will have one junior varsity race and one varsity race. Each school enters up to seven runners in the varsity race and unlimited runners in the junior varsity race. Some races will have as few as 35 runners and others may have 500+ runners! All of the race distances this season will be 5 kilometers (about 3.11 miles). Races have mass starts with teams lining up together 3-5 abreast and several runners deep, squeezed into designated numbered "boxes" or "lanes" marked on the grass with chalk or paint at even intervals along a single starting line. The race begins with a starting gun. The race course is marked by flags and often a white line. You will finish and funnel into the finish chute where your time and place are recorded.

Running fast for a long time is hard. It can cause significant discomfort and at times hurts, but one learns that it is a temporary pain. And a sense of euphoria and self-satisfaction is achieved by those who push themselves to new levels of personal achievement -- beyond the limits they thought they had. Along with general fitness, this is one of the rewards of cross country.

Racing at all levels requires mental strength and focus. Running with teammates during a race, just as in practice, can give runners much-needed mental support and confidence. The most successful cross country teams tend to run in one or two packs where the top runners hold back slightly, at least during the first portion of a race, to bring their teammates along. Different strategies are employed for different combinations of runners and for different races depending on the competition and team goals. It is a balancing act guided by the coaches.

How are races scored?

Not many sport competitions are won by scoring the least number of points, but cross country is one of them. Cross country meets are won by the best TEAM. The sum of the placement of the top five runners on each team accounts for the

team score. A perfect score is 15 ($1+2+3+4+5=15$). The 6th and 7th runners, while not part of their team's score count against other team scores if they finish ahead of one of the other team's top-5 runners. If two teams have the same total score from their top-5, the team with the best placed #6 runner wins. It doesn't matter how good your #1 runner is if your team has a much slower #4 or #5. For team results every place matters, and the #6 or #7 runner can also be the difference. One more thing: runners from incomplete teams (teams with fewer than 5 finishers) are not counted in the team scoring.

When do I get to race?

You begin racing when you can prove to the coaches that you can run for 30 minutes straight without walking and feel confident that you can comfortably handle the race distance and enjoy the race. We have our first meet after 11 days of practice and a runner will need to have recorded at least seven successful practices before their first competition. Usually this is enough time so that runners are ready to race. Throughout the season we typically have one race each week, but on a couple of occasions, we have two.

How long is the season?

The cross country season is only 9-11 weeks long. Cross country practice begins before the start of the school year on August 19th and ends with the WIAA State Cross Country Championships on November 2nd. The last two weeks are varsity only!

What will I get out of high school cross country?

This all depends on you! What I can promise is you will get tired and sweaty. You probably will also get sore muscles and blisters. You will also take away lifelong memories, make a ton of friends, push yourself to levels you didn't think were possible, self-confidence, physical fitness, self-discipline, and fun times.

We promote running for health and fitness and believe runners of all abilities have a place on this team. We'll coach you to the level you want to achieve at, whether that be, competing to become an individual state champion, or just running to get in shape for a winter or spring sport. We have athletes on the team who fall into these categories and many who fall somewhere in between.

But I have never run before?

Great! We are excited that you are willing to try something new. This just might end up being your sport? Since we allow you to progress at your own speed, your previous experience or lack of experience is not important. What is important is your desire to become a runner and be part of a truly unique sport!

What running gear do I need?

The bare essentials: shoes, socks, shorts, t-shirts, sports bras, and watch, cold and wet weather gear, long sleeve t-shirt, hat, gloves, sweatshirt, running pants, gym bag, and water bottle.

A good pair of shoes (or two) is essential - the most important thing a runner needs. It is generally best to go to a store that specializes in running to make sure you get the correct pair of shoes for you. Having the right pair of running shoes is also key to injury prevention. They do not have to be the most expensive; they just have to fit and feel right. There is no best brand, but often there is a brand that is best for your feet. A good pair of shoes will last about 400 miles. We also encourage you to have two pairs of running shoes to train in,

Do I need to purchase racing spikes?

Spikes are encouraged. Often younger runners begin by wearing the same shoes for running a race as they do for practice. However, at some point in your running career you will want to switch to spikes for races. Spikes are lightweight running shoes with metal spikes that protrude from the sole. These shoes do not provide the foot or leg with much support. Therefore, they are only used for racing, not every day running during practice.

What do spectators do during a cross country meet?

Cheer loudly and be amazed at the amount of JMM girls and boys runners! Observe in amazement that the coaching staff know the names of each runner! 😊 Racing is difficult and the support of fans is always helpful. A race course is usually set up in one or more loops. Spectators are allowed to roam about the course, cheering for you and your teammates. A spectator may choose to watch from one viewing location or move from point to point to follow runners on their team. Spectators have free reign to move about the course as they wish with two exceptions. Spectators may not run alongside an athlete or enter a restricted area (usually golf greens and tee boxes, the starting line, and inside the finish chute are the only restricted areas).