

NORTH GWINNETT XC: TEAM INFORMATION

* Athlete & Parent Checklist *	Complete
Complete Rank One – Instructions: https://www.northtfxc.com/xc-info <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All forms completed (must be renewed every school year) 	
Athlete Sign Up & Contact Info <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete info via signup QR code shown at Parent & Athlete meetings or by filling out the info here - https://forms.gle/3ugACXoh3UrdNriAA 	
Team Dues (Please pay by June 30th) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Athletes: \$315 (includes uniform) Returning Athletes (XC or Track): \$250 (does not include uniform) Additional Siblings: \$180 (with uniform); \$125 (no uniform) Athletes who need to order additional or replacement uniform items should contact Coach Carter directly Payment made via Venmo or Check given to Coach Carter (please include athlete’s name in notes of check or Venmo/Cash App) Venmo Code can be found here - https://www.northtfxc.com/xc-booster (please turn off Venmo security feature)	
Team Fundraiser (Double Good Popcorn) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details coming in August We ask all athletes to sell at least 10 bags 	

COMMUNICATION & COACHING STAFF

- Information will be primarily distributed at practice and via the team e-mail list
- Additional information & communication resources:
 - Team website – www.northtfxc.com
 - Remind - text “@nghscross” or “@nghscross2” to 81010
 - Twitter, Threads, & Instagram: @northtfxc
 - Facebook: North Gwinnet Cross Country/Track and Field
- Coaches’ e-mail addresses:
 - Coach Carter (Head Coach) - Chris.Carter@gcpsk12.org
 - Coach Storm – Lara.C.Knapp.Storm@gcpsk12.org
 - Coach Russell – Kim.Russell@gcpsk12.org
 - Coach Oakley – oaklega@gmail.com
 - Coach Morton (Strength & Conditioning) – amystraining@yahoo.com
 - Coach Nawyn (Middle School Coach) – Eric.Nawyn@gcpsk12.org

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS: (See Athlete & Parent Checklist above)

- Complete all sections of RankOne
 - Physicals must be on the approved form and are valid for 12 months from the date of exam.
- Paid Team Dues & Fundraiser
- Meet all state, county, and school eligibility requirements
- Follow all Team Policies

A GUIDE TO CROSS COUNTRY

What is Cross Country?

- A **team** sport
- Athletes usually race across open terrain, trails, hills & fields.
- Course difficulty differs for each race. Races are usually **5 kilometers** (3.1 miles).

Scoring (How do we win?)

- The places of the first five athletes for each team are added together to determine the team score. In the event of a tie, the team with a higher-finishing 6th place runner is the winner.
- **Team depth and a “tight pack” of 5 runners is important.** For example, a finish of 1, 3, 4, 6 and 83 (a score of 97) will lose to a team finishing 16, 17, 19, 21, 23 (a score of 96).

Cross Country Meets

- Meets may last a few hours or all day, depending on the organization and number of teams competing
- Races are often divided into Varsity & JV (and sometimes further divided into Championship, Open, etc.):
 - Varsity – the fastest 7-10 runners on a team
 - Championship JV – the next fastest 7-10 runners on a team
 - Open JV – unlimited (all JV runners on a team not competing in another division)

IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING DURING THE SUMMER

- Athletes who work hard in the summer and who run year-round are **far less likely to experience an injury** that causes them to miss significant training time during XC and are **far more likely to PR.**

STAYING HEALTHY

- **Follow the plan!** Do not increase your weekly mileage too fast. Do not try to “make up for” missed runs. This dramatically increases injury risk.
 - **2023** – Athletes who followed the Summer & Fall training plans were 71 seconds faster than 2022; Athletes who didn’t were 31 seconds slower
 - **2023** – Athletes who followed the Summer & Fall training plans – 4 injuries; Athletes who didn’t – 23 injuries
- A few keys to a healthy season: **hydration, nutritious foods, vitamins, and sleep.**
- **SOFT SURFACES!** Running on soft surfaces greatly reduces injury risk. Get together with friends on weekends and non-practice days and run trails!
- **Practice is not over when you finish your run.** You must stretch after every run & eat within 30 minutes!
- Wear proper running shoes. **Old shoes or non-running shoes lead directly to injury.** See “SHOES” section below for more info.

SLEEP

	NORTH GWINNETT TRACK & FIELD/XC What time should I go to sleep?					
	WAKE UP TIME:					
	5:30 a.m.	6:00 a.m.	6:30 a.m.	7:00 a.m.	7:30 a.m.	8:00 a.m.
	BEDTIME:					
Awful	after 10:30 p.m.	after 11:00 p.m.	after 11:30 p.m.	after 12:00 a.m.	after 12:30 a.m.	after 1:00 a.m.
Bad	10:00 p.m.	10:30 p.m.	11:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.	12:00 a.m.	after 12:00 a.m.
Minimal	9:30 p.m.	10:00 p.m.	10:30 p.m.	11:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.	12:00 a.m.
Good	9:00 p.m.	9:30 p.m.	10:00 p.m.	10:30 p.m.	11:00 p.m.	11:30 p.m.
Champion	8:30 p.m.	9:00 p.m.	9:30 p.m.	10:00 p.m.	10:30 p.m.	11:00 p.m.

- Establish a good “sleep routine”.
 - All devices off 60-90 minutes prior to bedtime.
 - Training makes demands on your body. You require sleep to recover & get stronger.
 - During sleep, your body secretes testosterone & HGH.
 - The stuff unethical pros take as steroids: Your body makes them naturally during sleep!
 - These are critical to repairing your muscles (injury prevention & getting stronger/faster)
 - Find another 20, 30, 45, 60 minutes of sleep in a hectic schedule.
 - Naps: 20 minutes or 90. No in between and no more than 90 minutes (disrupts your night sleep schedule)
-

NUTRITION

- Distance running is not easy, and a good diet is of the utmost importance to stay healthy and perform to your full potential!
- Iron & Ferritin tests are recommended.
- **Nutrition for “normal” people and nutrition for athletes are not the same.**
- Vitamin supplements are a good way to ensure that you are getting enough important nutrients. Doctors are the best source for information on how much of each supplement to take. However, liquid iron supplements & a multi-vitamin are generally safe & good for athletes.
- **30-minute rule** – Within 30 minutes of completing a run, your body is especially efficient at taking in and using nutrients, strengthening your muscles. Bring nutrition to practice with you.

INJURIES & ILLNESSES

- Athletes are not expected to train or race through injury or illness. Please discuss all injuries & illnesses with the coaching staff so that the best course of action can be determined to ensure health & success.

RUNNING SAFETY

- Athletes must run the routes given by coaches at practice.
- Cars ALWAYS have the right-of-way.
- No headphones/earbuds at practice.
- Share the sidewalk (be courteous to others).

REQUIRED GEAR:

- Team Uniform
- Good pair of running shoes (see next page)
- Wristwatch (with stopwatch/chrono function)
- Spikes (optional – contact Coach Carter for recommendations)

SHOES

- 300-350 miles on a pair of running shoes before needing to be replaced
 - Upperclassmen Varsity Boys: typically need a new pair of shoes every 6-8 weeks
 - Upperclassmen Varsity Girls: typically need a new pair of shoes every 8-10 weeks
 - JV athletes and Newcomers: every 3-6 months (at least a new pair every season)
- Logging your running miles helps track shoe mileage (Strava)
- Racing Spikes: Are optional but recommended. See Coach Carter for recommendations

SUMMER GATLINBURG TEAM CAMP

Athletes will be invited to team camp in Gatlinburg based on performance at a summer time trial on June 24th. A make-up time trial will be held the week prior. We can invite the top 10-14 overall finishers plus the top 2-3 freshman. Athletes will be invited based on time trial performance and coaching staff's determination of ability to handle the training load. The camp will be held from July 9th through July 13th. Preliminary camp information will be posted on the team website in mid-to-late June. Detailed camp information will be posted after the time trial.

TEAM POLICIES

CORE TEAM VALUES

- **Integrity**
 - What you do when no one else is watching
 - We must be whole in our pursuit of excellence.
- **Sacrifice**
 - Giving up something good for something better
- **Practice = Performance**
 - The Process: effort, focus, attendance, sleep, nutrition, post-run stretching, strengthening, off-season training
 - Take care of the process at practice, and race results will take care of themselves.
- **Consistency**
 - The consistent pursuit of excellence brings success: day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year.
- **Team**
 - You are an important part of the team.
 - The team always comes first.

COACHES' DISCRETION

Situations may arise that require altering or that are not covered by team policies. Coaches have the authority & discretion to alter team policies when appropriate. Alterations will be rare and may apply to an individual athlete or the entire team at the discretion of the coaching staff.

Athletes with regular known practice or meet conflicts should talk to Coach Carter prior to joining the team.

RANKINGS

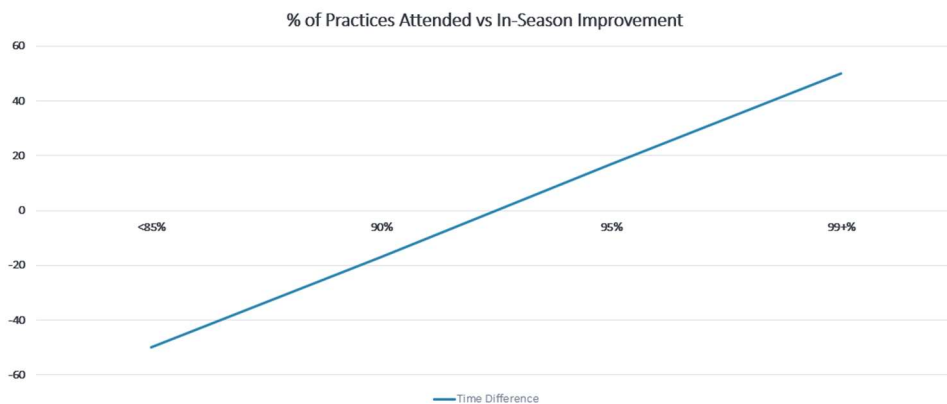
- We will use a ranking system of cumulative times to determine which athletes compete in Varsity & JV races, and in select meets. The rankings will begin with the August Time Trial. **Rankings reward consistent performance and hard work, the cornerstones of a successful program.**
- Athletes in the top 12 of the Rankings are eligible for Varsity competition.

UNIFORMS

- In competition, all athletes must wear the school-issued and approved uniform. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by Coach Carter.

PRACTICE

- **We will practice Monday through Friday from 2:30-4:30.** In the event of unsafe weather conditions, we will practice indoors, but we will not cancel practice.
- **Athletes who attend practice improve more than athletes who do not.**



- **Practice Attendance Policy**
 - If an athlete is going to miss practice, they or their parent must notify Coach Carter prior the end of the school day. Athletes are expected to make every effort to take care of schoolwork, schedule study sessions & obtain club meeting information at times that do not conflict with practice.
 - Athletes who fall below 90% attendance are ineligible for meets until returning to above 90%.
 - Athletes who fall below 80% attendance may be dismissed from the team.
 - Athletes who miss multiple or critical practices the week of a meet may be held out of that meet.
- **Unexcused practice absences** (absent with no communication prior to practice):
 - 1st offense: 2-minute time penalty in Rankings and athlete may be ineligible for entry-limited races (Varsity, Championship JV, etc.) and/or overnight trips.
 - 2nd offense: Dismissal from team
- **Arriving Late & Leaving Early**
 - Athletes must arrive at practice by 2:30 and stay through the end of practice. If athletes have an appointment, study session, etc. that would cause them to arrive late or leave early, they must discuss that with Coach Carter prior to practice.

MEETS

- Athletes are expected to be available to compete in all meets on the schedule.
- **To run in a meet, an athlete must meet the following criteria:**
 - Be able to safely run 4 consecutive miles without walking.
 - Not have an injury that would put the runner at risk.
 - Follow all applicable team policies.
- **Meet absences** - Runners may miss 1 meet with prior permission from Coach Carter with no penalty for the following reasons: – SAT/ACT, college visit (for themselves - not visiting a family member who is in college). These are considered excused absences. All other reasons for missed meets may be considered unexcused absences unless discussed with Coach Carter
 - 1st meet absence: Athletes will be given a time corresponding to their ranking (25th ranked runner will receive 25th fastest North Gwinnett time from the meet). An athlete missing a meet can not benefit in the Rankings.
 - 2nd meet absence: potential dismissal from team (unless both absences are for SAT/ACT, college, etc.)
 - **Athletes with known conflicts with scheduled meets should talk to Coach Carter before joining the team.**
- **Unexcused meet absences**
 - Unexcused meet absences included missed meets due to violation of practice attendance policy, out-of-town/vacations, skipping a meet, other sports, clubs, etc. that have not been specifically approved by Coach Carter in advance.
 - 1st unexcused meet absence: Potential dismissal from team

BUDGET (projected)

Expenses:

Athlete Awards Ceremony	\$5,000
Family Day	\$1,000
Uniforms	\$1,500
Team Shirts	\$4,000
Asst. Coach Stipends	\$4,500
Equipment (spikes, team tents, etc.)	\$2,000
Travel & Certification (Coaches)	\$2,000
Meets	\$6,500
Booster Club Operations	\$400
TOTAL	\$26,900

Income:

Team Dues	\$23,600
Fundraiser	\$3,000
Misc.	\$500
TOTAL	\$27,100

AWARDS & LETTERING STANDARDS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

AWARDS & LETTERING

- **Perfect Attendance Award:** Athletes with no absences from practices or meets
- **Participation Certificate:** Complete the season in good standing.
- **Scholar-Athlete:** Sophomore, Junior, & Senior Varsity Letterwinners with a cumulative GPA of 90 or higher
- **Reward T-Shirts**
 - **Freshman Elite/Sophomore Select:** The top 5 9th & 10th graders in the Rankings
 - **Top 20:** Top 20 in the Rankings
 - *Top 20, Freshman Elite, & Sophomore Select shirts will be awarded following the first competition after the Time Trial
 - **Summer:** Meet the “Summer Bonus” mileage standards listed below.
- **Lettering Standards:**
 - Run the following race times (3.1 miles/5K):
 - Girls: 9th - 22:45; 10th - 22:30; 11th - 22:15; 12th - 22:00
 - Boys: 9th - 19:45; 10th - 19:30; 11th - 19:15; 12th - 19:00
 - Meet one of the following criteria:
 - Finish in the Top 15 in the Final Team Rankings
 - Must compete in all races in which athlete is eligible
 - Seniors who have competed in XC for at least 3 years, finishing each season in good standing.
 - Summer Bonus: Run the summer mileage below and you can add 1 minute to the lettering times above to earn a letter (**includes all miles logged from June 10th to Aug 18th: 10 weeks**). **All mileage must be logged on Strava.**
 - 9th & Newcomers – Girls: 200 miles; Boys: 250 miles
 - Returning 10th – Girls: 250 miles; Boys: 300 miles
 - Returning 11th – Girls: 300 miles; Boys: 400 miles
 - Returning 12th – Girls: 350 miles; Boys: 450 miles
- **Lettering with Recognition Standards:**
 - Compete on a Varsity County Champion Team
 - Compete on a State Podium (top 4) Team
 - Finish in the top 25 at Varsity County (or run an equivalent time in the JV County race).
 - Finish in the top 25 at Varsity Sectionals
 - Finish in the top 50 at the State Championship Meet
 - Run the following race times (3.1 miles/5k):
 - Girls: 9th - 21:30; 10th - 21:15; 11th - 21:00; 12th - 20:45
 - Boys: 9th - 18:30; 10th - 18:15; 11th - 18:00; 12th - 17:45

NORTH GWINNETT BULLDOGS

2024 Cross Country Schedule

Date	Meet	Location	Who
8/3	Team Time Trial (Parent-Athlete Meeting & Family Fun Day)	NGHS Track	Everyone
8/17	North Georgia Two-Mile Stage Races	East Jackson High School – Commerce, GA	JV
8/24	Pickens Preview	Roper Park – Jasper, GA	Varsity & Top JV
9/7	Carrollton OrthoWest (overnight); Milton XC Invitational	State Course – Carrollton, GA; Milton H.S. – Alpharetta, GA	Carrollton – Varsity & Top JV; Milton – JV
9/14	County Championship	Georgia International Horse Park – Conyers, GA	Everyone
9/21	Wingfoot Classic *LIKELY SATURDAY AFTERNOON/EVENING	Sam Smith Park – Cartersville, GA	Everyone
10/8	JV vs Brookwood	Alexander Park – Lawrenceville, GA	JV
10/19	Coach Wood Invitational	McIntosh Nature Preserve – Whitesburg, GA	Everyone
10/26	Last Chance Invitational	Jackson County Airport – Jefferson, GA	Everyone not in Top 7
11/2	Sectional Qualifier (overnight)	Wilcox County H.S. – Rochelle, GA	Top 7 & Alternates
11/5	NGHS XC Awards Ceremony	NGHS Theater	All Athletes & Families
11/9	State Championship (overnight)	State Meet Course – Carrollton, GA	Top 7 & Alternates
12/5	All-County Banquet	Meadowcreek High School – Norcross, GA	All-County Athletes & Families