

Welcome to Saint Ignatius Boys Cross Country!



The first thing you need to know if you want to join the team at the end of this summer: Start running!

Yes, you will need running shoes. Go to a specialty running store—Fleet Feet in the city, Running Excels in Beverly, Dick Pond or Run Chicago in the suburbs, for example—and tell them that you are a beginning high school cross country runner at Ignatius. You will likely get a discount—but they will also help you choose a good shoe. You should expect to spend between \$60 and \$100.

As a freshman, you have a chance to make tremendous improvement in your first cross-country season. The earlier you get started, the more improvement you can make. Our team goal is to reclaim the title of Chicago Catholic League Varsity champions, and we have regularly been among the top teams in the Catholic League at the freshman and sophomore levels, so you have a challenge ahead!

Summer is an important training time for all cross country runners. Success as a distance runner requires basic talent and ability. But it also requires serious training. Few of us have so much talent that we can skip the training. In fact, in my experience, often the people who train harder—especially in the summer—can beat the people with more talent.

It is important to build up slowly when you begin to run—but that's another reason you should start now. When practice begins on Wednesday, August 10, we will have two groups. The boys who ran in the summer will start training aggressively; the boys who did not will have to start slowly.

We've provided a schedule you might follow below. Begin at week one and build up from there. Start with a two or three mile run—or just run ten or fifteen minutes in one direction, then return. Pace doesn't matter—in fact, start slowly. You will naturally get faster as your conditioning improves.

Figuring miles can be hard—even if you run on the lake front, where the markers aren't always in the right place. You can also run based on time: Run 14 minutes in one direction, then retrace your steps. Figure that for a three-mile run when you get started. A small piece of advice: Develop a routine, run at the same time every day, and just make it a part of your life. In the heat of the summer, mornings and evenings are the best time to run.

Summer can also be a time to try some road races. We also recommend the free meets on Thursday nights at 6:00 PM in the summer at the University of Chicago (see www.UCTC.org). Train for a couple weeks and then go ahead and race! It is a great way to show yourself that you are getting better—and to push yourself a little.

That's your summer program—simplified.

We have a camp training at Saint Ignatius on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 7:00 AM until the end of July, and our boys gather regularly to run together on other days.

If you contact us by email or phone, we will happily answer any other questions. Otherwise, see you on Wednesday, August 9, at 8 AM on the Saint Ignatius track for the first day of practice! If you cannot make it to practice the first day, you can still join the team. But you should get to practice as soon as you can!

Also, please contact us if you have questions: Coach Ed Ernst ed.ernst@ignatius.org 773-407-5220

Plan 1: Get in shape and be really ready for cross country

	M	T	W	TH	F	S	S	
Week 1	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	12
Week 2	3	2	3	2	3	2	0	15
Week 3	3	3	3	3	3	3	0	18
Week 4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	21
Week 5	4	4	4	4	4	4	0	24
Week 6	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	28
Week 7	5	5	5	5	5	5	0	30
Week 8	5	5	5	5	5	5	8	38
Week 9	5	5	5	5	5	8	0	33
Week 10	5	5	5	5	5	5	8	38
Week 11	5	5	8	5	5	5	8	41

- This is an ambitious program of improvement. If you think your own development is slower than this, just repeat each step or each week until you feel comfortable running more.
- If something hurts, pay attention. If it hurts a lot, take a day or two off. If it hurts a little bit three days in a row, take a day off.
- Take one day off every two weeks.
- Substitute 15 miles/60 minutes of hard riding on a bicycle for a 5 mile run.

Practice begins Wednesday, August 9!

We also have a 7:00 AM team summer camp on M, T, W, TH. For information about our summer camp, contact Assistant Coach Nate McPherson, nathan.mcpherson@ignatius.org.

Please call or email Coach Ernst (773-407-5220, ed.ernst@ignatius.org) for any other questions.