

Cross Country and Road Frequently Asked Questions

What is Cross Country?

Cross Country running is a sport in which teams and individuals run a race on open-air courses over natural terrain such as dirt or grass. It simply means running on grass / fields, and often (hopefully) some mud – just to make it a bit more fun! The cross country season runs from 1st April to 30th September each year.

What is Road Running?

Road Running is a sport of running on a measured course over an established road or hard surface (such as footpaths). There are many marshalls present during a road race to ensure the safety of all athletes. The road running part of the season usually runs from mid-August to October each year.

What footwear is suitable for cross country and road?

For cross country children can run in shoes or bare feet. Running ‘spikes’ may be worn for cross country races for U12 and above. Spikes may be 6mm or longer, but please note only 6mm are allowed on the track (with the exception of some events such as high jump and pole vault). Athletes may run barefoot but be aware they will be running next to athletes wearing running spikes and on a variety of surfaces. Shoes are recommended for all road races due to the uncertainty of the terrain and rough surfaces.

What happens if it rains?

The cross country and road events will continue come rain or shine! Remember to bring a complete change of clothes (including underwear) and a towel. Gumboots and umbrellas are recommended for spectators.

Where do runs usually happen?

Competitive races are held at various locations across Auckland and New Zealand (both North and South Islands). Refer to the Calendar of Events for more details.

Some clubs offer club runs during the week or over weekends. Reach out to your local club for more information about what they have to offer.

Can I run with my child?

Parents are allowed to run with their children during the Community Fun Runs.

In fairness to all runners for competitive events children must run independently, and no one can ‘pace’ i.e. run alongside at any point in the event. Please ensure all family members especially older siblings are aware of this.

Do you have to be competitive to compete in competitive events?

No, these races cater for all levels of fitness and ability, and most runners improve throughout the season. The more races you do, the better you will get at it.

What happens if I do not turn up to an event?

The entrance fees are generally non-refundable. You will obviously also not score any points for that particular event.

For the relays, we encourage all entrants to participate in the event if they have signed up for it, as non-attendance will affect the rest of the team.

My child has special needs – can they run?

Everyone is welcome to run – please speak to your club’s committee or contact us directly so that we can plan how to support and include your child.

What is the Senior Winter League?

The Auckland Senior Winter League consists of 10 races at different venues across the Auckland Region. These events are hosted by different clubs affiliated to Athletics Auckland.

Anyone over in the Under 18 and up age categories can enter these races.

Although entries from non-club registered members will be accepted, only registered club members affiliated to Athletics Auckland will be eligible to gain points throughout the League series. There are four age categories – each for both male and female – U18/U20, Seniors (20 – 34), Junior Masters (35 - 50); and Senior Masters (50+).

Points are allocated for each event. For the U18/U20 runners the Top 2 of each category will contribute to the overall team points. For all the other categories the Top 4 runners will contribute to the team points.

All runners are encouraged to compete in these races – regardless of your running ability. Each runner participating makes a difference to the results on the day.

These events are marked on the calendar as “Senior Winter League” races.

What is the Grand Prix?

The Grand Prix series is hosted by Athletics Auckland and held at various locations across Auckland. The series consists out of 5 events (4 x cross country and 1 x road race). One of the races include the Cross Country Individual and Teams Championship, and the last race in the series includes the Road Championship.

The Grand Prix Series is open to all Junior runners in the U8 to U16 age categories. Points are collected throughout the season based on the athlete’s performance per race.

At the end of the season the athletes with the highest accumulative points scored throughout the season are crowned the Grand Prix Champions.

To be eligible for the final championship points runners must have competed in four of the five races, and this must include either one of the Championships (Cross Country or Road). If all five events were completed, the one where the lowest points were scored will be dropped off. However, if after the last race points are equal for any of the first three placegetters, a countback system will be implemented for the number of wins, seconds and thirds (in counting order). The top 10 runners in each age category will receive a certificate during the end of year prizegiving.

These events are marked on the calendar as “Junior Grand Prix” races.

We will keep you informed of upcoming races, but for more information visit the Athletics Auckland website – www.athleticsauckland.co.nz

What is the Junior Winter Relay League?

The Junior Winter Relay League consists of six races and are held across the season at different venues. Clubs compete for the Hansen Shield and Turnco Shield. Points are allocated at each event, and the overall winner is the club with the highest points at the end of the season. A leaderboard is run throughout the season, and it is always very exciting for the juniors to find out if their club has won an event.

These events are marked on the calendar as “Junior Winter League” races. Entries for these races are usually done through the clubs, so please reach out to your club for more information.

If a club does not have enough runners to form full teams, they can form a combined team with another club, noting that this cannot be the fastest runner from clubs to form “super” or “elite” teams. Where combined club teams are formed the points gained will be split across the clubs.

What distances are run?

Generally, the distances run are as follows – however, these may change from time to time depending on the event. Please make sure you read the event information before each race.

JUNIORS: Generally, Juniors will run between 2km to 4km
Ages, Grades and Distances based on age as at 31st December in year of competition
SENIORS: As a guideline, Seniors can generally run between 4km to 10km

When does registration for the season open, and where should I register?

Registrations for the winter season opens on 1st April for Juniors. Juniors have the option to register only for the winter Cross Country and Road season, or for 12 months, which will include the summer Track & Field season (1st April to 31st March).

Seniors can register at any time of the year, and membership will be for a full year, i.e if you join on 1st January your membership will be until 31st December and renewable on 1st January.

You can register through any of the affiliated Athletics Auckland clubs.

How do I find a Club?

The list of affiliated clubs can be found by clicking on this link <https://athleticsauckland.co.nz/get-involved/clubs/>

Should I have an official complaint or suggestion, who do I address it to?

Please contact the Athletics Auckland office at office@athleticsauckland.co.nz