

COLUMBIA TRACK CLUB COLT CROSS COUNTRY TEAM

Once again this year the Columbia Track Club (C.T.C.) is sponsoring a Cross Country Team to compete in the P.A.L.S. Cross Country meets this year.

This will be the 8th year we are participating in this opportunity to field a grade school Cross Country Team. For a little historical background on the team, let me relate the CTC Colt record thus far. In the past the Colts have been a dominant power within the P.A.L.S. program, with individual champions and team championships being the norm as compared to the competition. Last year the Colts won every PALS meet and the Championship, with both teams qualifying for nationals. Having said this, it is most important to note that the competition is extremely good, we have been blessed, worked hard, and been better. Some of the top Cross Country runners in this city and in surrounding areas have learned the ropes with the Colts team and are now top-flight varsity runners at their respective schools. Last year at the high school Cross Country State Championships there were many past CTC Colt Cross Country runners, with a past Colt winning All State recognition. This is a unique opportunity to gain experience that most Cross Country runners don't get until they are at least sophomores in high school.

Due to MSHSAA rules barring competition against other non-MSHSAA teams, we could not organize the team as a CCS or public school team. Yet, we can organize as at CTC team under Head Coach Dick Hessler (past president of the CTC Track Club). This situation also does give us the great opportunity to include ALL Columbia students in the team. This, based on past experience, is an excellent opportunity to not only to meet and befriend some excellent runner/individuals, but also form the bonds that will serve you well in your future TEAM running. These are the bonds that will lead to your future success in running with a team in high school competition. Yet, I do want all to remember that the oldest runners in this competition are 8th graders, and the difference in ability between an 8th grade runner with distance experience and that of younger runner is quite great. If you, as a younger runner want to travel the route of running, this is a unique opportunity to gain invaluable experience in running and training. We expect runners from the 6th through 8th grade to be the core of the competitive team, but HOPE that younger runners will also participate and learn. Yet do not forget, for high school runners, once you have finished your high school season you can run at the national qualifying meet and at the national meet under the CTC banner, both events will be held at the famous Rim Rock Course in Lawrence, KS.

While the younger runners (10 years old or younger) may not want (but certainly are able) to actually compete at the events, they will gain experience and knowledge in this most demanding of sports. This early experience at their present age will serve them quite well in the years to come when they do want to, and can actively compete against the 7-8th graders. We hope that they will attend

the practices and learn, their time to compete will come, and at that time they will be far better than their competition!

You have been extended this invitation to join the team based upon past interest and dedication exhibited in track and field; either with the CCS Tiger Track Team, the summer fun run program, or with the CTC Colt Track Team or Cross Country Team. While talent is certainly important, dedication to training and interest in cross country/track & field is paramount. Those individuals who have exhibited these characteristics were invited to join. This is a select group, but the invitation is open also to interested, and dedicated individuals!

WHAT DOES CROSS COUNTRY ENTAIL?

- **PRACTICE & TRAINING:** There will be an afternoon Sunday practice at 4:00 p.m. each week as a team. In addition, there will be a team practice each Wednesday evening at 5:30 p.m., both will be held at Walton Track Stadium

SOCCER- If a soccer game is scheduled during a cross country practice then there is an excuse to miss a practice. If a soccer practice is scheduled during a cross country practice or **MEET** then cross country **MUST** take precedence, it is time to make a decision here and now – you run or you kick – **IT IS YOUR CHOICE** – make it now!

* During the week you will be expected to train on your own according to a schedule outlined by the team coaches. The outlined training is your own responsibility to complete. If this personal training is adhered to, then you will progress, do well, and improve with time. If this training is not done, you will be disappointed with your results/progress. Just like anything else – dedication and work are required to be successful.

- Team requirements:

You must be a member of the Columbia Track Club. Most of those invited to join are already members, but if you are not presently a member you must join. The Columbia Track Club will pick up any costs and entry fees related to participation in events. Dues are \$20 per year. If you are not a member, and want to join the team, please indicate your member status on the application page that follows.

- Events:

A grade school cross country run is 1.5 miles (high school distance is 3.1 miles). Unlike 5K runs, which usually are road races on paved surfaces, the cross country venue is over grass courses (parks and golf courses are very popular).

2008 PALS CROSS COUNTRY SCHEDULE

| WHEN | WHERE | RACE TIMES |
|-------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Saturday, September 13 | Linn RII Sports Complex | 9:00am |
| Wednesday, September 17 | Linn RII Sports Complex Hosted by St. George | Girls: 4:30pm Boys: 4:50pm |
| Tuesday, September 23 | Linn RII Sports Complex Hosted by Sacred Heart Rich Fountain | First Race: 4:30pm |
| Tuesday, September 30 | Binder Park, Jefferson City Hosted by St. Martins | First Race: 4:30pm |
| Wednesday, October 8 | Ashland Meet. Ashland Hosted by Ashland | First Race: 4:30pm |
| Thursday, October 16 | CHAMPIONSHIP MEET Columbia Tack Club Host at Stephens Lake Park (OUR HOME!) | First Race : 4:30pm |

If any other meets come up you will be notified (As soon as possible).

Travel to meets will be discussed at the first practice. Car-pooling is very likely, and travel should not be much of a problem.

If you want to join, please call Jim Keown at 446-4897.

Coaches: Dick Hessler, the CTC Adult Elite CC Team, & Jim Keown (paper coach).