

SSA GIRLS CROSS-COUNTRY LETTERING POLICY - 2015

REQUIREMENTS FOR AN ATHLETIC LETTER

To be eligible for consideration for the awarding of an athletic letter in Girls Cross Country, an athlete must first fulfill three requirements:

1. An "attendance" requirement. An athlete must fulfill the "attendance" requirement before the question of whether she has fulfilled the following two requirements will be considered.
2. A "meet participation" requirement.
3. A "performance" requirement.

The following definitions apply to this document:

"Participation" in a cross country meet is defined as actually running in a meet, as opposed simply to being present on the day of a meet.

"Completing" a meet is defined as crossing the finish line, being awarded a finish time and place, and not having been disqualified.

Attendance Requirement

To obtain Physical Education (P.E.) credit for the season, an athlete must attend (be present at) 75% of the practices and meets that comprise the athlete's season. (Varsity athletes, who will typically participate in the WPIAL Championship meet, usually have a longer season than Junior Varsity athletes. The exact number of days that comprise the Varsity and Junior Varsity seasons varies from year to year, and depends upon the school calendar and the meet schedule.) To achieve consideration for an athletic letter, an athlete must attend (be present at) 90% of the practices and meets that comprise the athlete's season.

Absences from practice are classified as either "excused" or "unexcused." Excused absences, which do not count against an athlete's attendance record when considering eligibility for lettering, include:

1. Absences for the observance of religious holidays.
2. Absences by Seniors for college visits.
3. Absences for school-sponsored events.
4. Absences due to illness.
5. Absences due to medical appointments for an illness, injury, or condition relating to, or resulting from, participation in cross country.

Unexcused absences will count against an athlete's attendance record when considering eligibility for lettering. Unexcused absences include absences for such things as non-school events, family trips or gatherings, doctor's appointments for illness, injury, or condition not related to participation in cross country (e.g. orthodontist or eye doctor appointments), music lessons or recitals, etc.

The coaches retain the right to consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether a special situation might be considered as an "excused" absence for the purposes of the lettering eligibility attendance requirement.

Injured athletes are expected to attend practice (thereby fulfilling the attendance requirement) and to perform rehabilitation or an alternate workout, as appropriate, during the practice time.

An athlete who needs to obtain extra academic help after school must seek out the coach during the day to say that she might be late to practice. Understand that the athlete should make every effort to come to practice on time, but that academics take priority in this situation. Late arrival to practice must be accompanied by a note from the teacher with whom the student was meeting. Chronically late arrival to practice will be viewed by the coaches in a negative light.

Meet Participation Requirement

For the 2015 season, all team members are expected to participate in 5 dual meets (Sewickley Academy, Riverview, Greensburg Central Catholic/West Shamokin, Indiana/Southmoreland, Freeport/Armstrong) and 4 Invitational meets (Red, White, and Blue; Altoona; Central Catholic Invitational; and the Freedom (Brush Creek) Invitational). For an athlete to earn the right to be considered for the awarding of an athletic letter, the athlete must participate in 8 of these 9 meets. This meet participation requirement may be adjusted during the course of the season, if the number of Invitational meets in which we are able to participate changes.

The coaches retain the right to consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether a special situation might be considered as an "excused" absence for the purposes of the lettering eligibility meet participation requirement.

In order to be allowed to participate in a meet, an athlete must attend the practice on the day before the meet. (For meets which occur on a Monday, this would mean that the athlete must attend the practice on the preceding Friday.) The following three exceptions to the requirement to attend practice on the day before a meet are permitted:

1. An excused absence for the observance of a religious holiday on the day before a meet will not prevent an athlete from participating in the meet.
2. An excused absence for a Senior doing a college visit on the day before a meet will not prevent that Senior from participating in the meet.
3. An excused absence for a school-sponsored event on the day before a meet will not prevent an athlete from participating in the meet.

The coaches retain the right to waive the requirement of having to attend practice on the day before a meet by considering special situations on a case-by-base basis. Athletes and their parents should keep both the meet participation requirement and the requirement to attend practice on the day before a meet in mind when scheduling medical appointments, family trips, etc.

Athletes who miss practice on the day before a meet, and who are therefore ineligible to participate in a meet, are expected to attend the meet (thereby fulfilling their attendance requirement) and to assist in whatever way possible, including cheering on your teammates.

Performance Requirement

There are two ways to fulfill the performance requirement, the achievement of either of which will earn the athlete the right to be considered for the awarding of an athletic letter:

1. An athlete who achieves a time of 23:30 or better for a 5000 meter (3.107 mile) course at any dual or invitational meet during the season will be considered to have met the performance requirement. In making this determination, times that are achieved on courses shorter or longer than 5000 meters (3.107 miles) will be adjusted by the ratio of the actual course length to 5000 meters (3.107 miles).
2. At a minimum, the runners in the top ten (10) "average positions" (defined below) within the team, considered across all meets during the season, will be considered to have met the performance requirement. The coaches retain the right to increase the number of runners under consideration to more than ten, should the coaches deem it appropriate to do so.

A runner's "average position" is calculated as follows: for each meet which a runner completes, the runner's relative finish position within the team is summed. The sum of the relative finish positions is divided by the total number of meets which the runner has completed, giving the runner's "average position." Double (or triple) dual meets or Invitational meets count as one meet, because an athlete's relative finish position within our team is unaffected by the number of teams we may run against on any given day. Invitational meets in which part of the team runs in a Varsity meet and part of the team runs in a Junior Varsity meet are combined by finish times and dealt with as if the entire team had run in one meet. Average positions which are artificially

low (e.g., as a result of completing only one (1) meet but achieving a low finish position for that meet) will not be considered.

AWARDING OF LETTERS

Athletes who have fulfilled the Attendance, Meet Participation, and Performance requirements become eligible for consideration by the coaches for the award of an Athletic Letter. In addition to having to fulfill these three requirements, the coaches also consider an athlete's attitude, her interactions with her teammates and the coaches, and her overall commitment to the sport. It is important that an athlete have a positive impact on team morale and that she co-operate with the coaches.

The coaches retain the right to award an athletic letter in special situations to an athlete who might not otherwise have lettered based on the above criteria. One example of this would be the award of a letter to an injured athlete who is deemed likely to have lettered had she not been injured.

OTHER NOTES AND INFORMATION

1. The team which competes in the WPIAL Championship meet will consist of the top eight runners from the Freedom Invitational Varsity meet (held one week prior to the WPIAL Championship meet). In close situations, priority is given to upper formers. The coaches retain the right to make changes to the WPIAL Championship team roster as a result of considering special situations.
2. The team which competes in the Freedom Invitational Varsity meet will consist of the top nine (9) runners, based upon their "average position" within the team, provided they have met the attendance requirements up to that time. Priority is given to upper formers, and the coaches retain the right to make changes to the Freedom Invitational team roster as a result of considering special situations.
3. Athletes who do not compete in the Freedom Invitational Varsity meet will compete in the Junior Varsity meet at the Freedom Invitational.

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY LETTERING POLICY SIGNOFF SHEET

We have read and understood the Shady Side Academy Girls Cross Country 2015 Lettering Policy, and promise to abide by its guidelines.

Athlete: _____(PRINT)

Athlete: _____ Date: _____

Parent: _____ Date: _____