



Ready, set, go! The girls got off to a great start at the St. X meet. Although the course was 100 meters short, many of the girls still reached their personal records even with the added time.

“CROSS COUNTRY IS AN AMAZING SPORT BECAUSE, WHILE YOU HAVE TO WORK EXTREMELEY HARD TO ACHIEVE YOUR OWN PERSONAL BEST, THERE IS A STRONG SENSE OF TEAM UNITY, AND YOUR TEAMMATES ARE ALWAYS THERE FOR YOU.”

-JENNIFER FRENCH, 11.

GIRLS READY TO RUN

Finishing strong

By: Rachel Hershberger

The girls cross country team was ready to run: all 47 of them. The sport grew larger every year, and this year was no exception. The freshman class was bigger than ever, making up over a quarter of the team. Maybe it was the easy going nature of the team that made it so easy for the many freshman to fit in.

“Getting involved in the cross country team made adjusting to high school much easier for me. It was awesome to have upperclassman friends; the girls are just so accepting,” said **Sydnee Hosler, 9**

Optional team practices began in early June, where the girls would meet every day for a refreshing morning workout. When the season started in mid August, they were definitely ready to run.

“Attending morning practices in the summer helped me improve my times for the school year, and also made it easier to wake up early on the first day of school!” said **Abigail Harris, 11**.

Along with a strong team bond, the girls also had a strong work ethic. Although cross country is a team sport, the girls had to push themselves to the max. Each week’s meet was an opportunity to achieve their PR, or Personal Record.

“Cross Country is an amazing sport because, while you have to work extremely hard to achieve your own personal best, there is a strong sense of team unity, and your teammates are always there for you,” said **Jennifer French, 11**.

Every Saturday morning a 5k race was run at various locations throughout Ohio. The runners competed in two races: Varsity and Junior Varsity. The girls who competed in the Varsity races were top 7 placers on the team, usually with a time of 22:00 and under. They finished the season strong; at districts many JV runners achieved their personal record and top times for the team. Top placeholders included **Sydnee Hosler, 9, Emily Kosel, 10, Sara Hahn, 12, Jennifer French, 11, Clara Heish, 11, and Rita Klofta, 11**.

The varsity as a team did not qualify for regionals, however **April Zhang, 11, Kelli Rogers, 12, Jessica Tufts, 10, Kathleen Mayer, 9, and Ana Connely, 10** all ran top times in the varsity district race. **Kelly Wills, 12** placed in regionals, as well as **Alanah Sontag, 9**, who placed 5th. **Sontag** moved on to the state meet, placing and finishing off a great season for the girls cross country team.

Teammates stick together. Victoria Biddle, 12, and Mattie Hulett, 9, paced each other during a race. The girls ran together at practice and tried to keep the same pace during races. Running with teammates helped the girls keep a quick pace and improve their times.



Girls get pumped before the race. The girls huddled together before running. Encouraging words from the coaches often helped to increase motivation and confidence among the girls.

