

# **18<sup>th</sup> Annual Salem Early Bird Cross Country Invitational**

**Saturday, August 29, 2020  
Salem Memorial Park  
Salem, Ohio**

## **Coaches Instructions**

Dated: 08/24/2020

Cross Country, “Our Sport” has a deep history of great personalities and challenges. This year we are faced with yet another significant hill to master. The Salem High School Athletic Department & Salem Early Bird meet management is committed to executing the level of event that you and your athletes have come accustomed to while conducting it in the safest manor possible. Dealing with the current virus environment has sited us to implement unpopular but necessary guidelines. While some of these requirements may seem cumbersome, we are approaching these circumstances seriously and expect you and your athletes to meet this challenge in a admirable manor.

### **1) Pre-Meet**

Coaches are to monitor their athletes for signs illness per OHSAA guidelines. Any athlete or team affiliate showing signs of illness must not travel with the team or attend the competition. Travel restrictions must also follow OHSAA recommended guidelines.

### **2) Arrival**

Team busses and other transportation must park in the lot located at the end of Sunset Blvd. Determine a “*camp site*” prior to exiting the bus. Team camps must be a spaced a minimum of 10 meters from adjacent camps and also 10 meters off the race course itself. Recommend sites are fields on either side of the parking lot or the field near the 2K mark on the course. No camp will be permitted near the start or finish areas. All team members and personnel must walk directly to the chosen camp site carrying only their own gear and wearing an appropriate face covering. All team members must remain masked at their camp site when not warming up, competing or cooling down. Open air canopy style tents without side panels are permitted. It is the coaches responsibility of enforce proper distancing in the camp area. Touching of common surfaces should be avoided when possible and such surfaces shall be disinfected frequently. No one other than team members and support staff is permitted in the camp area. No parents or spectators are permitted in the camp area.

### **3) Restrooms**

There are two restroom facilities at the park. One near the Band Shell and the other near the pond. Each building has a Ladies’ & Men’s side. Only 4 individuals are permitted in each Men’s or Ladies’ restroom at one time. Others must wait in a line outside while maintaining 6 feet of distancing. Those using the restrooms must carry a personal hand sanitizer.

#### 4) Coaches packets

Packets containing competition “Bib” numbers can be picked up near the DJ stand. The packets will only contain numbers and pins. To prevent sharing of maps, etc, it is recommended that coaches, athletes & parents download maps from Baumspage prior to meet arrival. Printed maps & results will not be distributed at the meet. Coaches shall designate one person to distribute competition numbers and safety pins each individual team member. Numbers must be worn on the front upper torso (chest) in order to be visible to the timing equipment at the finish. Starting box positions will posted on Baumspage.

#### 5) Course inspection & warm-ups

Athletes choosing to “*walk the course*” prior to competition must wear masks and social distance while doing so. If a competitor is active on the course, anyone near must step off to the side a minimum a 6 feet. It is highly recommend that coaches accompany and monitor their athletes. Please respect the space of others & yield to them when possible. No one may inspect the starting or finish areas prior to their assigned race.

#### 6) Reporting to the Starting Line

**Middle School:** Coaches will send their entire boys or girls team to the starting line of the appropriate race according to the time schedule. Middle school teams of 5 to 7 runners will be scored in team placement. All participants finishing will be recorded with an overall individual placement & time results.

**High School:** Prior to sending athletes to the starting line, coaches of team of 5 or more runners will designate a “*Varsity Race*” team of 5 to 7 runners. (*Only schools with a total of 8 runners may send 8*). Varsity designated runners only may report to the Boy or Girls “*Varsity Team*” race. All others will compete as individuals in the High School Open races. There will be no team scoring in the open race, only individual placement & time results will be recorded.

Runners should report properly uniformed to their designated starting box no later than 5 minutes prior to start time but no earlier than 10 minutes before. No run-outs will be permitted in the starting area. Athletes should report warmed up and ready to go. There will be no clerking of teams but a team count will be recorded by the clerk prior to the start. Please designate a captain to communicate this total with the clerk. Announcements will also be made by the DJ so listen closely but reporting at the proper time and place is the coaches & team’s responsibility. There will be no delays from the posted start times. Coaches are permitted to accompany their team but must exit promptly per the starters announcement.

All in the starting area must be wearing a mask. No other articles are permitted in the starting area. This includes extra shoes & socks, warm-up suits, t-shirts, sweat shirts & bottoms, hats, sunglasses, water bottles, ice packs, maps, tape, etc. If desired, masks may be removed by command of the starter only after distancing 6 feet from others. Those choosing to not wear their mask during the race may carry it, wear it around their neck or place it in an individually sealed, zipper style plastic bag. Their name must be clearly marked on the bag. These bags are to be left behind in their designated starting box and collected immediately after the start by one (1) team representative.

## 7) The Start

Coaches must share the following instruction prior to reporting as there will not be the traditional meeting with the starter.

Runners will silence for starter instructions while at the line. Individuals shall position themselves to assure a 6 foot between teammates. The two nearest the starting line shall position themselves one step behind the line. With the starters command “*On Your Mark*”, the front runners will step to the line without crossing or touching it and all will remain motionless. There will then be a long whistle blow followed by the dropping of the flag and firing of the gun. If the starter witnesses a false start or falling of a runner in the first 100 meters caused by contact, they will fire the gun a second time to stop the race and recall all runners for a restart.

## 8) The Race

Participants are advised to social distance as much as possible. The race is long and there are ample wide section on the course for passing. Runners should look down course and strategically plan their passing well ahead of actually performing the act. Contact between runners is strictly prohibited. In the high school races only, the course continues into the adjacent wooded area. The section entering and exiting the woods is a 2-way segment. This means runners **must keep to their left** when on this section to maintain properly distancing from the possibility of approaching competitors. There will be signage in this section as a reminder but please make your athletes aware. Race clocks will be positioned at the 1 & 2 mile marks & the finish line. Cups of water will be available at the point of entry and exit of the woods.

## 9) The Finish

All finish evaluation will be done using cameras. There will be no finish chute present and no tear-offs or chips to be collected. Finishing runners are to cross the line and immediately exit the finish area in a direction counter to the finish line. The finisher’s competition number must be visible when crossing the line to properly identify them. Advise your runners to not finish directly behind another runner or cover their number in any way. The most common cause for this is an arm blocking the number while reaching for their wrist watch. Water will be distributed after exiting the finish zone. Coaches must distance themselves at least 10 meters from the finish zone.

The OHSAA has mandated that race management & officials are not to have any type of direct contact or touching with competitors. We recommend that schools provide a designated person to assist with distressed finishers of their team only. These representatives must wear face masks but gloves & face shields are also recommended. They will be places in a designated holding area at the finish. Their job will be to quickly assist & remove distressed team members from the finish area. Theater like displays of drama in the finish area will not be tolerated this season.

It is requested that finished athletes “Cool Down” away from the competition area. Masks must be carried but not worn while cooling down. When finished cooling down, athletes must wear masks and return to their camp.

## 10) Results

To promote distancing, all results will only be posted electronically. Live results can be accessed at <http://timingcrew.com> . A link to this will also be present on *Baumspage* under *Salem Early Bird Invitational*.

11) Awards

Awards to the winning & runner-up team will be announced and distributed immediately following the middle school & high school “Varsity Team” races. Masked individuals can pick them up at the award table near the DJ stand. There will be no awards distributed for the Open Races.

12) Spectators

To comply with OHSAA guidelines, spectators will be limited to **2 per athlete**. Please refer to the “*Spectator Letter*” posted on the Salem Early Bird section on Baumspage.com

13) Performance

In these “*Different Times*”, one of the most critical situations we will face is dealing with a down runner. While everyone wishes your athletes to perform at their best, it is best this early in this season. Under the current circumstances it may be necessary to “*throttle*” your teams performance according to environmental conditions and each individual’s ability. When you witness one of your athletes *struggling*, please consider pulling them out of the race or at minimum, instruct them to *ease up* and *pace* themselves. Though the idea of slowing a runner may go against your normal approach to coaching, we are not in normal times. A runners goal must not only be to cross the finish line but to also swiftly exit the finish area & return to camp under their own power.

14) Conclusion

While some of these requirements may seem cumbersome, we are approaching these circumstances seriously and expect you and your athletes to do the same. The continuation of the *2020 OHSAA Cross Country* season depends on the successful implementation of the early season meets like the *Salem Early Bird Invitational*. Thank you again for choosing to participate and we wish you and your team much success this season.

Sincerely,

*Salem High School Athletic Dept.*  
*Salem Early Bird Meet Management*