

Cross country takes the extra mile for success

While focused in on this year's goals, the runners have also brought middle-schoolers up to practice for experience

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Sports Reporter

As the trees turn a multi-color spectrum of autumn, a collection of athletes witness the change before them. From summer through fall, boys' and girls' cross country whips through the wooded pathways of various trails. The green leaves that signify conditioning season are now turning shades of yellow and orange and the athletes are focused on the season.

"Training can be tough. It consists of one long run which for most is eight to fourteen miles. We also work out two to three times a week depending if we have a race that week. Those runs are fast mile repeat runs and the rest of the runs are recovery runs," said junior Wade Woosley.

The outdoor scenery helps a lot of runners stay focused and motivated throughout their 3.1 mile races and ridiculously long practices. Over the course of summer training, all the athletes strive to stay motivated and push themselves for the upcoming season. Intense workouts and different types of training keep everyone in shape and excited for the year to come.

"During the summer, we focus on base mileage, which is very important for the rest of the season. We also do many hill workouts and tempo runs," said senior Sydney Liddle. "We all attend a running camp over the summer which is super fun. We have team games and runs. We are able to know our

teammates better and it's a great way to start the season off."

Many of the athletes agree that their week long camping trip sets a positive and hopeful outlook for the season. It is also a way for the runners to make friendships with their peers.

"Camp is always the best week of the summer. We bond with the whole team and become friends with the freshmen," said junior Sydney Baxter.

This past summer, FC decided to include some much younger runners to join them at camp. They invited all the high school runners and an additional three from Highland Hills Middle School. The three incoming eighth graders joined the high school team during select workouts and attended the camp as well.

Eighth-grader Emerson Graf said, "Running with the high-schoolers was definitely a different experience. It let me get a good idea of how fast I really need to be and how much

"...it's important to involve the middle school runners earlier so they get integrated with the athletes they will be running with when it truly matters."

Hunter Griffin
junior

more I need to improve."

Looking to improve before his high school career begins,



Grace Allen/The Bagpiper

BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY TEAM runs behind the football stadium during practice on Friday, Aug. 30.

Graf says his experience was eye opening.

Inviting the middle-schoolers to get involved has been done before, but this set of boys have not had the experience before. Each of them took on the training camp and were introduced to the world of high school running. Adapting to their training schedule and running paces, the middle school boys worked hard to keep up with the big dogs.

"I thought it was really great

that the middle schoolers got to run with us this summer. They got to know all the high school runners and coaches that they will eventually have as a part of their team," said Liddle.

Junior Hunter Griffin believes that the improvement of involving younger runners will help the team out for years to come and will change the culture from past years.

"Floyd cross-country has definitely had a change in culture. I think it's important to involve the middle school runners earlier so they get integrated with the athletes they will be running with when it truly matters," said Griffin.

The team continues to mentor their future successors

to be the best they can be. Baxter said she works hard to be an example for her peers and underclassmen.

"I want the younger runners to look up to my example. I do my best to look out for them and hope that they will do the same for the kids that come after them," said Baxter.

The future of the team is in the hands of the incoming high schoolers, but this season's fate is up to this team. Athletes have been preparing for their upcoming races with the main goal of continuing success.

Griffin said, "Last season was great as we got 21st in state, but I'm excited for this year and I think we as a team are ready to improve."