



TOP

Bearcat Cross Country Rebuilds for 2011

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The Dexter Bearcats Cross Country team season will begin this Fall with a new list of athletes leading the team. As the team will miss last year's departing senior class, Coach Chris Bolin quickly admits that the team is looking for a great season as they build for the future.

Cross Country has only been revived as a team sport the past 5 years here in Dexter. This is a unique sport that encompasses both girls and boys divisions. Each race is on open-air courses over natural terrain. The course, typically 4–12 kilometres (2.5–7.5 mi) long,. Athletes simply run a designed long distance course which may include surfaces of grass and earth, pass through woodlands and open country, and include hills and flat ground.

It's a pure sport of competition whereby athletes display a degree of running technique combined with the sheer determination and guts to finish high. Like wrestling or tennis, cross country teams compete as both individuals and as a team.

"I am exciting to be learning the ropes of coaching cross country," says Coach Bolin. "We are a young team, but I am excited to be building the program up."

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Coach Bolin comes to the team with a wide array of experience from girl's softball to girl's basketball and most recently an assistant to the cross country program at Doniphan High School. Chris was an athlete himself from Doniphan where he played 4 years of baseball and even advanced to the collegiate level. Eventually, he returned to SEMO

University to complete his degree. He is now employed in Dexter as the Middle School special education teacher.

The team is anchored by its returning seniors Melinda Mayo and Jenny Blattman. Both girls have been a part of the team all four years of their high school career and are expected to show true leadership among the group.

The remaining members of the girl's team are; Samantha Midgett – JR, Selana Flannigan – SO, Katie Justice – SO, Alexis Smith – FR and Kelsi Wood – FR.

The boy's team will be led by Junior Alex Rybolt. "Alex is a fantastic runner and has a goal of qualifying for the state meet in 2011," added Bolin.

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The boy's team is rounded out by four freshman athletes of Colton Averett, Zach Conner, Damon Allston and

Michael Layton.

"Averett and Conner will most likely compete at the varsity level," says Coach Bolin. "Both Allston and Layton are new to running and will compete at the junior varsity meets."

The coaching staff feels that additional athletes will join the team after school begins this week and will increase the strength of the team overall.

If you wonder who the young people are that are lining Grant Street each morning the past two weeks that would be your Bearcat runners. A typical practice is about 1 to 1.5 hours and has an emphasis of leg conditioning and endurance training. The prescribed workout will include approximately 5 miles of running with speed and interval training mixed in throughout the training schedule.

The first meet for the Bearcats' Cross Country team will be held at the Jackson Invitational on September 3rd. There are no home meets scheduled at this point, but the hope is to begin the process of developing a home course to hold meets in the future.

Photo One: 2010 Season photo with Alex Rybolt and Ryan Bagby at the starting line.

Photo Two: Senior Jenny Blattman shows her running skills in the 2010 DHS Cross Country Season.

Photo Three: Junior Alex Rybolt shown last season and will be the anchor runner for the Bearcat Boys Cross Country Team.

*Make sure to check back with the **ShowMe Times** for updates on the Bearcat Cross Country Team.*

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