

Cross Country Season in Athletics

Cross country running is a core part of the athletics calendar, usually taking place during the autumn and winter months. Unlike track events, cross country races are held on natural terrain such as grass, woodland trails, and open fields, testing endurance, speed, and resilience across varied surfaces and conditions.

Competition Format

Cross country season often includes Juvenile League fixtures, County championships (Even/Uneven Ages), regional championships, and culminates in national championships. Athletes may also be selected to represent their school, county, or even country. Team scoring is a key feature, with points awarded based on finishing positions, encouraging both individual and collective performance.

Age Categories for Athletics Wicklow 2026

Age categories calculated from 31st December in the year of competition. No athlete may obtain a birthday in the year of competition and compete in that age.

- 2018 - U9/U10
- 2017 – U10/U11
- 2016 – U11/U12
- 2015 – U12/U13
- 2014 – U13/U14
- 2013 – U14/U15

Even/Uneven Ages Cross Country

These 2 events feature a “Even Ages” and “Uneven Ages” race day. On a “Even Ages” event there will be U8,U10,U12,14 etc and then “Uneven Ages” U7,U9,U11,U13 etc. Children can compete in both race days but will be going up an age-group for one event. Example a 10 year old child can run both U11 & U12.

Distances

- **Under 7:** 150m
- **Under 8:** 500m
- **Under 9:** 800m
- **Under 10:** 1000m
- **Under 11:** 1500m
- **Under 12:** 2000m
- **Under 13:** 2500m
- **Under 14:** 3000m

Juvenile League

The Juvenile League is an exciting series of five cross country races designed to encourage young athletes to stay active and involved throughout the season. Open to all juvenile age groups, the league provides a fun, competitive atmosphere while also rewarding commitment and consistency.

How It Works

Athletes take part in up to five races held across the cross country season. Each race gives competitors the chance to gain experience, represent their club, and test themselves on different courses and conditions. The distances vary depending on whether it's an even/uneven race. Kids can run in their correct age and also in the next age group up depending on whether the event is Even/Uneven Ages.

Medals and Awards

Unlike single-event competitions, the Juvenile League places special emphasis on participation and dedication. Medals are awarded based on the number of races completed:

- **5 races completed – Gold Medal** 🏆₁
- **4 races completed – Silver Medal** 🥈₂
- **3 races completed – Bronze Medal** 🥉₃

This system ensures that every athlete, regardless of finishing position, has the opportunity to earn recognition for their hard work and commitment.