

Pacific Association athletes, parents and coaches,

During the youth cross country meets this season, there have been several incidents of athletes straying off course. These types of issues occur at all levels of competition in cross country: youth, high school, collegiate and open. Even elite athletes have suffered these challenges. Athletes have gone off course in the past; athletes will go off course in the future. Part of the challenge of cross country is learning an unfamiliar course and navigating it successfully.

**Please emphasize to your athletes the importance of not only participating in the course walk, but paying attention to and learning the course.** Course walks are provided for the athletes to learn the course so they may successfully compete.

It is not a valid excuse to go off course following another athlete. If an athlete leaves the course, they are expected to return to the point where they left the course and continue from that point. Athletes covering an unknown course cannot be given legitimate results.

Please direct your comments and concerns to the current [Youth Chairperson](#).