

# Moorestown Cross Country

## A Brief History of the New Moorestown Cross Country Course

Several years ago the district purchased property at the corner of Westfield Ave and Bridgeboro Road, which sits adjacent to our property. The expansion gave us enough room to envision a credible course and that is when the planning started. We have an email from the girls coach -- John Denning -- with the first request to the district dated June 11th, 2005! From there, John, Lorenzo Eagles (the boys coach) and Bob Bickel (Volunteer Coach and co-owner of the Moorestown Running Company) had discussions with the district, having numerous meetings about course design, liabilities, and responsibilities. They agreed to support the idea and help us fill out the requisite paperwork for the course with local and state officials. This included the work of using a GPS to lay out the course and have it written up by Tom Miller and his engineering firm. So much for the days when we could just lay out a starting line, walk off the 5k to find the finish and make a course! We ran into a lengthy (and somewhat frustrating) delay due to the fact that we wanted to cut the course through some of our wooded areas, almost all of which are wetlands designations.



In the meantime, both the boys and girls teams began the process of building the course where we could. Leonberg Nursery, owned by the parents of one of our former runners, generously donated mulch, and we used monies fundraised and donated by the Moorestown Distance Running Club, mostly generated by the annual Turkey Trot and through generous donations from organizations like Family Fun Day, RBC Dain Rauscher, and the Moorestown Alumni Association, to pay for a gravel base to be put down. Then the kids spread the mulch. Lots of mulch. And that was only the beginning.

When the state approval finally came in late this summer, we had already decided to ask the BCSL to host a batch meet. We would run on the Turkey Trot course, which followed the property's perimeter instead of running through the woods. Now, with the approval, we decided to try and finish the entire course by the meet date, Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>. Leonberg and the gravel contractor cut the path through the woods starting the second week of

September. We have had three workdays laying mulch since. On each occasion except the last, we had runners, coaches, and parents lug out rakes, pitchforks, and wheelbarrows to finish and maintain the mulching. We can honestly say most of us never want to see mulch again! But, in the rain on the Friday afternoon before the race we finished the course!

We are all tremendously excited. Not only that we have finally finished and have a course that we are proud of, but because of the tremendous enthusiasm we have around our program today. Moorestown XC has always been good -- Jim Brudnicki did a wonderful job with our distance programs going back into the seventies -- but the last five years have seen so many positive things happen to this program. Both the boys and girls have had very good teams and some excellent runners. But more importantly, we have seen kids (and parents) attracted to the program and enthusiastically supporting it. Our numbers are huge -- we started with 70 boys and 25 girls -- and the positive vibe has been palpable from the top runners on down. And the good news keeps rolling in: we just started a middle school XC club; Our fundraiser for our booster club, the Turkey Trot, has grown into a welcome community event; the course is now finished! Win or lose, we are having a positive impact on kids lives and the community here in Moorestown. We feel like we have a good thing going and that, hopefully, will only get better in the future!

To learn more about our program, please visit our website at [www.moorestownxc.org](http://www.moorestownxc.org).