

After Receiving Mark of Beast Number 666, High School Athlete Drops Out of Race

A high school athlete refused to run in a regional cross country meet after she was issued a bib with the numbers 666.

Codie Thacker, a junior at Whitley County High School in Williamsburg, Ky., says seeing the bib with the mark of the beast made her sick.

Though she had trained since June for the race, which would have qualified her to compete for the state championship if she won, she pulled out after officials refused to change the number.

Cross country coach Gina Croley immediately knew the number would be a problem when she saw it had been assigned to Thacker.

"I saw it and I was like, 'Whoa,'" Croley told . "I don't think she will wear that number."

Croley and Thacker asked three different officials for a new number and were denied each time.

"I was upset, because I'd trained all season for it. But in another sense I stood up for my beliefs and I stood up for God," the student said, according to the *Daily Mail*.

She told , "I didn't want to risk my relationship with God and try to take that number."

Kentucky High School Athletic Association spokesman Joe Angolia says officials did not know the requested change was for religious reasons.

"We've made adjustments to uniform codes and things like that in the past when it's known that religious reasons are in play," he says in the *Daily Mail*.

Croley supports Thacker's decision not to run.

"I wouldn't have been more proud of her if she won the entire meet. She stood on her principles," Croley says.