

2017 Cross Country Rules Review for Coaches

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Overview

- The 2017 Track and Field and Cross Country Rules Book and in particular Rule **8** will be in effect for cross country competition, along with appropriate sections of rule 4. The primary rules are highlighted below. Please refer to the NFHS 2017 Track and Field and Cross Country Rules Book for the complete cross country competition rules.
- All coaches are expected to be familiar with the rules. These rules should also be discussed with your cross country athletes.
- All teams are expected to exhibit good behavior and sportsmanship.
- The head coach or his/her designee may be required to verify, in writing, that their athletes are properly attired, i.e., that their cross country team members are in compliance with NFHS uniform rules governing the meet.

Information Covered

- Important Notice
- Rule Changes
- NFHS Points of Emphasis
- Uniforms & Visible Undergarments
- Shoes
- Atomizers and Inhalers
- Cross Country Course Measurement Directions
- Entries
- Behavior & Disqualifications
- Starting Procedures
- Team Scoring
- NHIAA Policies and Procedures Manual for Boys and Girls Cross Country
- NHIAA Lightning Guidelines
- Other Miscellaneous Environmental Information (Blood Spillage & Body Fluids, Heat Stress & Athletic Participation, Guidelines on Ozone & Physical Activity)
- NHIAA Concussion Statement
- Comments or Questions?

Important Notice

- **Watches may not be worn by any cross country athlete competing in the NHIAA State Cross Country Championships (Divisional Meets or Meet of Champions) per the NHIAA Cross Country Policies and Procedures Manual. Athletes found competing while wearing watches will be subject to disqualification from the event.**

2017 NFHS Cross Country Rule Changes

- **Note:** NFHS Rules pertaining to cross country are now covered in Rule 8 of the *2017 NFHS Track and Field and Cross Country Rules Book*.
- **3-2-4u New** Places the responsibility of providing liquids during competition on the games committee, not the individual coaches.
- **Rationale:** The games committee should have responsibility for providing liquids during the race and not leave up to each coach.
- **8-1-3b** Clarifies that directional sign posts can be used with or in place of directional flags in cross country.

2017 NFHS Cross Country Rule Changes

- **8-6-1 b(4)** Allows the placement of one American flag on each item of uniform apparel and deletes NOTE restricting flag placement.
- **8-7 d** A person is disqualified who receives any assistance from any other person.
 - This includes “receiving physical aid during a race from any other person”.
 - “Any other person” clarifies that not only the actions of competitors and nonparticipating team members may be considered as providing assistance but any other party is also included, such as a spectator.
 - Every attempt should be made for the appropriate health-care professionals to make these decisions to assist

2017 NFHS Cross Country Rule Changes

- **8-7e** (A competitor is disqualified who) “Receives assistance from another competitor to complete the race”.
 1. Both competitors shall be disqualified unless a competitor is injured or becomes ill and an appropriate health care professional is not available; (in this case) only the injured/ill competitor is disqualified.
- Note: Every attempt should be made for the appropriate health-care professionals to make these decisions as to assistance.

NFHS Points of Emphasis

Heat Acclimatization and the Prevention of Heat Illness

- Exertional Heat Stroke (EHS) leading cause of preventable death in high school athletics.
- Participation in high intensity, long-duration or repeated same day session sports in hot weather are at greatest risk.
- NFHS offers free course “Heat Illness Prevention”
www.nfhslearn.com
- Coaches must know the prevention keys which are located in the 2017 Rules Book, pg. 77

NFHS Points of Emphasis

Heat Acclimatization and the Prevention of Heat Illness*

- Physical exertion and training activities should begin slowly and continue progressively. An athlete cannot be “conditioned” in a period of only two to three weeks.
- Keep each athlete’s individual level of conditioning and medical status in mind and adjust activity accordingly. These factors directly affect heat illness risk.
- Adjust intensity (lower) and rest breaks (increase frequency/duration), and consider type of uniform, while being sure to monitor all athletes more closely as conditions are increasingly warm/humid, especially if there is a change in weather from the previous few days.
- Athletes must begin practices and training activities adequately hydrated.

NFHS Points of Emphasis

Heat Acclimatization and the Prevention of Heat Illness*

- Recognize early signs of distress and developing exertional heat illness, and promptly adjust activity and treat accordingly. First aid should not be delayed!
- Recognize more serious signs of exertional heat-related distress (clumsiness, stumbling, collapse, obvious behavioral changes and/or other central nervous system problems), immediately stop activity and promptly seek medical attention by activating the Emergency Medical System. On-site rapid cooling should begin immediately.
- An Emergency Action Plan with clearly defined written and practiced protocols should be developed and in place ahead of time.
- Please read the 2017 NFHS Track and Field and Cross Country Points of Emphasis for more information. These are posted on the NHIAA website in the coach's corner.

NFHS Points of Emphasis

Track and Field and Cross Country Uniform Regulations*

- During a meet, the clerk of the course has the responsibility to check and enforce uniform, visible apparel and shoe regulations
- Prior to meet the ultimate responsibility rests with the coach
 - No valid reason for athlete to show up in illegal uniform
 - If athlete is purchasing a component of the uniform or permitted attire, coach must make certain the athlete and parents are educated on what will be rule compliant

NFHS Points of Emphasis

Track and Field and Cross Country Uniform Regulations*

- Garments worn under the uniform bottom are considered foundation garments, providing they DO NOT extend beyond the knees, and are not subject to color or logo restrictions.
- This holds true for sports bras and/or boxer style foundation garments as well.
- Two or more members of a relay team or cross country team wearing visible undergarments **extending below the knees shall be** the same single, solid color and unadorned
- The purpose for the specific uniform rules for relay and cross country teams is to ensure that members of the same team are easily identifiable to meet officials and other competitors

NFHS Points of Emphasis

Sportsmanship*

- Good sporting conduct, sportsmanship, is a foundational pillar of high school athletics.
- Its value and importance should not be overlooked or taken for granted
- Sportsmanship rules exist to help officials, parents, coaches and the student-athletes themselves develop and reinforce values that are applicable to the development of the whole person and enhance the participation experience.
- Respect for others, honesty, fair play, and learning and understanding rules are critical action skills that, when practiced, will enhance any individual's character

NFHS Points of Emphasis Sportsmanship*

- The absence of good sportsmanship jeopardizes one of the fundamental principles of participation in education-based athletics.
- This season “step-up to the line” and practice respect, honesty, fair play...the essence of good sportsmanship, a true characteristic that makes track and field/cross country such great sports with lifelong values.
- *From the ***2017 NFHS Track and Field and Cross Country Rules PowerPoint***
- Please read the 2017NFHS Points of emphasis for further information regarding the topics of Heat Acclimatization and Sportsmanship .

Uniforms & Visible Undergarments

- Team uniforms (the uniform top and bottom or one-piece uniform) must be issued by the school.
- Uniforms must be worn as intended by the manufacturer.
- **Uniforms of all cross country team members must be of the same color and design.**
- The uniform must consist of either a full length uniform top and bottom or one-piece uniform issued by the school.
- The uniform top may not be knotted or have a knot-like protrusion.
- The top must hang below or be tucked into the waistband of the bottom when the competitor is standing upright.
- Uniform bottoms may be boxer-type or compression style for boys and girls. Closed-leg briefs are OK for girls.
- Uniform bottoms may be of differing length but must be identical in color and design for all team members.

Uniforms & Visible Undergarments

- Uniforms must be worn as intended by the manufacturer. The waistband of the uniform must be worn above the hips. The waistband of the uniform cannot be rolled.
- Removing any part of the team uniform while in the area of competition is illegal. This will result in a warning. If repeated, the athlete will be disqualified from the meet. The area of competition includes the lines in the finish chute.
- Hats are not normally allowed. If allowed, only stocking-type caps may be worn. (At the championship meets, a decision concerning hats will be made prior to each race.)
- Please refer to the rules for logo, trademark, American flag, school name or insignia, etc. requirements pertaining to cross country in the **2017 NFHS Track and Field and Cross Country Rules Book** (Rule 8).

Uniforms & Visible Undergarments

- Any garment worn underneath the uniform bottom and that terminates above the knees is considered a foundation garment and not subject to being a single, solid color.
- Any visible garment(s) worn underneath the uniform bottom and extending below the knees shall be unadorned, of a single, solid color and meet all logo requirements.
- If the base layer extends below the knees, and a second layer is worn and it ends above the knee, it shall no longer be considered a foundation garment due to it being the outer layer over a visible undergarment. In such a case, both garments are considered visible undergarments must be a single, solid (and the same) color.

Uniforms & Visible Undergarments

- If the base layer terminates above the knees and the second garment likewise terminates above the knees the items shall be considered foundation garments and therefore do not have to be the same single, solid color.
- The key is the length of the base layer when it is worn as intended by the manufacturer.

Uniforms and Visible Undergarments



Visible
undergarment
extends below
the knees
LEGAL

Visible
undergarments
extend below knees
Both must be same
color
ILLEGAL

Foundation
garment ends
above knees
LEGAL

Foundation
garments end
above knees
LEGAL

Uniforms & Visible Undergarments

- Cross country team members wearing foundation garments are not required to wear the same color foundation garment.
- The foundation garment does not have to be a single, solid color.
- Any visible garment(s) worn underneath the uniform bottom and extending below the knees shall be the same color for all cross country team members choosing to wear them.
- Sports bras and boxers are not considered part of the uniform or visible undergarments and thus are not required to meet the requirements of uniforms or visible undergarments.
- **The ultimate responsibility to have each competitor compliant with uniform rules lies with the coach.**

Uniforms & Visible Undergarments

- **Special Notice:** Per order of the NHIAA Cross Country Committee, no warning for uniform violations will be issued. **All athletes observed competing while wearing illegal uniforms will be disqualified.**
- Medical Alerts medals should be visible so officials are aware of a potential problem.
- Heart monitors are allowed only if prescribed by a doctor and a medical note is given to the meet director prior to the race.

Shoes

- All competitors must wear shoes.
- Shoes must be worn on both feet and have an upper and definite heel and sole.
- Shoes must be fastened securely to the foot.
- Use of slippers or socks do not meet the shoe requirement.
- Socks and shoes are not considered part of the uniform and therefore do not have to be identical.
- The wearing of metal spikes or hard plastic cleats is not recommended during the cross country championships due to safety concerns about running on the paved surfaces.

Inhalers/Atomizers

- The use of an atomizer during competition containing a prescription drug designed to alleviate the asthmatic condition is not considered to be an illegal aid as long as a physician's statement documenting the need of the athlete to use the prescription is presented to the meet director/referee prior to the beginning of the meet.

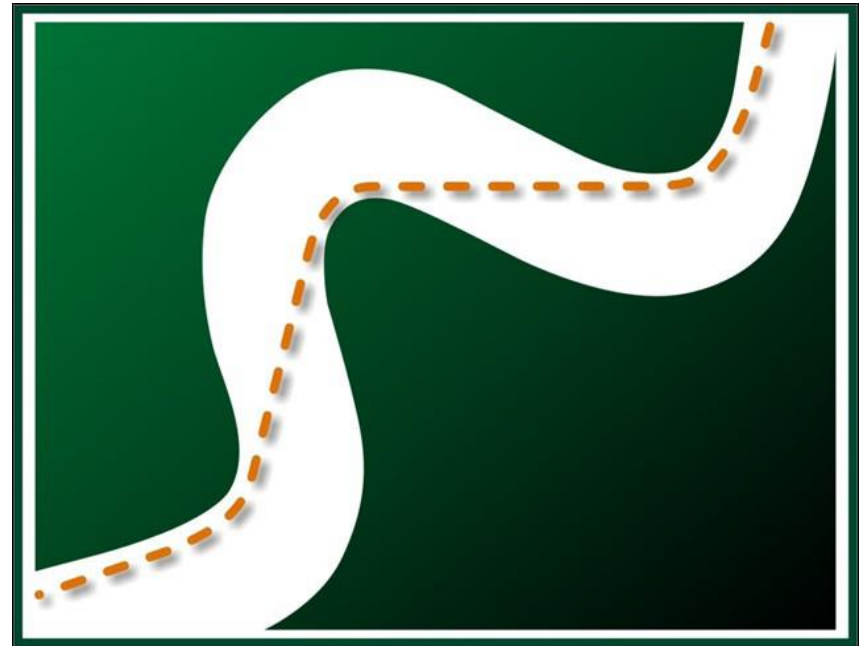
(NFHS Rule 4-6-5 Note 1)

NFHS Cross Country Course Measurement Directions

- Course measurement directions:

“Envision the shortest possible route as a string, stretched along the course. Along corners/sharp curves, stay approximately one foot off corner/curve, straight through S-turns and diagonally between corners and curves

2012 NFHS Track and Field Pre-Meet Notes



2012 NFHS Track and Field Pre-Meet Notes

Entries

- The coach, athletic director or principal is to complete the entry procedure using www.directathletics.com for the NHIAA Cross Country Championship meets.
- Each school may enter a maximum of seven (7) athletes. (recommended).
- Coaches will not be able to add entries after the entry deadline, they will only be able to replace someone already entered. Replacement will be allowed until just prior to the race by notifying Lancer Timing of the change.
- If a school has a cross country team and is not entering any competitors in the Divisional Championships, the NHIAA must be notified on or before the deadline date.
- Entry deadlines and other all cross country procedures may be found in the 2017 Policies and Procedures for Cross Country at www.nhiala.org by clicking on Rules and then Policies & Procedures.

Behavior & Disqualifications

- Competitors, including coaches, are expected to exhibit good behavior at all times. Competitors who are “unsporting” or use “unacceptable conduct” during the meet or at or near the finish line or chute will be disqualified and will be referred to the NHIAA for possible disciplinary action.
- Any competitor who exhibits any of the following behaviors will be disqualified from the meet:
 - A competitor who false starts.
 - A competitor who interferes with another competitor.
 - A competitor who is unsporting or uses unacceptable conduct.
 - A competitor who receives any assistance from any other person.
 - A competitor who fails to complete the prescribed course that is defined by a legal marking system.
 - A competitor who wears a watch

Starting Procedures

- **All athletes must report to the starting line at least 15 minutes prior the scheduled start of their race.** Although announcements will be made, it is the responsibility of the coaches, individual athletes and team members to arrive promptly.
- Team and individual starting line positions will be randomly assigned by the Cross Country Committee.
- Races will NOT be delayed for teams reporting late. Teams not checked in by the clerk prior to race time may not compete.
- Once the competitors have been called to the starting line for final instructions by the starter, no further run-outs are allowed.

NHIAA X-C Championships

Finish Line Protocols – *2017NHIAA X-C Policies and Procedures Manual*

The following guidelines for competitors will help prevent bottlenecks at the X-C finish line when chip timing is used.

- Run through the finish line and continue moving toward the exit.
- Don't stop after crossing the timing mats; you will impede athletes finishing behind you.
- Do not intentionally cross the finish line simultaneously with teammates.
- Don't talk to family, friends, or coaches until you depart the exit area
- Listen to the officials.

Special Note: When chip timing is used, the finish order does not have to be maintained after crossing the timing mats.

Team Scoring (I)

- To be considered for team scoring in the State Championships, each school must have a minimum of five (5) finishers.
- Schools with fewer than five (5) runners (finishers) will not be eligible for team awards.
- Team scores will be determined by adding the places in which the first five (5) runners from each school finish.
- The finish positions of non-team competitors will be eliminated and team finish positions re-ranked in order to determine team scores.
- Ties in team scoring shall be resolved by comparing the sixth place finishers from the tying teams. The team with the best sixth place finisher shall prevail.
- If two teams tied for a position each have only five finishers, the sum of the first four (4) finishers is used to break the tie.

NHIAA 2017 Policies and Procedures for Boys and Girls Cross Country (I)

- The **2017 Policies and Procedures for Boys and Girls Cross Country** (P&P) contains all of the important information relevant to the State Cross Country Divisional Champions and the Meet of Champions. The P&P may be accessed at www.nhiala.org by clicking on *Sports*, followed by *Fall* then *Cross Country* and finally *NHIAA Policies and Procedures for Cross Country 2017*. All coaches are expected to be familiar with this manual. Some of the important information is highlighted below.
- Any variation/exception to any of the regulations outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual must be for medical reasons and have the prior approval of the Committee/Meet Director. Written documentation from a physician must be provided to the Committee/Meet Director prior to competition.
- There will be no coach's information given on the day of the Divisional Championship meets or the Meet of Champions. Only the starting line position assignments and competitor's numbers will be given out.

NHIAA 2017 Policies and Procedures for Boys and Girls Cross Country (II)

- There will be athletic trainers at the State Divisional Championships, the Meet of Champions, and the New England Championships. Schools requesting medical services are to provide the necessary supplies for the athletic trainer at all regular season and tournament events.
- **The starting times for each Division at the State Cross Country Divisional Championships will be rotated on an annual basis. Please be sure to check the meet schedule prior to the day of the meet.**
- State Divisional Championship competitors must have participated in at least one cross country meet during the regular season. (NHIAA By-Law Article XVII.)

NHIAA 2017 Policies and Procedures for Boys and Girls Cross Country (IV)

Important information included in the P&P:

- Cross Country Divisional Alignments
- Championship Meets dates and starting times (This can also be found at www.lancertiming.com.)
- Entry information and deadlines
- Points of emphasis
- Special information
- Protest procedures
- Maps of both courses

NHIAA Lightning Guidelines

- *If you can hear it – clear it.* This means if you can hear thunder, you must suspend activities and go to a safe shelter or location.
- *If you can see it – flee it.* If you see lightning, take shelter immediately.
- You must wait until 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder or lightning bolt before activities can be resumed.
- Lightning has been known to strike up to 10 miles ahead of or behind a thunder storm. It does have to be raining or even cloudy overhead for lightening to strike. Meteorologists at The Weather Channel have said “*If you are close enough to hear thunder, you are close enough to be struck by lightening.*”
- *The complete lightning guidelines may be found in the 2017 Policies & Procedures Manual.*

Other Miscellaneous Environmental Information

- Please refer for the 2017 Cross Country Policies & Procedures manual for complete information about any of the following topics:
 - Heat Stress an Athletic Participation including standards on participating in weather with high heat and humidity
 - NHIAA Guidelines on Ozone Pollution and Physical Activity.
 - Information concerning Blood Spillage
- For air quality forecasts and current air pollution levels in New Hampshire, call **1-800-935-SMOG** or visit the DES website at www.airquality.nh.gov.

NHIAA Concussion Statement

- The NHIAA mandates the following of the NFHS Guidelines for Management of Concussions.
- Concussions: Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional.
- Please visit www.nhiaa.org, News & Info. and select “What’s New”, to view the NFHS Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussions and the state law, New Hampshire SB402, concerning concussions.

Comments or Questions?

- If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Nancy Eastman, NHTOA Supervisor of Officials, by email at neastman@metrocast.net or by phone at 332-7327. Questions about the Divisional Championships and Meet of Champions may be referred to members of the NHIAA Cross Country Committee.
- Answers to many questions may be found by reviewing the **NFHS 2016 Track and Field and Cross Country Rule Book** or the *2017 NHIAA Policies & Procedures Manual for Cross Country*.
- Good luck and have a great cross country season. I hope to see you at the State Divisional Championships.