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February 17, 2021

To: Athletic Directors and Head Football Coaches
From: Brad Garrett, Assistant Executive Director
Subject: Cross Country Reminders for the 2020-21 Alternative Season

Included within this memo are several items specific to Cross Country that I would like you to review with your staff as we begin a new fall season and other reminders to share with coaches and administrators.

1. COVID Information

Protocols, guidelines, and recommendations for practice and contests are located in the Cross Country Season Plan Book posted to the Cross Country page at <https://www.osaa.org/activities/bxc>.

2. OSAA XC Guidelines

- 1) Masks shall be worn at all times by all individuals in attendance.
- 2) Physical distancing measures shall be in place at all times other than when engaged in competition.
- 3) Sportsmanship is a key component, while physical contact of handshakes, fist-bumps, etc., are not allowed teams are encouraged to acknowledge their opponents in pregame and postgame rituals with a physical distance observance of the team's choosing.
- 4) Cross country meets should consider using staggered, wave or interval starts.
 - a) Possible Rule Modifications – 8-1-3a: Consider widening the course to at least six feet at its narrowest point.
- 5) Finish
 - a) Consider using finish corrals and FAT timing for larger meets as easier to distance at finish.
 - b) With no FAT timing system consider alternative means of finish place and time to address congestion at finish line.
 - c) Consider using image-based equipment at finish to assist with picking place to avoid congestion.

Highlighted 2020 NFHS Cross Country Rule Changes:

1. (See <https://www.nfhs.org/sports-resource-content/track-and-field-cross-country-rules-changes/> for complete list of changes)

Rule Change

PROVIDING AID

4-6-5 g Disqualification and conduct

ART. 5. . . It is an unfair act when a competitor receives any assistance. Assistance includes:

g. Competitor receiving assistance from another competitor to complete the race. Both competitors shall be disqualified unless a competitor is injured or becomes ill and an appropriate health-care professional is not readily available, 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. A competitor who provides assistance to an injured or ill competitor should not be disqualified if neither the individual competitor providing the assistance nor his/her team gains an advantage as a result of providing the assistance.

8-6-1e Disqualification and conduct

ART. 1 . . . A competitor is disqualified who:

a. Receives assistance from another competitor to complete the race.

1. Both competitors shall be disqualified unless a competitor is injured or become ill and an appropriate health-care professional is not readily available, 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. A competitor who provides assistance to an injured or ill competitor should not be disqualified if neither the individual competitor providing the assistance nor his/her team gains an advantage as a result of providing the assistance.



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Clarifies that a competitor should not be penalized for helping another competitor who is distressed or injured when no advantage is gained by the competitor who is assisting.

Rule Change

CROSS COUNTRY COURSE MARKINGS

8-1-1 Cross Country Course

ART. 1 . . . The cross country course shall be 2,500 to 5,000 meters (1.5 to 3.1 miles) in length as determined by the meet director or games committee. Measurement shall be along the shortest possible route a runner may take on the prescribed course.

The course shall be clearly marked using one or more of the following methods:

a. A single wide line or boundary lines, both inside and outside, marked with a material which is not injurious to the eyes or skin.

b. The use of natural or artificial boundary markers.

c. Signposts with large directional arrows wherever the course turns, or flags about 1-foot square and mounted on stakes which hold them 6 feet or more above the ground.

NOTE: If a single wide line is used, it may or may not mark the shortest possible route that a runner may take.

FLAG DESIGNATIONS

- A red flag indicates a turn to the left. Runners must stay on the right side of the flag.
- A yellow flag indicates a turn to the right. Runners must stay on the left side of the flag.
- A blue flag indicates a course straight ahead. Runners may run on either side of the flag.

ART. 2 . . . In case of a discrepancy in the course markings, directional flag markings cones and course markings take precedence over any other course markings.



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The reorganization of the rule states that a course should be clearly marked with any or all of the methods listed in the rule.



CROSS COUNTRY COURSE

8-1-3 Cross Country Course

ART. 3 . . . The race course should include the following features:

- a. Signs and flags at least 6 feet above the ground visible for 100 feet. Turns and guidelines should be marked on the ground with a material which is not injurious to the eyes or skin. The course should be at least 3 feet (one meter) wide at its narrowest place. No narrow section should be longer than 10 feet (3 meters) long. Small survey flags or cones at least 12 inches (30 cm) high of the appropriate color may be used in lieu of painted lines or survey chalk.
- b. No ground obstructions which might cause tripping, turned ankles, etc. No overhead objects such as tree branches lower than 8 feet above the ground. At least 90% of the course should be a yielding surface such as grass or wood chips.
- c. A 2-inch wide starting line marked at the beginning of a lengthy straightaway, wide enough to accommodate all teams; i.e., a width of the number of teams multiplied by 6 feet.
- d. At the beginning of the course, there may be a straightaway of at least 100 meters before any significant turns.
- e. At the end of the course, a straightaway of at least 150 yards (140 meters) ending in a rope funnel with a mouth 15 feet (3 meters) wide. When pull tags and chutes are used, the finish line should be at the mouth of the funnel and 15 to 25 feet (4 to 7 meters) from the chute. This funnel should narrow to a rope chute about 30 inches (0.75 meters) wide and at least 100 feet (30 meters) long. The stakes supporting the ropes should be solid enough to permit taut ropes, and the stakes and ropes near the finish line should be well-padded. See diagrams of chutes.

NOTE: For large meets, the use of multiple chutes is recommended. Where video timing is used and pull tags are not, the use of a large corral with a single exit point should be used instead of finish chutes.



The reorganization of the rule states that a course should be clearly marked with any or all of the methods listed in the rule.