

2026 CROSS COUNTRY SECTIONAL TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

The WIAA cross country tournament series starts with Sectional competition on either Friday, October 23 or Saturday, October 24. Tournament assignments and time schedules are posted on the WIAA website < www.wiaawi.org >. Select Sports, Boys or Girls Cross Country, Menu (on the right hand side), Boys/Girls Cross Country Tournament, scroll down to see Assignments & Brackets. Schools desiring additional information must communicate directly with the designated tournament manager.

PREMEET INFORMATION

A. Course

To assist schools, managers have been instructed to send a map of their course to all schools competing at their tournament. The map should include, as much as possible, a description of the course (terrain, surface, turns, etc.). Hopefully this will assist schools who have not run the course.

1. Course should be marked no later than 1 1/2 hours before the meet.
2. Course should only cross pavement, not run along the side of roads, parking lots, and sidewalks.
3. Natural barriers should be utilized where possible.
4. Blue flags should be used where the course is not lined or where there might be a question.
5. Flags should be placed three feet to the side of lines.
6. The starting line should be established so that box 1 is on the runners' left.
7. A visual marker (flag, cone, etc.) must be present 100 meters from the starting line to assist officials with recalls.
8. Distance from start to first significant turn should be 300 to 400 yards. Double turns should be used instead of 90 degree turns where possible, particularly early in the course.
9. Course should allow 800 meters before the course narrows and restricts runners to pass.
10. Chute should be constructed long enough and in such a manner to eliminate potential overflow of runners. (Rule 8-3-4, 8-3-5, 8-4-7 Figure 10)
11. Course distances should be as accurate as possible. Markers should be clearly visible at each mile with splits provided to all runners at those points.
12. Course should allow 1/2" spikes to be worn.
13. Meet management must identify the restricted and nonrestricted areas.
14. The use of lead and trail vehicles/carts is recommended. If only one vehicle/cart is available it should be used in a trail capacity.
15. The use of music at meets should cease two minutes prior to the start of the race. Note: Other than music used by meet management, noisemakers and audible music will not be allowed at or near the starting line. (Earbuds are allowed prior to the race).
16. Course shall be 5000 meters.
17. The use of double boundary lines and outside boundaries are allowed. Directional flags would still be required.

B. Entries

1. A tournament team consists of a maximum of seven individuals.
2. A school may enter less than a full team (1-4) for individual competition.
3. A school is expected to provide their meet manager, by a designated date, an alphabetical list of its participants for purposes of publicity, and programs.
4. Entries will be made on-line at: Athletic.net ([Timer Information sheet](#))
5. Deadline for entries is 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, October 20.
6. Any school that misses the entry deadline will still be allowed to enter but their reimbursement will be withheld if their team or individual(s) qualify for the State Meet. The WIAA will also send a letter of reprimand to the school's administration.
7. Alternates – It is not a requirement to list alternates when doing entries. However, if alternates are listed it assists the timing services in making changes to the line-up (listing 3 alternates is an appropriate number). The make-up of your team may change from sectionals to State (this does not apply to individuals who have qualified for State).

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C. Limited Competition

There cannot be any other competition, formal or informal, at the sectional site the day of the tournament. This means there cannot be a junior varsity meet, time trials, runoffs, etc.

D. No Practice at Facility/Practicing at Sectional Site

Host schools are not permitted to allow participating schools to practice at their facilities prior to tournament competition. Schools are prohibited during the regular season and the WIAA tournament series from practicing for sectional and State Tournament preparation at sites and facilities hosting WIAA tournaments.

E. Order of Events

1. The boys' race must be conducted first in odd calendar years; the girls' races first in the even years.

F. Water

1. Each tournament host should make sure that water is available at the starting and chute areas.

TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

A. Inhalers

Runners who have asthmatic conditions may legally use an inhaler during competition. A physician's statement documenting the need must be presented to the meet manager or meet referee prior to the beginning of the meet. The prescription sticker on the inhaler itself is enough documentation.

B. Changes

1. A school may make changes to its tournament roster up until race time.
2. A school may change its squad makeup from sectional to State competition.

C. Restricted/Nonrestricted Areas

Tournament Managers must define:

1. Restricted areas where no one except appropriate competing athletes/meet personnel are allowed and where athletes are prohibited from removing any portion of their team uniform, excluding shoes. These areas include, but are not limited to the starting line, finish chute, awards stand, any special area(s) on the course, any other designated area(s).
2. Nonrestricted areas: In these areas coaches and team managers shall be allowed to encourage, call out times, give verbal instructions, etc.
3. This information must be sent to all involved schools and WIAA officials prior to the meet.

D. Jury of Appeals

1. Each tournament manager must appoint a jury of appeals consisting of the contracted WIAA starter, the meet manager, and three coaches (at least one boys', one girls') not from the same school or host school.
2. The meet referee cannot be a part of this committee.
3. The membership of this committee will be published and sent to all involved schools and the contracted WIAA officials prior to the meet.
4. The committee will serve as the final board of appeals. Their responsibilities include:
 - a. Hearing and ruling on appeals of official's decisions.
 - b. This committee, however, has no authority to set aside, modify, or change defined WIAA tournament qualifying procedures or National Federation Track & Field/Cross Country Rules.
5. If anyone on the committee has his/her school involved with an appeal they must withdraw from that particular committee review.
6. The WIAA does not have the authority to change a meet referee or jury of appeals decision.
7. The meet referee will assemble this committee prior to the start of the meet to review their responsibilities.
8. Committee members must stay and be available after the meet for approximately 20 minutes.

E. Disqualifications

1. NFHS Rule 8-6-1 states: A competitor is disqualified who:
 - a. False starts

- b. Interferes with another competitor.
- c. Is unsporting or uses unacceptable conduct.
- d. Receives any assistance from any other person
- e. Receives assistance from another competitor to complete the race
- f. Fails to complete the prescribed course that is defined by legal marking system

F. Starting Procedure (Rule 8-4-4)

1. Starters should not give instructions nor answer questions after the three-minute countdown. The information given over the public address system must be:
 - 15 minutes to the start of the race
 - 10 minutes to the start of the race
 - 5 minutes to the start of the race
 - 3 minutes to the start of the race - all runners must have reported to the clerk of course; no further run outs are permitted
 - 2 minutes to the start of the race - all runners remove sweats, coaches and non-competing athletes must vacate starting box
 - 1 minute to the start of the race - all runners must be positioned, and remain, behind the starting line
 - 30 seconds to the start of the race
 - 15 seconds to the start of the race
 - 10 seconds countdown to 5 seconds
 - The starter fires the gun when all runners are set and motionless after an "On your marks" command.
2. If a public address system is available the entire countdown to 5 seconds is done by the announcer. The starter is responsible only for firing the gun when all runners are set and motionless after the "on your marks" command.
3. Other than music used by meet management, noisemakers and audible music will not be allowed at or near the starting line. (Earbuds are allowed prior to the race)

G. Recalling a Race

1. If a runner falls during the first 100 meters due to contact with another runner, the race shall be recalled by firing the pistol.
2. The countdown should normally be started again from 30 seconds. This can be modified, however, depending on special circumstances.

H. Uniform/Equipment Regulations (Rule 4-3-1)

Make sure all your runners are in legal attire. The clerk of course, the referee, and both starters will check runners on the starting line before each race.

1. Gloves
 - a. Gloves may be worn.
 - b. No regulation on color(s).
2. Shoes/Spikes
 - a. Athletes must compete using the defined appropriate shoes/spikes. Spikes, if allowed may NOT be longer than 1/2 inch. Rule 4-3-1(3).
3. Jewelry
 - a. There are no restrictions regarding jewelry.
4. Headwear
 - a. Billed hats, caps, visors, headbands, knit caps and durags without flaps which are unadorned except for school name, school nickname or school mascots and follow the single 2 1/4" manufacturer logo rule are legal. Waivers for other head coverings may be issued for medical situations by the WIAA staff..
 - b. Athletes must compete using the defined appropriate shoes/spikes. Spikes, if allowed, may NOT be longer than 1/2 inch. [Rule 8-6-1a(3)]
 - c. Face paint, body paint or symbols and temporary tattoos can be displayed, however full face, solid block color cannot be used. Markings cannot be offensive or distract from the integrity of the competition.
 - d. Electronic devices may only be used in unrestricted areas and coaching boxes and shall not be used to communicate information from any person to the competitor during a race (NFHS Rule 4-6), Biometric data from watches or smart watches including heart rate, GPS or pace, is allowed. Athletes and coaches shall not be allowed to use GPS data to contest the length of a course or review any decision made by a race official

5. Flags/Patches
 - a. One American Flag may be worn or occupy space on each item of the uniform apparel, but shall not exceed 2" x 3".
 - b. Other items may be placed on the team warm-ups provided the warm-ups are not worn in actual competition.
6. Preventative Officiating
 - a. The clerk of course, meet referee, and both starters will prior to the start of each race enforce uniform, visible apparel, and shoe regulations.
 - b. The final responsibility, however, still lies with the athlete and/or coach.

I. Wireless Communication Devices

1. Wireless communication devices (headsets, radios, etc.) except by meet management and meet officials are prohibited.
2. Individuals bringing such equipment will be instructed to return the item(s) to their vehicles.

J. WIAA Tournament UAV Policy (Drones)

The Board of Control has approved a policy for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles or drones at outdoor WIAA State Tournament Series events. UAVs are prohibited at all WIAA indoor tournaments. Drone operation requires a Remote Pilot Command license. Operators must also receive written consent from the WIAA executive office at least 24 hours in advance, as well as approval of the host facility event management. The complete policy for UAVs is located on page 50 of the Senior High Handbook.

K. Sectional Box Assignments

(if a team withdraws or you have less teams entered then the number of boxes, you may move teams closer to the middle of the course).

DIVISION 1

1. 11th School Alpha
2. 3rd School Alpha
3. 8th School Alpha
4. 1st School Alpha
5. 10th School Alpha
6. 5th School Alpha
7. 12th School Alpha
8. 2nd School Alpha
9. 7th School Alpha
10. 4th School Alpha
11. 13th School Alpha
12. 9th School Alpha
13. 6th School Alpha

DIVISIONS 2 & 3

1. 17th School Alpha
2. 4th School Alpha
3. 22nd School Alpha
4. 9th School Alpha
5. 1st School Alpha
6. 14th School Alpha
7. 25th School Alpha
8. 6th School Alpha
9. 19th School Alpha
10. 11th School Alpha
11. 3rd School Alpha
12. 21st School Alpha
13. 8th School Alpha
14. 15th School Alpha
15. 24th School Alpha
16. 5th School Alpha
17. 12th School Alpha
18. 20th School Alpha
19. 2nd School Alpha
20. 18th School Alpha
21. 10th School Alpha
22. 23rd School Alpha
23. 7th School Alpha
24. 16th School Alpha
25. 13th School Alpha

POST MEET INFORMATION

A. Posting/Announcing of Results

1. To avoid issues during the awards ceremony unofficial results must be announced or posted prior to the awards ceremony.
2. Appeals regarding misapplication of the rules shall be filled within 30 minutes after the results have been announced or made official. The head coach protests to the meet referee. (Rule 2-3-3, Rule 3-5-3 a, b)
3. Timers must upload the results file to Athletic.net immediately after the event. See the [Timer Information sheet](#) for more detail.

B. Awards

1. Plaque for championship and runner-up teams.
2. Medals to:
 - a. Members (7) of championship and runner-up teams.
 - b. Sectional champions.
 - c. First five individuals who are not members of a qualifying team, with the individual sectional champion receiving a gold medal (even if he/she is a member of the championship team).
 - d. Extra medals - To order additional medals online from our jeweler ESCO. Access their website <<http://wiaa.escoinc.com>> ESCO "WIAA Award & Gift Store" and choose "extra" medals. The medals are offered in "Plain" for quick turn around and also "Engraved" for those that want/need the copy on the back.
3. It is recommended that meet managers use the following procedures for their Awards Presentations:
 - a. Read team scores from last to second place.
 - b. Call up each runner from the second place team reading their name, place, time, and present medal.
 - c. Present WIAA sectional runner-up plaque to coach.
 - d. Have second place team stay in Awards Area.
 - e. Call up each runner from the first place team reading their name, place, time, and present medal.
 - f. Present WIAA sectional championship plaque to coach.
 - g. Have first place team also stay in Awards Area.
 - h. Call up the five individual State qualifiers and present each runner his/her medal.

C. State Qualifying

Qualifying for the State Meet from each sectional will be:

1. The first two teams.
2. The first five individuals who are not members of a qualifying team.

D. Scoring (Rule 8-2-1, 2, & 3)

1. All competitors who finish the race shall be ranked and tallied.
2. The team score shall then be determined by totaling the points scored by the first five finishers of each team.
3. The team which scores the fewest number of points is the winner.
4. If fewer than five competitors of a team finish, the places of all members of that team shall be disregarded and the team scores re-ranked.

E. Ties (Rule 8-2-4, & 5)

1. Ties in team scoring shall be resolved by comparing the sixth-place finishers from the tying teams.
2. The team with the best sixth place finisher shall prevail.
3. If one team does not have a sixth-place finisher, the team with the sixth-place finisher shall prevail.
4. If only five competitors of tying teams finish, the tie shall be resolved by totaling the scores of the first four finishers.

F. WIAA Website

1. State Qualifiers will be posted on the WIAA Website <www.wiaawi.org> on Sunday, October 25. Access the Cross Country Home Page and choose State Qualifiers.
2. Corrections (spelling, year in school, etc.) should be emailed to abaierl@wiaawi.org. Deadline for corrections is 12 noon on Monday, October 26.
3. State Meet results will be posted on the WIAA Website <www.wiaawi.org> Saturday, October 31 approximately 1 hour after the conclusion of all competition.