



***Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union***  
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***Iowa High School Athletic Association***  
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Dear Cross Country Coaches, Athletic Directors, and Officials:

Welcome back to a new school year and new season! With the first two weeks of practice in the books, your kids can look forward to competing against their peers. As we have stressed in the past, we cannot stress the importance of hydrating your athletes prior to, during, and after practice. With our Iowa weather, we can bet on one more extremely warm weather pattern in the coming weeks. As we've done in the past, we have posted a PDF version of the rules meeting, so all interested individuals can again familiarize themselves with an overview of heat and hydration safety precautions. From our standpoint, it's been a very quiet start to the season, but as competitions begin this week, we expect the number of questions to increase.

**State Qualifying Meet Sites** – The state qualifying meet sites are now posted on both web sites and can be found at the following link: <http://www.iahsaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018-SQM-Cross-Country-Sites.pdf>. The state qualifying meet assignments will be posted during the week of October 8. The state qualifying meets will be held on Thursday, October 18, 2018, beginning at 3:00 PM for the two two-class sites and 4:00 PM for the single class sites.

**Reporting Meet Results** – As in the past, the IHSAA and IGHSAA do not require cross country coaches to report their meet results. The Iowa Association of Track Coaches strongly encourages that coaches send their meet results to [iaxcresults@gmail.com](mailto:iaxcresults@gmail.com), so the IATC Cross Country Ranking Committee can adequately and fairly rank the top 15 teams in each class for both boys and girls. Both the IHSAA and IGHSAA use the IATC rankings to help determine state qualifying meet assignments. Again, there is no requirement to report your meet results or to use any particular software for managing and scoring your meets.

**Watches** – Starting with this fall's cross country season, watches with GPS capabilities are legal for both cross country and track and field meets. The NFHS has changed their interpretation regarding GPS as a form of an aid, and we have elected to implement this change for this fall.

**Inhalers** – The NFHS rule regarding inhalers has not changed. An athlete may carry an inhaler with himself/herself during competition as long as he/she has a doctor's note indicating the inhaler is designed to alleviate asthmatic conditions. The doctor's note needs to be presented to the meet director or referee prior to the start of the meet. Coaches, if you have someone on your team that uses an inhaler, we recommend making several copies of the doctor's note and leaving them in your bag or binder, so when you arrive to a meet, you can simply pull out one of the notes and deliver it to the proper individual.

**Varsity and Sub-Varsity Combined Races** – As stated in the rules meeting, students ineligible at the varsity level under the General Transfer and Open Enrollment rules may not compete in combined varsity/junior varsity races. We know there are many meets that combine both races for a number of reasons. A solution we are proposing to schools is to divide your varsity and junior varsity into two races and to start your junior varsity race five minutes after the start of the varsity race. For a boy/girl one class meet, meet managers are only extending the meet by ten minutes and all participants have a chance to compete on a particular day.

**Starting Grids** – Starting grids were discussed at length last year during the advisory committee meeting. As we covered in the rules meeting, the NFHS recommends each box to be 6 feet wide. Again, this is a recommendation and not a steadfast requirement. Depending on the number of teams participating in the meet, the boxes may need to be narrower than this recommendation. Regardless of the size of the starting box, all boxes should be the same width, and teams should be randomly assigned a box (not just alphabetical order).

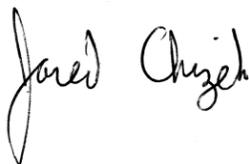
**Pets at Meets** – This is more a concern for meet management than coaches and officials, but we do feel that we need to discuss spectators bringing pets to meets. Per both organizations’ policy, *“Except as otherwise stated herein, no pets are permitted at events sanctioned by the IHSAA/IGHSAU. Any person found with a pet will be asked to remove the pet from the premises. Failure to comply will result in the person being asked to leave the premises. However, this policy shall comply with the provisions of Iowa code 216c. as such, a person with a disability or a person training an assistive animal has the right to be accompanied by a service dog or an assistive animal, under control. The person is liable for damage done to any premises or facility by a service dog or assistive animal. A “service dog” means a dog specially trained at a recognized training facility to assist a person with a disability, whether described as a service dog, guide dog, hearing dog, support dog, independence dog, or otherwise. An “assisted animal” means a simian or other animal specially trained or in the process of being trained under the auspices of a recognized training facility to assist a person with a disability.”* With that being said, spectators should not have pets on the course. As coaches, you can help us out by sharing this information with your athletes’ parents, so there aren’t any issues at the meets you participate. This is not a new policy and will be enforced at the state meet.

**Wheelchair Competitors** – We are uncertain about the number of wheelchair competitors we have this fall. It would be very helpful if you could notify our offices if you have any wheelchair participants in cross country this fall.

**Junior High** – We have received a few calls asking if junior high cross country participants are required to have ten days of practice prior to their first competition in part to the new school start date. Neither organization requires a specific number of days of practice prior to a junior high participant’s first cross country meet. Junior high cross country teams are allowed to participate in seven meets.

We will be communicating with you any issues and concerns that are brought to our attention. As coaches and officials, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions throughout the season.

Sincerely,



Jared Chizek  
Assistant Director



Gary Ross  
Associate Director