



2025 CROSS COUNTRY RULES MEETING

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HEAT ILLNESS

- Heat illness is the leading cause of preventable death in high school athletes. Heat production during intense exercise is 15 - 20 times greater than at rest and can raise body core temperature 1 – 2 degrees Fahrenheit every 5 minutes unless heat is dissipated.
- The IHSAA, IGHSAA, IHSMA, and IHSSA, under the guidance of the IA Sports Medicine Advisory Committee, have approved the Wet Bulb Globe Thermometer (WBGT) as the recommended measurement practice and device for measuring acceptable heat/humidity levels for practices and contests. The use of WBGT is required throughout the calendar year when the ambient temperature is above 80 degrees (indoors or outdoors).





TYPES OF HEAT ILLNESS

Condition	Description	Treatment
Heat (Fatigue) Cramps	Painful muscle spasms/cramps that can happen during activity in hot environments. Athletes who sweat a lot may be prone to heat cramps due to fluid and electrolyte losses.	Stop exercising, massage or stretch involved muscle. Replace salt and water loss by drinking a lot of cool, salt-containing fluids. Future cramping may be reduced by improved conditioning, getting more used to exercising in hot temperatures, and drinking more salt-containing fluids.
Heat Exhaustion	A type of heat illness when the body overheats leading to symptoms like excessive sweating, rapid heart rate, dizziness, faintness, fatigue, low blood pressure with standing, nausea, headache, muscle cramps.	Stop exercising, move to shaded or air-conditioned area. Replace water loss by drinking a lot of cool fluids. If the athlete does not quickly improve or is unable to drink fluids, then the athlete should be immediately taken to the nearest emergency facility.
Heat Stroke	A type of heat illness that includes any of the symptoms of heat exhaustion + symptoms of confusion, disorientation, distress or loss of consciousness. Core (rectal) body temperature should be measured right away by a trained medical professional.	Call 911 or your local emergency number. Begin cooling immediately by cold water immersion technique (see below); don't wait for help to arrive. The athlete needs immediate medical attention.





WET BULB GLOBE TEMPERATURE

The WBGT is the gold standard for measuring heat stress during hot weather taking into account ambient heat, humidity, wind speed, direct sunlight, sun angle & cloud cover.

Why Not Heat Index?

- Heat Index is calculated in the shade, considering a standard/average sized person with a normal core temperature walking 3.1 mph
- Even in warm-ups for a practice a student athlete's body temperature rises above normal levels
- Local news weather forecasts, weather apps on phones do NOT provide an accurate temperature. They do not consider all of the variables.

How to Take a WBGT?

- WBGT should be measured every 30 minutes (where the activity is being held)
- The same person should monitor WBGT throughout the event
- WBGT reading at the start of practice/contest is the lowest category directions to follow, if WBGT increases to a higher category modifications will follow that category.
- Individual reactions to heat will vary per athletes and/or position/role
- Schools should have an exertional heat illness emergency action plan
- At-risk athletes should always be monitored closely



WET BULB GLOBE TEMPERATURE

WBGT Reading (Region 2)	Activity Guidelines / Required Modifications for Grades 9-12	WBGT Reading (Region 2)	Activity Guidelines/Required Modification for Grades 7-8
< 79.7	Normal activities 3 separate rest/water breaks (3-5 minutes each) / hour	<79.7	Normal activities 3 separate rest/water breaks (3-5 minutes each) / hour
79.8 – 84.6	Use discretion for intense / prolonged practice 3 separate rest/water breaks (4-6 minutes each) / hour Monitor at-risk athletes closely <i>Cold water immersion available – see additional info sheet</i>	79.8 -- 84.6	4 separate rest/water breaks (4-6 minutes each) / hour Monitor at-risk athletes closely Cold-water immersion available--see additional information sheet and Appendix B
84.7 – 87.6	Maximum practice time is 2 hours <i>Reduce equipment to partial uniform</i> Remove all additional equipment if conditioning (football) <i>*if WBGT rises to this level during practice, players may continue practicing in football pants</i> 4 separate rest/water breaks (4-6 minutes each) / hour Monitor at-risk athletes closely <i>Cold water immersion available – see additional info sheet</i> CONTESTS: Implement additional/extended timeouts for rest/water breaks	84.7 --87.6	Maximum practice time is 2 hours 4 separate rest/water breaks (4-6 minutes each) / hour There must be 20 minutes of rest breaks distributed throughout each hour of practice Monitor at-risk athletes closely Cold-water immersion available--see additional information sheet and Appendix B CONTESTS: IMPLEMENT ADDITIONAL/EXTENDED TIMEOUTS FOR REST/WATER BREAKS
87.7 – 89.7	Maximum practice time is 1 hour <i>Reduce equipment to out of uniform</i> No conditioning allowed There must be 20 minutes of rest breaks distributed throughout the one hour of practice Monitor athletes closely <i>Cold water immersion available – see additional info sheet</i> CONTESTS: Consider moving start times earlier or postponing; Implement additional/ extended timeouts for rest/water and shade.	87.7 -- 89.7	Maximum practice time is 1 hour Shorts/t-shirt/footwear only for all activities No conditioning allowed There must be 20 minutes of rest breaks distributed throughout the one hour of practice Monitor at-risk athletes closely Cold-water immersion available--see additional information sheet and Appendix B CONTESTS: IMPLEMENT ADDITIONAL/EXTENDED TIMEOUTS FOR REST/WATER BREAKS. Consider delaying/postponing start times
> 89.7	No (outdoor) activities Cancel or delay outdoor practices / contests until lower WBGT is recorded	89.8 or >	No activities Indoor workouts permitted in air-conditioned/climate controlled facilities CONTESTS: CAN CANCEL CONTESTS UNTIL LOWER WBGT IS RECORDED



WBGT & SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Cross Country/Soccer/BB/SB

- **Cross Country:** When in competition and WBGT is **87.7 or greater (RED)/ (BLACK)**, at least two (2) hydration stations should be placed on the race course as well as at the finish line.
- **Soccer:** When in competition and WBGT is **87.7 or greater (RED)/ (BLACK)**, referees will take a 3 minute hydration break at or near the midway point of each half.
 - Teams will go to the bench area during the hydration break, no coaches permitted on the field.
- **BB/SB:** When in competition and WBGT is **87.7 or greater (RED)/ (BLACK)**, umpires should have a 3 minute hydration break starting in the beginning and mid-point of inning 3 and every inning through the remainder of the contest.

Marching Band / Cheerleading

- **Marching Band/Cheerleading:**
- WBGT **84.7 to 87.6 (ORANGE):** Partial / 1/2 uniform (no long sleeves or long pants). Move practice to grassy area rather than turf or concrete.
- WBGT **87.7 to 89.7 (RED):** out of uniform. Shorts, t-shirts and footwear only for activities. No conditioning allowed.
- WBGT **89.8 or greater (BLACK):** No outdoor activities, cancel or delay practices until lower WBGT is recorded.



COLD WATER IMMERSION

Set-up:

- Acquire a 50-gallon tub, stock tank or kiddie pool (rubber or structural foam)
- Prior to the start of activity, half-fill with water and ice, keep additional chest coolers of ice next to tub
- Cool the water to a temperature of 35-59 degrees F

When an Athlete is in need of Cold Water Immersion:

- Remove the athlete's equipment and excess clothing
- Immerse athlete in the tub up to their neck, if possible
- Place an ice/wet towel over the head and neck
- Stir/agitate the water continuously, adding more ice throughout the cooling process
- Cool for a minimum of 20 minutes (based on the average estimated cooling rate of 1 degree per 3 minutes).
- Continue cooling until an AT or other appropriate medical provider, EMS assumes control of patient & determines transport based on core (rectal) temperature reaches 102 degrees F.



OTHER METHODS FOR COOLING

Cold Water Immersion Bag

- A cold water immersion bag is a method which uses a combination of ice and cold water are added to an athlete once they have been placed in a cold water immersion bag and seal the bag to reduce core body temperature
- Cool for a minimum of 20 minutes (based on the average estimated cooling rate of 1 degree per 3 minutes.
- Continue cooling until an AT or other appropriate medical provider, EMS assumes control of patient & determines transport based on core (rectal) temperature reaches 102 degrees F.

TACO Method

- Tarp Assisted Cooling Oscillation (TACO) is a method in which a combination of ice and cold water are added to an athlete once they have been placed on a tarp with the edges held up by personnel to create a physical “taco” for the patient to be encased inside.
- Continue cooling until an AT or other appropriate medical provider, EMS assumes control of patient & determines transport based on core (rectal) temperature reaches 102 degrees F.



HEAT & HYDRATION

- **Heat-related deaths are preventable if specific steps are taken by coaches and administrators.**
 - Develop an Emergency Action Plan
 - Allow student-athletes to acclimatize to heat and humidity
 - Access to water should never be restricted
 - Student-athletes should be encouraged to take in fluids frequently before and after practices and games
 - Practices should be scheduled at times during the day that minimize exposure to heat and humidity





HEAT & HYDRATION

- **Use the “BUDDY SYSTEM”**
 - Assign student-athletes a “Buddy” and have them monitor each other for signs and symptoms of heat related problems
- **Signs of Possible Heat Stroke**
 - Altered consciousness
 - Semi-consciousness, confused, irrational behavior
 - Combative
 - Headache, dizziness, weakness
 - Hot skin – with or without sweating
 - Increased heart and breathing rates
 - Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea





Exertional Heat Stroke is the **leading cause** of preventable death in high school athletics



-0:47



MANDATORY CONCUSSION COURSE FOR ALL 7-12 COACHES



Concussion in Sports

 Elective Course

Student

Coach

Parent

Administrator

Official

Free!

Completions: 161023+

ALL 7-12 coaches (paid or volunteer) are required to view the NFHS course, **“Concussion in Sports”** before the beginning of their respective sport season. Information regarding accessing this course has been sent to your school administrator.





CONCUSSIONS

Iowa Code Section 280.13C states, in part,

“**Annually**, each school district and nonpublic school shall provide to the parent or guardian of each student a concussion and brain information sheet, as provided by the Iowa High School Athletic Association and Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union.

The student and student’s parent or guardian shall sign and return the concussion and brain injury information sheet to the student’s school **prior to the student’s participation in any interscholastic activity for grades seven through twelve.**”





CONCUSSIONS

Iowa Code Section 280.13C continued –

“If a student’s coach, contest official, or licensed health care provider or an emergency medical care provider observes signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or brain injury in an extracurricular interscholastic activity, **the student shall be immediately removed from participation.**

A student who has been removed from participation shall not recommence such participation until the student has been evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and other brain injuries and **the student has received written clearance to return to participation from the health care provider.**”



CONCUSSION RECOGNITION & MANAGEMENT

Recognition and Management

If an athlete exhibits any signs, symptoms, or behaviors that make you suspicious that he or she may have had a concussion, that athlete must be removed from all physical activity, including sports and recreation. Continuing to participate in physical activity after a concussion can lead to worsening concussion symptoms, increased risk for further injury, and even death.

SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE

Headache
Nausea
Balance problems or dizziness
Double or fuzzy vision
Sensitivity to light or noise
Feeling sluggish
Feeling foggy or groggy
Concentration or memory problems
Confusion

Parents and coaches are not expected to be able to “diagnose” a concussion. That is the role of an appropriate health-care professional. However, you must be aware of the signs, symptoms and behaviors of a possible concussion, and if you suspect that an athlete may have a concussion, then he or she must be immediately removed from all physical activity.

SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS, FRIENDS, TEACHERS OR COACHES

Appears dazed or stunned
Is confused about what to do
Forgets plays
Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
Moves clumsily
Answers questions slowly
Loses consciousness
Shows behavior or personality changes
Can't recall events prior to hit
Can't recall events after hit

When in doubt, sit them out!

- Information on concussions can be found at www.iahsaa.org. Click on “Health and Safety” under “Resources” on the IHSAA home page.





LIGHTNING GUIDELINES

- ALL thunderstorms produce lightning and are dangerous.
- Lightning often strikes as far as 10 miles away from the storm.
- Each school should have a lightning safety plan, which includes knowing where teams & spectators will go and how long it will take them to get there safely.





LIGHTNING GUIDELINES

If thunder is heard, or lightning is seen, immediately suspend the contest and instruct everyone to take safe shelter.

Once the contest is suspended due to lightning, wait at least 30 minutes after hearing the last thunder before having teams & spectators leave safe shelter and resuming the contest.

Complete guidelines regarding lightning safety appear in every NFHS rule book.

Remember, lightning kills, play it safe!





IMPORTANT DATES

- First Day of Practice: August 11
- Classifications Finalized: August 15
- First Day of Competition: August 25
- State Qualifying Meet: October 22, 23
- State Meet: October 31, November 1



COURSE DISTANCE

- In cases of inclement weather, meet managers may shorten the race distance to a minimum of two miles in the interest of the health and safety of competitors.
- Prior to the fifth Monday of the competition season (September 22), meet managers have the option of running a 4000 meter course for competitors below the varsity level as long as all varsity and sub-varsity races run to a common finish line. Beginning the fifth Monday of the competition season (September 22), all competitors must run 5000 meters.





CLASSIFICATION POLICY

In the sport of cross country, member schools that are placed in different classes due to cooperative agreement decisions made by other member schools, shall remain in the same class. The member school will be placed in the lower of the two split classifications. Member schools placed in different classes, based on the member school's decision to have different cooperative programs for each gender or cooperative programs with different schools, will remain in different classifications and be assigned to state qualifying events as classified. Member schools will not be allowed the choice to participate in a higher classification. In order for classifications to be determined in a timely manner, no new cross country cooperative programs will be accepted, nor will any existing cross country cooperative programs be allowed to dissolve after 5:00 pm on Friday, August 15, 2025.



SCHOLARSHIP RULE – NEEDING GUIDANCE

The Scholarship Rule for the 2025 school year.

- If the student failed a class last school year and had not yet served the 20 calendar day suspension, Day 1 of the 20 calendar day suspension would begin on August 25 with eligibility resuming on September 14.





MEET LIMITATION

Same for Boys and Girls

Ten (10) Meets

Does not include the state qualifying
meet and state meet



REGISTERED OFFICIALS REQUIRED

All cross country meets must be started and refereed by an official registered with either the IGHSAU or IHSAA for Track and Field

New for 2025: One registration to work both girls and boys.

No rules meeting or testing requirement for cross country officials; just need to pay registration fee





MEET STRUCTURE

Varsity and sub-varsity races may run together

Students ineligible for varsity competition under General Transfer or Open Enrollment may not participate in these combined races

High school and junior high students can be on the course at same time; however, races may not be started together

Junior high boys and girls race may be started together; however, this practice is discouraged





BOUND

- Make sure your rosters are updated on Bound.
- Timers/schools should make an effort to upload their results on Bound.
- If you are having difficulties please continue to email your results to results@gobound.com
- Uploading instructions can be found using the link listed in both the IHSAA and IGHSAU Manual as well as on both websites. We will also link it in our first memo.





POST SEASON DATES

- Postseason schedule:
 - 3A and 4A
 - Qualify on Wednesday, October 22nd
 - 1A and 2A
 - Qualify on Thursday, October 23rd
 - 2024-25 State Rotation
 - Friday October 31st
 - » 2A,3A
 - Saturday November 1st
 - » 4A, 1A
- Class 2A, 3A, 4A
 - 5 sites; top three teams and 15 individuals qualify
- Class 1A
 - 8 sites; top two teams and 10 individuals qualify
- **Minimum of 5 individual state qualifiers advance from each SQM site if current 15 in 2A-4A (10 in 1A) are taken by team state qualifiers.**





STATE QUALIFYING MEET INFORMATION

Sites will be determined in September and will be posted as soon as they are confirmed

State qualifying meet assignments will be posted the week of October 13

Host sites may charge up to \$5 for parking





STATE QUALIFYING MEET INFORMATION

Schools wanting to practice on the state qualifying course need to contact the meet manager to see if the venue's management will allow competitors to practice on the course.



STATE MEET INFORMATION

Class 2A, 3A, 4A: Top three teams and top fifteen individuals from state qualifying meets will qualify for state meet

Class 1A: Top two teams and top ten individuals from state qualifying meets will qualify for state meet

Minimum of 5 individual state qualifiers advance from each SQM site if current 15 in 2A-4A (10 in 1A) are taken by team state qualifiers.

State Admission: \$10 spectator admission charge + \$3 Parking Fee to Fort Dodge Parks and Rec



RULE BOOKS



Contact Whitney at the IHSAA (515-432-2011) officials@iahsaa.org if interested in purchasing Rules Book.





JOINT CROSS COUNTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Matt Fouch(Chair)

Tom Trygstad

Emy Williams

Jay Byma

Lacey Stephens

Fran Long (Official)

Colin Shawago

Justin Davie

Pella

Valley, WDM

Solon

Unity Christian

Stanton

Fort Dodge

ACGC

Wapsie Valley



ADVISORY COMMITTEE REMINDERS

- IATO Meet Recommendations
 - Have lead & trial cart for all races
 - **Courses are accurately measured and marked**
 - Clearly identifiable start line with 6' wide starting grids, numbered
 - Solid 4" line throughout (runners within 6' at all times when single line)
 - Distance markings @ 1 mile & 2 mile, turns appropriately marked
 - Clearly identifiable finish line with 50'/50' roped off on either side



SPORTSMANSHIP

Sportsmanship rules help officials, parents, coaches, and student-athletes develop and reinforce values that apply to the development of the whole person. Respect for others, honesty, fair play, learning, and understanding the rules are critical life skills that, when practiced, will enhance any individual's character. The absence of good sportsmanship jeopardizes one of the fundamental principles of participation in education-based athletics and complicates the team-building process. A sportsmanship priority is keeping winning and losing in perspective. Understanding that losing with dignity is an important lesson, everyone must learn and practice. A collaborative, working relationship should be a priority between officials, game administration, coaches, and student-athletes to promote good sportsmanship during a cross country meet. This includes treating people with respect and using appropriate language, actions, and language that build people up and values each person.

It is critical to remember that winning means you were the best version of yourself that day. The beauty of cross country is that one constantly tests themselves against one's best time, or distance. Continual improvement is a hallmark of successful student-athletes, programs, teams, and coaches. This improvement also involves positive sporting behavior, a fundamental ingredient of education-based high school sports.



CROSS COUNTRY SAFETY

Training for Cross Country is unique in that there are so many options afforded to the runner(s) to accomplish their workouts.

Not being limited to the track allows the runners access to parks, city streets, highways and country roads. However, each of these options creates safety concerns that all runners and coaches should keep in mind.

Workouts and runs should be fun, relaxing, carefree experiences. But an increase in pedestrian deaths in the United States, as well as eight reported running-related motor vehicle crashes resulting in nine deaths and two disabling injuries among middle school and high school cross country and track and field runners between 2011 and 2021 shows a continual need for attention.



CROSS COUNTRY SAFETY CONT.

Everyone should promote and practice safety and risk minimization strategies as Cross Country runners share the road with vehicles and drivers that have become increasingly distracted on the roads.

Coaches need to plan when developing a road route where stop lights, routes, and heavy traffic exist. Educating the athletes on where to go for safety in case of weather, emergency situations and hydration stops is crucial to athlete safety.

Some key safety measures include:

- Using sidewalks when available or run facing traffic.
- Stay alert and avoid wearing headphones and using electronic devices, including cell phones.
- Crossing roads at crosswalks and intersections, when available. If not, cross at a well-lit location.
- Avoid running when it is dark. If it is dark, wear bright, reflective materials and/or use a flashlight or head lamp.



CROSS COUNTRY SAFETY CONT.

Some key safety measures continued

- Follow the rules of the road.
- Avoid running along eastbound roads at sunrise or along westbound roads at sunset.
- Provide a safety orientation for first-year runners
- Run in pairs
- Never run against traffic lights
- Avoid running in higher traffic speed areas
- Run during lower traffic times if running along a road
- Avoid loitering along the road before and after runs



CONTACT INFORMATION

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