

**Minutes of the Boys/Girls Cross Country Advisory Committee
December 9, 2015**

The IHSA B/G Cross Country Advisory Committee met at the IHSA office in Bloomington, Illinois, on December 9, 2015, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Committee members present were Andrew Adelman, Chicago (Jones); Tim Burkhalter, Lake Forest (H.S.); John Sipple, Downers Grove (North); Ryan Bustle, Principal, Champaign (St. Thomas More); Gregg Meyers, Elmwood; Brandon Shaver, East Peoria; Carl Florczyk, Freeburg; Geza Ehrentreu, Coordinator of Officials, Rockford; Chris Perry, Meet Manager, Peoria; Others in attendance, Matt Grimm, Peoria H.S. ; Mark Tacchi, Mike Stokes, Mike Garcia, (ITCCCA); Gene Jones, Metamora; Bill Bulat, Rock Island (H.S.); Larry Hicks, State Final Scorer; John Polka, Oak Park (Fenwick); Brien Dunphy, Meet Manager Elect, Peoria H.S.; Chuck Austin, Results Official; Kayode Adegoke, IHSA, Coordinator of Special Programs; Ron McGraw, IHSA, Assistant Executive Director.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS RECOMMENDATIONS:

1) **VI.-E-1, VII-D and IX-E. State Final Practice**

Recommendation: Add to the cross country terms and conditions the explicit prohibition of unauthorized timed (or untimed) races on the state final course in the days preceding the state final races. Additionally, when meet management declares the course open for practice, only the state qualifiers and coaches whose names appear in the IHSA official List of Participants will be eligible to be on the course. This would include the week leading up to the state finals including Friday and Saturday. The consequence for violating this term and condition will range from placing the offending school, coaches and program on probation, up to the immediate suspension and disqualification of the offending school, coaches and all qualifiers from participation in the current state finals. Final decisions related to the severity of the consequences will be at the discretion of the IHSA Cross Country Administrator. This rule will be in effect for all state series events.

Rationale: IHSA administration, ITCCCA, ITCCOA and many coaches were deeply disturbed by the unauthorized race that occurred at the 2015 state finals. The Open Race that occurred on Friday afternoon was not authorized by IHSA administration and coaches were told at an earlier coaches meeting that no such races were to be conducted. In spite of this directive it is estimated that over 200 athletes participated in the unauthorized race thus placing all legitimate state qualifiers on the course at the time at risk of injury.

There are ample opportunities during the year for coaches to bring their athletes to Detweiller Park to compete in a race and receive a time on this course. The park district has worked with the IHSA to preserve the course through the year which is why there are no longer any sectional races allowed at Detweiller. Following sectionals, the course is intended to be saved for only those that have qualified and earned the right to compete on this historic and revered course at the state finals. It is inappropriate and disrespectful for coaches to place unneeded wear on the course the day before the state finals by bringing their non-qualifiers to race here. As stated earlier, an announcement was made at the 2:00 pm coaches meeting where coaches were formally and respectfully asked to respect the course and the actual qualifiers here at Detweiller that were attempting to get in a safe and unencumbered work out. Coaches were told that no open races had been approved by the IHSA and no such races were to take place. In spite of the formal announcement from IHSA meet officials, the open race occurred anyway. IHSA officials attempted to stop the race and their efforts were disrespectfully ignored by the participants. The safety of legitimate athletes working out on the course during this unauthorized race was jeopardized.

The IHSA must be able to maintain control of the course to guarantee the safety and welfare of those legitimate and authorized athletes that have qualified to participate in this special event. The consequence for coaches allowing their athletes to participate in such an event in the future must be severe. This situation must never again

occur in the future. Further, if implementation of this rule fails to solve the problem, and the IHSA fails to receive the complete cooperation from all schools and coaches on this matter, the IHSA will have no option but to close the course until Saturday morning. Clearly, if the IHSA cannot control the course environment then the IHSA cannot afford to open the facility for use by anyone.

Passed 8-0-1

Board of Directors Approved by Consent

2) VI.-E-2. 2016 State Final Meet

Recommendation: Allow any certified IHSA Cross Country coach or school official who is on the list of participants to attend the coaches meeting.

Rationale: This language clarifies the existing language in the terms and conditions. The advisory committee determined that any certified coach or school administrator from a member school would be qualified to attend the required coaches meeting. This would allow Principals, Athletic Directors, or Assistant coaches to attend the meeting and meet the requirement of school representation. The committee generally recognizes the importance of having the head coach attend, but believes the option should be made available to each qualifying school.

Passed 9-0-0

Board of Directors Approved by Consent

3) X. Awards: A. Regional

Recommendation: Increase the number of medals at each regional from five (5) to seven (7).

Rationale: The advisory committee would like to see the IHSA provide medals in a similar allotment that was previously distributed when the IHSA had 5 regional sites.

Passed 6-0-3

Board of Directors Died for Lack of Motion

4) VIII-P: Certified Medical Personnel

Recommendation: It is highly recommended that an Athletic Trainer or other EMS be present at Cross Country meets during the state series.

Rationale: The advisory committee concluded having a trainer or other certified medical personnel on site during the duration of all CC state series events is always a wise decision on meet managements part. Therefore the committee highly recommends the presence of certified medical staff be on-site for all state series meets.

Passed 9-0-0

Board of Directors Approved by Consent

The Cross Country Advisory committee reviewed and discussed the following topics which were submitted by state series hosts and others. No action was taken on any of the following items.

Change the method of breaking ties in cross-country

Rule 9-2 -4 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 one team does not have a sixth-place finisher, the team with the sixth-place finisher shall prevail.

Change: Ties in team scoring shall be broken by comparing IN ORDER the place finish of each of the five scoring members of the tied teams. The team with the majority of winning comparisons shall be awarded the higher finish.

This is the method that the NCAA adopted in 2013 to brake ties. (Section 6 Article 3, d)

Examples - from a previous season

CCL Conference Championships

Teams	Loyola	1	5	6	8	9	10
	St. Ignatius	2	3	4	7	13	17

The scores are tied. By the present method, Loyola having a lower place finisher for their sixth man, finished first. St. Ignatius is second. By the proposed method, St. Ignatius would have finished first with score of 3-2. Loyola has a faster 1st and 5th finisher, St. Ignatius, a faster 2-3 & 4 place finisher.

Niles West 3A Boys Sectional

Teams	York	2	22	36	38	46	60
	St. Ignatius	10	13	29	30	63	79

The scores are tied. By the present system, York having a faster 6-place finisher, finished 5th, St. Ignatius with the slower 6th place finisher was 6th.

By the proposed method, St. Ignatius would have finished 5th with a score of 3-2, having faster, 2-3 & 4, finishers.

Rational: The definition of a cross-country is seven runners, with five scoring and two pushing. The present rule favors teams with a large number of runners and penalizes small teams, especially those with only five runners. It allows the sixth man to become a scorer, which is contrary to the team definition. The proposal would also eliminate rule 9-2-5. "If only five competitors of tying teams finish, the tie shall be resolved by totaling the scores of the first four finishers." This rule favors the team with the slowest fifth runner.

-Committee discussed this recommendation. No action taken.

C. Require seeding of the starting boxes at the state meet:

Can the committee explain the current starting box assignment method for the state meet?

I understand it to be random and it appears that it is from my past experience at the meet.

However it's not very transparent. I did try to search for the methodology and only can find the suggestion for the sectional meet manager.

The reason I would like the committee to explore this matter is that the random nature of the current method sometimes puts sectional winners at a disadvantage for the state meet. It has happened many times where a Sectional winner is placed in an inside box which can put runners in a less than advantageous position for the first turn. This did not impact my team this year, but in 2013 my girls won sectionals and were placed in box 3. Ever since I've been curious about this issue.

I would offer to the committee that the state meet be seeded in some manner. Perhaps sectional winners could be placed in boxes closer to the center of the 36 boxes. There still could be a random placement within the boxes, with number 1 & 2 teams coming out of each sectional being placed within 10 boxes of the center. Then the 3, 4 & 5 sectional teams could be randomly assigned to fill out the field

Rational: The author suggests there is a disadvantage to starting from the outer boxes. He believes sectional team winners should be given the advantage of starting from the preferred boxes.

-Committee discussed this recommendation and determined more data was necessary to determine which boxes should be considered as "preferred boxes as well as who receives them" during the state finals. A committee may conduct research on this topic and discuss its findings at its 2016 meeting. No action taken.

D. Modify athlete check-in procedures at the state meet:

Final Declaration – Clerking and Check-In Procedure – NEW: The window for check-in will open 80 minutes prior to the start of each race (9:40 a.m. for the women and 10:40 a.m. for the men). Student-athletes are encouraged to check-in as soon as possible, and not later than 20 minutes prior to their race. When teams and individuals check-in at the clerking tent, they will be required to show that they have their hip numbers, bibs on their jersey, chips are securely attached to the appropriate location (bib), and that their uniforms meet the IHSA logo requirements. The head clerk will apply a small colored dot sticker to the bibs of student-athletes who have completed the check-in process. This will serve as a quick visual for assistant clerks at the start line that the student-athletes have completed the check in process. The clerking tent is also where teams are required to return any extra chips/bibs for additional student-athletes beyond the seven (7) that were declared. Reminder: Teams may not run more than seven (7) student-athletes. Student-athletes will NOT be allowed to check-in at the start line. All student-athletes must check-in at the clerking tent located immediately adjacent to the start line 20 minutes prior to the start of the race. The head clerk controls the master list of all the team and individual qualifiers that have and have not completed the check-in process. The clerks at the line will only be responsible for ensuring runners have reported to their appropriate boxes. There should be no need to check uniforms, chips, bibs, etc. at the start line.

Rational: Conducting the check-in prior to coming to the starting line will reduce the starting line congestion and provide for easier runouts for the competitors.

-Committee discussed this recommendation. Meet management will explore specific logistics necessary for possible future implementation. No action taken.