NFHS TRACK & FIELD AND CROSS COUNTRY 2026

EACH COACH IS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE EACH COURSE ANNUALLY:

ALL COURSES CAN BE FOUND AT
WWW.NFHSLEARN.COM

CONCUSSION IN SPORTS
HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION
SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST

ANNUAL OFFICALS CONCUSSION TRAINING

EACH CONTEST OFFICIAL IS REQUIRING TO COMPLETE THE CONCUSSION IN SPORTS COURSE AT WWW.NFHSLEARN.COM. THIS REQUIREMENT IS FOR EACH SCHOOL YEAR.

UPON COMPLETION OF THE COURSE THE CERTIFICATE SHOULD BE SENT TO SHEREE RIDDELL AT THE OSSAA. (sriddell@ossaa.com)

STUDENTS REMOVED FROM PLAY

IN ACCORDANCE WITH STATE LAW, ANY STUDENT REMOVED FROM PLAY MAY NOT RETURN TO PLAY WITHOUT WRITTEN CLEARANCE FROM A LICENSED MEDICAL PROVIDER TRAINED IN HEAD INJURY

EACH LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MUST DESIGNATE THE PROVIDER AUTHORIZED TO PROVIDE THE CLEARANCE FOR THEIR DISTRICT IN ADVANCE OF THE SEASON.

ONLY THE DESIGNATED PROVIDER MAY CLEAR A STUDENT FOR PLAY.

RETURN TO PLAY AND RETURN TO LEARN PROTOCOLS MUST BE FOLLOWED PRIOR TO GAINING CLEARANCE.

SPORTSMANSHIP

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT'S ADMINISTRATION TO MAINTAIN A CLIMATE OF GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP AT ALL LEVELS IN ALL CONTESTS.

UNRULY BEHAVIOR SHOULD NOT BE TOLERATED AND ANY INDIVIDUAL, COACH, PLAYER OR SPECTATOR SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM THE AREA IMMEDIATELY TO ALLOW THE CONTEST TO CONTINUE WITHOUT THE DISRUPTION OF DISTRACTING INDIVIDUALS.

THE OSSAA ENCOURAGES ALL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND COACHES TO TAKE A STRONG STAND AGAINST UNSPORTSMANLIKE ACTS.

SUSPENSION FROM ACTIVITIES

Any time an egregious act of unsportsmanlike conduct occurs two or more times during the same season, at the same school, in the same activity, the team and/or individual will be suspended from participation in that activity for the remainder of the season. Egregious acts of unsportsmanlike conduct will be defined as intances not within the OSSAA adopted rules of the contest. In the event the second act of misconduct occurs when there are no contests left in the current season, the penalty will be applied to the next season in the same activity. The OSSAA will notify the school that the the team and/or individual has been placed on warning after the first offense. Unsportsmanlike acts under this policy will include acts by coaches, players or spectators.

EXTREME HEAT

National Federation of State High School Associations

Take Part. Get Set For Life.™

EXTREME HEAT POLICY

Beginning July 1, 2026, the OSSAA Board of Directors implemented an Extreme Heat Policy. www.ossaa.com

Coaches are required to view the heat Acclimatization Video at WWW.NFHSLEARN.COM and keep a completion certificate on file.

HEAT ACCLIMATIZATION AND PREVENTION OF HEAT ILLNESS

- Exertional Heat Stroke (EHS) leading cause of preventable death in high school athletics
- Participation in high intensity, long-duration or repeated same day session sports in hot weather are at greatest risk
- NFHS offers free course “Heat Illness Prevention” www.nfhslearn.com

OKLAHOMA CROSS COUNTRY GROWTH OVER THE YEARS

source: OHSTRACK.COM

1937-1963	1 CLASS
1964-1983	2 CLASSES
1984-1989	3 CLASSES
1990-1995	4 CLASSES
1996-2023	5 CLASSES
2024-present	6 CLASSES

**0ver 1500 athletes raced at the 2025 State XC Meet.

Largest NFHS sport combined with over 1 million participants.

2026 XC DATES TO REMEMBER

- AUG 5 ZOOM RULES MTG 7:00 PM
- SEPT. 9 XC Entry Forms Due
- OCT. 10 XC Season Opens
- OCT. 17 CLASS A-4A REGIONAL MEETS
- OCT. 24 CLASS 5A-6A REGIONAL MEETS
- OCT. 24 CLASS A-4A STATE MEET @ Carl Albert HS
- OCT. 31 CLASS 5A-6A STATE MEET @ Ed.Santa Fe HS

NOV. 3 XC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MTG 2:00 PM

- NOV. 14 OK-ARK ALL STAR DUAL

REGIONAL HOSTS AND SITES 2026

A-4A	HENRYETTA
	BRIDGECREEK
	WAURIKA
	OBA
5A-6A	OWASSO
	MOORE

PRE-STATE AND STATE MEET INFORMATION

- **Classes A-4A October 24, 2026**
- Coach Bill Case
- Carl Albert High School

- **Classes 5A/6A October 31, 2026**
- Coach David Snow/Stephanie Lewis
- EDMOND SANTA FE HIGH SCHOOL

2026 CONTEST LIMITS

- High School teams/individuals are limited to **eight meets**, four of which must occur when there is no loss of instructional time, including travel time.

- Junior High teams/individuals are limited to **six meets**, two of which must occur when there is no loss of instructional time, including travel time.

2026 MEET LIMITS/START DATE

FIRST MEET…AUGUST 10

HIGH SCHOOL…….8……4/4

MIDDLE SCHOOL…6…..4/2

**Two practice meets of 4 or less teams are permitted, no entry, no awards, no loss of school time.

REGIONALS/STATE QUALIFYING INFORMATION 2026

- ASSIGNMENTS RELEASED OCT. 9 & OCT.16

- CLASS A-4A……3 (4) REGIONAL SITES
- CLASS 5A-6A….2 REGIONAL SITES

- CLASSES A-2A….TOP 5 TEAMS/12 INDIVIDUALS
- CLASS 3A……..TOP 5 TEAMS/ 7 INDIVIDUALS
- CLASS 4A……..TOP 6 TEAMS/ 7 INDIVIDUALS
- CLASSES 5A-6A..TOP 7 TEAMS/ 7 INDIVIDUALS

2026 CROSS COUNTRY TEAM SCORING /RUNNER LIMIT

- CLASSES 2A-6A TEAMS SHALL CONSIST OF NO MORE THAN 7 RUNNERS

- CLASS A TEAMS SHALL CONSIST OF NO MORE THAN 6 RUNNERS

The team score shall be determined by totaling the points scored by the first five finishers of each team in classes 2A-6A.

Class A, the first four finishers of each team.

STATE MEET STARTING LINE AND START RECALL PROCEDURES

- TEAMS WILL BE SEEDED BASED ON REGIONAL RESULTS. PREFERRED POSITIONS WLL BE FROM THE MIDDLE POINT WORKING OUTWARD.
- ALL INDIVIDUAL QUALIFIERS WILL BE ASSIGNED TO OUTSIDE BOX POSITIONS.
- IF A RUNNER FALLS DURING THE FIRST 50 METERS DUE TO CONTACT WITH ANOTHER RUNNER, THE RACE SHALL BE RECALLED.

CHIP TRANSPONDER/FINISH LINE/FINISH CORRAL

- A COMPETITOR SHALL WEAR THE ASSIGNED CONTESTANT NUMBER AND TRANSPONDER.
- GAMES COMMITTEE APPROVED IMAGE-BASED VIDEO MAY BE USED TO VERIFY THE ORDER OF FINISH WHEN THERE IS A CHALLENGE TO THE FINISH ORDER.
- A FINISH CORRAL WILL BE CONSTRUCTED BEYOND THE IDENTIFIED FINISH LINE.

CROSS COUNTRY TRAINING SAFELY

- Use sidewalks or run facing traffic.
- Stay alert…avoid wearing distracting audio electronics
- Cross all roads at crosswalks & intersections or at well lit locations.
- If dark, wear bright reflective materials/use flashlight or headlamp.
- Avoid running eastbound at sunrise and westbound at sunset
- Run in pairs/give verbal warnings
- TRUST YOUR EYES, NOT YOUR EARS (especially in windy conditions)

CROSS COUNTRY TRAINING SAFELY

- Educating athletes on where to go for safety in case of weather, emergency situations and hydration stops is crucial to athlete's safety.
- Carry identification and/or cell phone.
- If running alone, communicate the route you're running.
- Don't assume that cars will stop or see you. Give vehicles the right of way.

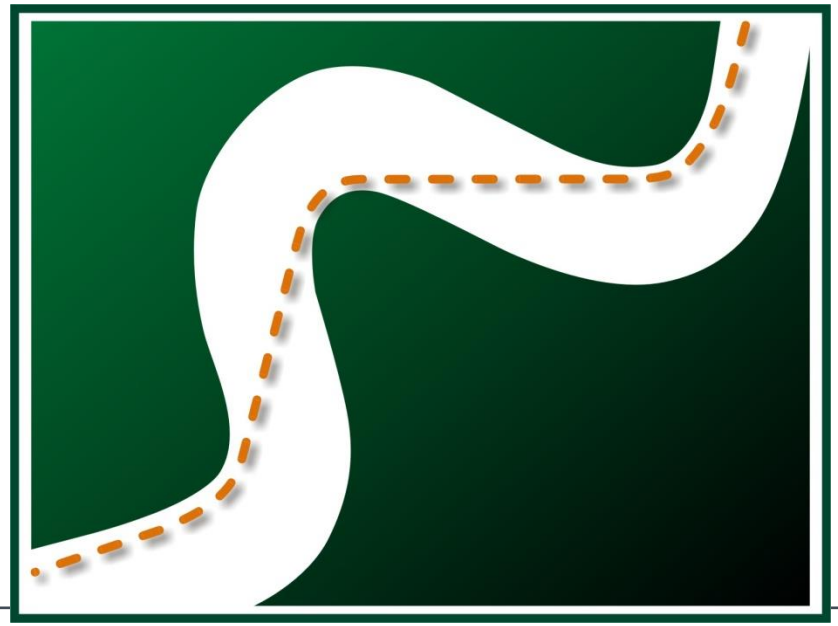
PROVIDING FLUIDS FOR COMPETITORS AT CROSS COUNTRY COMPETITIONS

- Participating schools should expect the availability of water unless meet organizers have specified otherwise in advance.
- It is the responsibility of the Games Committee, along with host school to provide liquids to athletes on race day.
- This does not limit the coach from providing liquids to his/her athletes in addition.

PROVIDING FLUIDS FOR COMPETITORS AT CROSS COUNTRY COMPETITIONS

CROSS COUNTRY COURSE RULE 9-1-1

- The cross country course shall be 2,500 to 5,000 meters (1.5 to 3.1 miles) in length, as determined by the games committee
- Measurement of the course shall be along the shortest possible

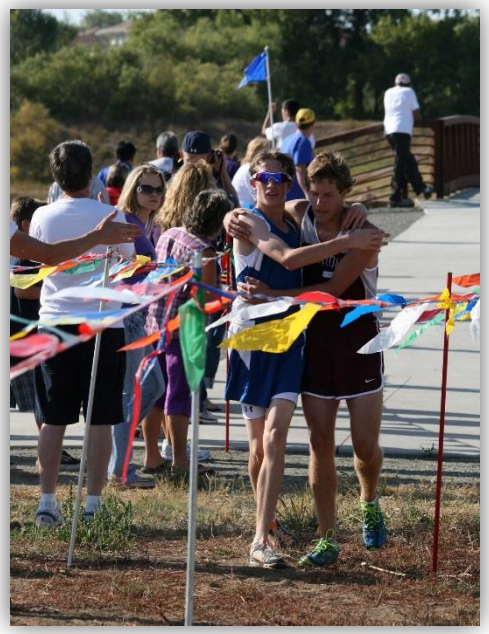


RENDERING AND RECEIVING ASSISTANCE

RENDERING AND RECEIVING ASSISTANCE

RECEIVING ASSISTANCE AND DISQUALIFICATION RULE 4-6-5-G

- A competitor is disqualified who:
  - (e) Receives 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 available, only the injured/ill competitor is disqualified
  - Every attempt should be made for the appropriate health-care professionals to make these decisions as to assistance.



Competitor's Uniform

Coach and competitor have primary responsibilities for competitor to report to event in legal uniform

Preventive officiating continues to be very important to avoid unnecessary violations pertaining to uniforms

Should a competitor need to change the uniform, such action should take place in an appropriate area and not cause a delay in the progress of the meet

CROSS COUNTRY UNIFORM REGULATIONS

- During a meet, the clerk of the course has the responsibility to check and enforce uniform, visible apparel and shoe regulations
- Prior to meet the ultimate responsibility rests with the coach
  - No valid reason for athlete to show up in illegal uniform
  - If athlete is purchasing a component of the uniform or permitted attire, coach must make certain the athlete and parents are educated on what will be rule compliant

4-3-1-b-2
Competitor's uniform in track and field and cross country

- The top or one-piece uniform may have school name, school logo, school nickname and/or competitor's name.

UNIFORMS

- UNIFORMS MUST BE WORN AS INTENDED BY THE MANUFACTURER. THE WAISTBAND OF A CONTESTANT'S SHORTS SHALL BE WORN ABOVE THE HIPS.

- JERSEYS SHALL TOUCH THE SHORTS IN A STANDING POSITION (NO BARE MIDRIFF)

www.nfhs.org

4-3-1 Competitor's uniform in track and field and cross country

- Anything worn under the uniform is now considered a foundation garment. Foundation garments are not subject to logo/trademark/reference or color restrictions.

- All uniform rules (track and field and cross country) now fall in rule 4-3.

Competitor's uniform rule 4-3-1

- Rule 4-3-1:

a. Each competitor shall wear shoes on both feet.

1. The shoes shall have an upper and definitely recognizable sole and heel.
2. The (shoe) upper must be designed so that it can be fastened securely to the foot.
3. In cross country, the sole and heel may contain grooves, ridges or track spikes which are no longer than 1 inch.

4. The use of slippers or socks does not meet the requirements of the rule.

NFHS PARTNER GILL ATHLETICS

Uniforms – Waistbands, Trim, Accents and compliance

- When evaluating color of uniforms, slight variations in shade of the color should not be considered an automatic violation of Rule 4-3-2.

- It is expected that all relay team members and cross country team members can be clearly identified as representing the same school.

New "Waistband" Multi Logo Rule Rule 4-3-1-b-5

5. A single manufacturer's logo/trademark/reference, no more than 2¼ square inches with no dimension more than 2¼ inches, is permitted on the top and bottom or one-piece uniform. Bottoms may have manufacturer's logo/trademark/references larger than 2¼ square inches around the waistband.

“Waistband” Multiple Logos

NOW RULED AS A LEGAL UNIFORM BOTTOM

Competitor's Uniform
Rules 4-3-1,2 and 9-6-1,2 Penalties

- Competitor observed in an illegal uniform:
  - Observed and noted by official prior to competition – competitor required to make the uniform legal before allowed to compete and without delay of meet
  - Competitor shall be issued a warning and subsequent violation of uniform rule results in disqualification from event
- Referee shall be notified of violation by observing meet official
  - Referee shall notify or cause to be notified the head coach of offending school of competitor's violation and warning or disqualification

Cross Country Penalties for Rules 9-6-1, 2

- Wearing an illegal uniform has a penalty separate from the not wearing or altering the assigned number or transponder (Penalty 1)
- Penalties for not wearing or altering the assigned number or transponder results in disqualification
- Should there be an irregularity creating this problem, such incident shall be addressed by the referee (Penalty 2)

Point of PoE Emphasis

Prohibition of Wearing Jewelry Removed

- Jewelry and hair accessories are no longer illegal
  - An official may ask a competitor to remove an accessory if it is not properly secured or could damage equipment
- Religious and medical alert medals are legal and no longer required to be taped to the body
  - When wearing a medical alert, the alert should be visible for risk minimization

Competitor's Watch

- Communication with a competitor, by means of a smart watch or any electronic device shall not be permitted during a race.
- Otherwise, a watch is not considered an aid.
- It is an unfair act when a competitor receives any assistance.
- Penalty: A competitor shall be disqualified from the event.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

***SUNGLASSES no longer require a doctors note however referee shall have authority to monitor appropriate/functional style.

INHALERS require a doctors note.

HATS, CAPS, BANDANAS, SKULL CAPS….

NOT ALLOWED

YES

NO

RIBBONS AND BOWS

YES

NO

head ties with tailings are illegal headwear

www.nfhs.org

GAMES COMMITTEE-VIDEO REPLAY RULE 3-2-7

- Video replay or television monitoring equipment, other than the official equipment approved by the games committee prior to the start of competition, shall not be used to make decisions related to the meet

Use of Electronic Devices Rule 3-2-8

- Electronic devices may be used in unrestricted areas and coaching boxes, providing the location does not interfere with progress of the meet as determined by the meet referee
  - Electronic devices shall not be used to transmit information to the competitor during the race or trial
  - Electronic devices shall not be used for any review of an official's decision
  - State associations may also have policies in place to further address the use of electronic devices
- Penalties:
  - A competitor shall be disqualified from the event
  - Team personnel (e.g. coach, manager, etc.) shall be disqualified from further participation in the meet for unsporting conduct

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- STAY A SAFE DISTANCE FROM THE COURSE (COACHES, MANAGERS, FANS)
- PACING (5 OR MORE STRIDES) IS ILLEGAL.
- *Do not throw water on runners during a race

*Runners must run “close” to the painted course lines during competition.

***AFTER THE RACE, RUNNERS SHALL CONTINUE MOVING THROUGH THE FINISH AREA.**

TRACK & FIELD AND CROSS COUNTRY

QUESTIONS??

CONTACT INFORMATION

CROSS COUNTRY RULES INTERPRETERS

RANDY BELICEK
randybelicek73@gmail.com
405-763-7434

TIM PALESANO
tpalesano@gmail.com
580-330-2292

OSSAA ADMINISTRATOR:

Lenny Hatchett
lhatchett@ossaa.com
405-840-1116