



Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union

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Iowa High School Athletic Association

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September 25, 2013

Dear Cross Country Coaches and Officials,

We have been able to get out and see a number of meets and are very pleased with the great student and fan participation we have seen. Member schools have done an excellent job organizing meets and providing a competitive opportunity for a large number of students. We attended a meet on a 93 degree day and the host school was well prepared to handle the adverse conditions and made excellent choices in adapting race length to the conditions. Hopefully the hot weather is over. It does appear that the weather will be staying warmer than normal through next week.

State Qualifying Meet Assignments – According to our manuals, State Qualifying Meet assignments are scheduled to be released the week of October 7. We will review the October 9 rankings from the Iowa Association of Track Coaches (IATC) and then make the final assignments. Don't start calling on Monday as the assignments will not be posted until later in the week depending on when we see the IATC rankings. Keep submitting meet results to Bill Neal (bill.neal@mchsi.com). The more meet results received the better the accuracy of the rankings.

Meet Postponements/Cancellations – Hopefully we are at a point in the season when there will not be anymore cancellations or postponements. However, this is still a chance for stormy weather that may cause postponement and even cancellations. As we have explained, we have a very liberal policy for rescheduling events. There have been schools taking advantage of that liberal policy and there will likely be a change for the future. We will work with the Cross Country Advisory Committee and the IATC in making recommendations to our Boards. It was never the intent of the policy to have schools schedule a new event on the same day as an existing event or so near to an existing date that varsity contracts were not honored. We have had schools do this and there will be discussion regarding adding meets to a schedule to replace cancelled meets.

Wheelchair Competitors – We have not heard from any member schools regarding having wheelchair participants in cross country this fall. This is the last call for any member schools to let us know if they have wheelchair competitors.

Number of Scoring Competitors – This will probably not be an issue for the remainder of the season, but we have had member schools share their concerns with us. The NFHS Rules do not dictate the number of competitors that may be entered, but the rules do specifically state how many finishers displace opposing runners and how many finishers should be used to determine the team score. We understand that in meets with smaller schools the host may wish to have six (6) runners displacing opposing runners and four (4) finishers used to determine the score. We believe this is a poor practice. The IHSAA and the IGHSAA at State Qualifying Meets and the State Meet have seven (7) entries with five (5) finishers scoring. Someone may be thinking “what's the big deal?” The “big deal” is that using this scoring system places quality teams at a

disadvantage. It can also cause better teams to not do as well in team standings. Team standing are reviewed for rankings without knowing how many finishers scored. We believe as we get into the later portion of the season this practice will no longer occur. We understand the reason for doing this, but it does have implications.

Sunglasses – We continue to get calls about students wearing sunglasses during competition. In the meets we have attended we see very few students wearing sunglasses. Coaches and officials, the wearing of sunglasses, whether prescription or not, is legal. The only guideline, which is the sole judgment of the referee, is whether the design of the sunglasses is an attempt to draw attention to the runner. It is not extremely difficult to determine whether a runner is wearing a common pair of sunglasses or sunglasses that are intended to draw attention to the runner.

Uniforms Violations – In our attendance at meets we have noticed very few illegal uniforms. However there are both boy and girl runners wearing bottoms and undergarments with waistbands that have numerous manufacture’s logos. The waistband cannot say “NIKE NIKE NIKE NIKE” all the way around the waist. The waistband can say “NIKE” one time. We understand that observation during the race is a warning and no one will be disqualified. Remember, no warnings are issued prior to the race. To start the race runners must be in a legal uniform and should be asked to replace the shorts or undergarments if discovered in the starting box area.

Junior High Competitors – Please remember that by Department of Education rules, interscholastic competition is only allowed for seventh (7th) through twelfth (12th) graders. We understand that the Middle School concept can cause confusion. The point is that sixth (6th) graders are not allowed to compete in Junior High cross country meets. We will try to emphasize this earlier next year to avoid the violation of Department of Education rules that have occurred this season.

We hope to get out to more meets in the coming weeks. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact either of our offices. We will communicate questions and concerns to all coaches and officials through this type of correspondence.

Sincerely,



John Overton
Assistant Director



David Anderson
Assistant Executive Director