



Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union
5000 Westown Parkway, Suite 150 - West Des Moines, Iowa 50266 - (515) 288-9741



Iowa High School Athletic Association
PO Box 10 - Boone, Iowa 50036 - (515) 432-2011

September 24, 2015

Dear Cross Country Coaches, Athletic Directors and Officials-

Where has this season gone? It's hard to believe that we are already halfway through the competitive season and that the state qualifying meets are four weeks from today. We continue to be amazed at both the performances and the number of participants competing in the meets we have observed. Just think how many volleyball matches or football games it would take for 1,400 students to participate? And yet, in cross country, this large number can participate at the same site and on the same day. It is a credit to you as coaches for promoting and growing the sport of cross country.

State Qualifying Meet Assignments – According to our manuals, State Qualifying Meet assignments will be released the week of October 5. We will review the October 8 IATC rankings and then make the final assignments. Please do not start calling our offices first thing Monday the 5th, as the assignments will not be posted until later in the week when we receive the IATC rankings. Keep submitting meet results to Greg Blank (iaxcresults@gmail.com) as many of you have earlier this season to help make the rankings more accurate.

Head Bands & Hair Devices – During our meet visits, we have been stopped and asked the difference between a head band and a hair device. Both items are allowed by rule, but each have a specific purpose and unique rules. A head band is meant to keep perspiration off an athlete's face and out of his/her eyes. A head band needs to be a single solid color, unadorned except for a manufacturer's logo or school logo, and no wider than 2 ¼ inches. A head band must be worn on and around the forehead. Head bands are a continuous piece of cloth and do not required to be tied or knotted. Bandanas folded to have a head band appearance are not legal. A hair device is something that is worn to aid in controlling the hair and keeping it back and out of the face of an athlete. Barrettes, hair pins, and ribbons are some examples of hair devices. These items can be adorned. As the name implies, these devices are worn in the hair. To keep it simple for our coaches and officials, if it is in the hair, it is considered a hair device. Remember all other head gear and hats are not allowed unless an exception is made for adverse weather conditions.

Watches – The FitBit portion of our last memo has caused some confusion with regards to wrist watches. Wrist watches are legal to wear during competition as long as there are no GPS capabilities. The interpretation for wrist watches is the same for cross country as it is track and field. As stated in the NFHS rule book (4-6-5 Note 2), "The use of a watch worn around the wrist is not considered an aid for racing." Therefore, it is legal for a participant may check his/her wrist watch for a split time during a race.


Attire In The Competition Area – It has been warm for a number of meets but competitors for schools should not be in the competition area without a uniform, shirt or other appropriate attire. We have had numerous reports of male competitors not wearing shirts as they observe junior high, junior varsity and female races. There has also been some concern expressed about the attire of female competitors. This practice is not acceptable. The competition area is very large at a cross country meet, but students representing their schools should be wearing appropriate clothing. There currently is no policy about competitor's attire when not running and this can be corrected by coaches talking to their athletes. The IHSAA and the IGHS AU do not want to have to create a policy to deal with this issue.

Providing Participants Water During Competition – Again, due to the warm weather this fall, we received a number of calls asking if coaches could hand water to athletes during a race. Coaches are allowed to give liquids to his/her team members provided it is in an unrestricted area. Both organizations believe it is much more appropriate for the games committee to provide liquids for all competitors at specific points along the course when temperature and/or humidity could cause a concern for the competitors' welfare.

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

Best of luck as we entered the last half of the season. Again, if we can be of assistance, don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Jared Chizek
Assistant Director



John Overton
Assistant Director