



***Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union***

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***Iowa High School Athletic Association***

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September 13, 2012

Dear Cross Country Coaches and Officials,

The cross country season has been plagued with hot and windy conditions so far this season. Hopefully we will soon transition to cooler and more fall like weather. You have done a great job of taking care of the student athletes in the warm conditions and have been making appropriate accommodations during competition and practice. We want to discuss a few issues with you that have been called into our offices.

**Contracted Meets** – We are getting our usual questions that come up this time of year about outstanding individuals going to compete in meets where the rest of the team does not compete. Remember, your school is allowed 10 varsity meets. When a student attends a varsity meet, even by themselves, it counts as a meet for your school. There is no such thing as a student running “unattached” in a high school meet. Don’t let this happen at your school. Member schools exceeding the meet limitation have faced significant consequences.

**State Qualifying Meet Assignments** – As published in both manuals, we will determine the assignments for the state qualifying meets after we receive the IATC rankings on Wednesday, September 26. The two staffs will meet and review the rankings, other meet results and geography before we post the assignments on the websites during the week of October 1.

**Attire In The Competition Area** – It has been hot 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 IGHSAA do not want to have to create a policy to deal with this issue.

**Reporting Meet Results** – Almost all of you coaches are receiving emails from Iowa TFXC.com regarding the reporting of your results. The IHSAA and the IGHSAA have no concerns about results being reported and how those results are being shared with the public. We do want to make certain that you understand that your participation in submitting meet results is not a requirement of the IHSAA or the IGHSAA. There also is no requirement for the use of any particular software for managing and scoring your meets.

**Number Of Competitors Composing A Team** – We have had telephone calls from both coaches and officials regarding how many runners a team must have. The concern has been raised when a school may have multiple junior varsity runners but less than seven runners on the varsity team. The NFHS Rule Book states: “A cross country team shall consist of seven members unless otherwise agreed.” This statement is often misinterpreted to mean that a team must have seven runners. The intent of the statement is to indicate the maximum number of cross country runners that can be part of a team. The phrase “unless otherwise agreed” allows you to have unlimited number of runners at the lower levels and even more than seven at the varsity level if determined by the host school. There is no requirement to place a junior varsity runner in the varsity race to make certain that a team has seven varsity runners. There is no advantage gained, and in fact if displacement scoring is used,

having fewer than seven can be a disadvantage. Obviously, if a school has less than five runners entered or finish that school cannot be a team place winner.

**Jewelry** - Both coaches and officials need to understand the change that was made in the jewelry rule. Jewelry is illegal and is not allowed. If discovered before the race begins, it shall be removed before the competitor is allowed to run. If discovered during the race, the competitor receives a warning and is not disqualified. It is virtually impossible to be disqualified in cross country for wearing jewelry unless discovered before the race begins and the competitor refuses to remove the jewelry or puts jewelry back on after having been warned.

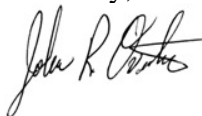
**Disqualifying Information** - Officials, remember, only the meet referee/starter has the authority to disqualify a competitor. If a violation is observed by a meet official, the official should report the violation to the referee who will determine if a disqualification will occur. Referees, please remember the only credible source of information for a disqualification must come from a meet official or from your personal observation of a violation. Violations reported by coaches or competitors are not grounds for disqualification unless verified by a meet official or yourself.

**Junior Varsity Uniforms** – The best thing about the cross country meets we have attended this fall is the large number of competitors. With junior high, junior varsity and varsity races it is not uncommon to have over a thousand students in the competition. With the large number of junior high and junior varsity runners it is virtually impossible to have all of the competitors at those levels in the same uniform. The uniform worn by a competitor shall be school issued and an effort needs to be made to have those uniforms similar for school identification. The more stringent application of the uniform rule used for varsity races does not need to be enforced at the lower levels as we provide the opportunity for large numbers of students to compete.

**Wheelchair Competitors** – We are trying to determine a count of our wheelchair competitors. If your school has either a boy or a girl participating in cross country using a wheelchair or sit down cycle, please notify the appropriate organization immediately.

We have about a month remaining in the competitive season. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact our offices.

Sincerely,



John Overton  
Assistant Director



David Anderson  
Assistant Executive Director