

Monroe County Cross Country League Coaches Handbook

INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been developed to standardize procedures at meets. Cross-Country has always had the reputation of being a sport with few conflicts or problems. Our intention is to maintain that reputation through a coordinated approach in running our meets. It is the **responsibility of the host schools to organize and run their designated meets**. Host schools are encouraged to call fellow schools they are competing against each week for any additional help they may need. (We are all in this together so we need to help each other out if possible.) The use of assistants and/or managers will help to run meets smoothly and efficiently (advanced planning will have a positive impact on running your meet). If problems arise, coaches should contact the primary host coach immediately. If the problems continue (poor organization, scoring, starting, rule enforcement, etc.), or are not handled according to this handbook, coaches should contact their chairperson for further action. During the season, each school is responsible for hosting a least one league meet with the exception of the schools that volunteer to produce the website and record league results. The season schedule will denote the host school for each meet with an *. Responsibilities of the host school are outlined below:

A. ENFORCEMENT OF RULES

1. It is the responsibility of the host school's coach to enforce all the rules of Cross-Country as laid out in the State and Federation Rulebooks. Rules are listed in appendix 4 of the handbook. Rules that seem to cause the most problems are listed below:
 - a. Section 6, Articles 1-5 deal with disqualification.
 - b. Uncalled for roughness of any kind shall lead to disqualification of the runner(s) concerned.
 - c. Any language that is abusive or obscene shall call for disqualification of the runner(s) who use such language.
 - d. It is the responsibility of the coach to inform his/her athletes of proper etiquette and sportsmanship.

* All infractions of rules must be observed by a coach, official or admitted to by a runner when confronted with the issue.

** An athlete disqualified for un-sportsmanlike conduct must have his/her school file a report concerning that incident with Section V.

B. STARTING TIMES AND ORDER OF RACES

1. In general, starting times for all meets shall be 4:30 PM. However, whenever possible, a team should be given sufficient time (a minimum of 20 minutes) to warm up.
2. If a team has not arrived by 4:30 PM, wait 15 more minutes, then start the races.
3. The order of races is as follows:
 - a. Varsity and JV Boys
 - b. Modified
 - c. Varsity and JV Girls

At mid season, the Varsity Girls and Boys races will reverse. If a varsity team has not arrived by 4:45, start the modified race, then run the varsity races in their proper order.

4. Meet level designation
 - a. All seven varsity runners (the first 7 scoring, and any additional runners (excluding JV's) up to a total of 18 may run in the varsity race. **All seniors must run in the Varsity race.** All runners beyond the top seven are displaced in scoring.

- b. The JV team will be composed of all 9th, 10th, and 11th graders who have not made the varsity top seven. **Two chutes will be provided** and the **right hand chute** (from the point of view of the incoming runners) will **always be the VARSITY chute, AND IT WILL BE MARKED “A”**. When an athlete enters a chute, he or she will be recorded as a finisher in that race.

If coaches wish to avoid using two chutes and still run a JV competition the following protocol could be followed:

1. *Coaches submit a JV roster to the officials prior to the meet. These names are irretrevable after the meet starts.*
2. *During scoring, these names can be marked on the time sheet. When scoring Varsity, these runners will not be counted in scoring.*
3. *The JV can be scored on a separate sheet. This may be handled by the officials, the coach setting up the course, or any coach involved in the competition.*

C. UNIFORMS

1. Each member of each team is required to wear a team uniform in competition.
2. **Rule for the need of identical equipment worn under the uniform is waived for league meets.**

D. COURSES

1. See attached course maps (appendix 1). These are updated.
2. Primary and secondary host coaches are responsible for sufficiently marking the course and explaining the markings to all runners and coaches sometime before the start of the race. (See Federation Rules, appendix 4, for proper marking.)
3. All coaches should agree upon any course changes, alterations (due to weather, repairs, etc.) before the start of the race. Any alterations must be reported to the league chairs and the person recording league results.
4. Course sites:

There are alternate course sites in case of poor conditions. The county chairpersons are responsible for contacting all coaches, schools, athletic directors, and assignor of officials concerning a site change due to site problems. All coaches must receive ONE week notice of change. In case of emergency situations such as flooding, fallen trees, etc., a 24 hour notice will be sufficient. After that deadline, the meet will to be postponed. In the event that two meets must be scheduled at one site due to emergency conditions, the ORDER OF EVENTS must be agreed upon by ALL parties involved.

E. STARTING LINE PROCEDURES

1. ORDER ON THE LINE:
Runners will line up by teams with the order determined by PICK OF THE DRAW (numbers, straws, etc.) The first **five** runners of each team will take a place on the line, with the remaining runners behind them. JV's will be on the outside of the starting line: Varsity on the inside. **This will be determined by the direction of the first turn in the course.**
2. STARTING COMMAND PROCEDURE:
The command shall be “ON YOUR MARKS”. When all competitors are steady, the pistol shall be fired. For an unfair start, the starter or assistant shall recall the runners by firing the pistol. **If a runner falls during the first 100 meters due to contact with another runner, the race shall be recalled by firing the pistol.** (Federation –Rule 9 –3-3)
3. OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES:
 - a. It is the responsibility of the host school to provide the **AED** at the start/finish area

- b. Primary host coach will give adequate warning of the start of each race (first call 10 minutes, second call 5 minutes before the race). They will call runners to the line and answer any questions about the course. They will direct line-up order, explain finish procedures (cards, chutes) and check to see that the timers are ready. There must be at **least three timers**.
- c. It is the host school responsibility to provide vouchers for officials.

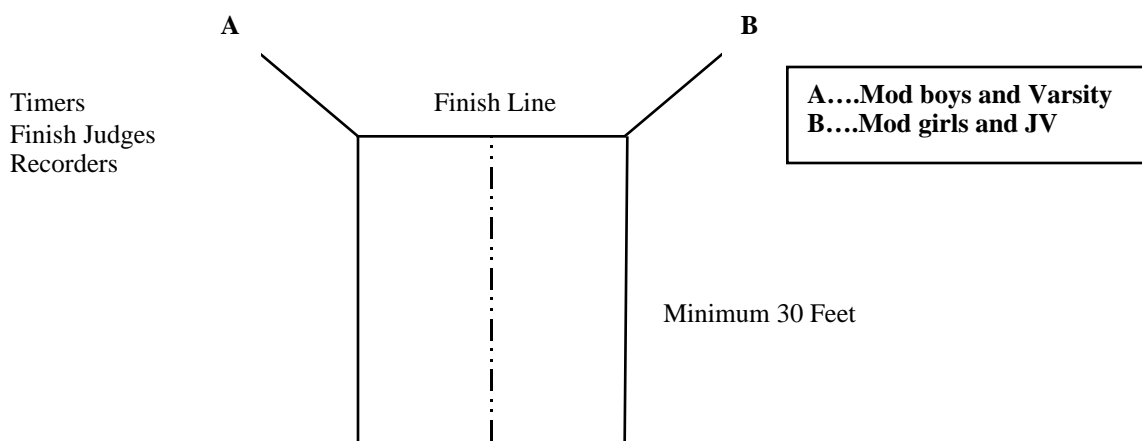
4. OFFICIATING:

The host school may use certified officials in lieu of the host coaches running the meet. To get officials, contact **Rick Smith at 352-6505 (h) 477-1228 (w)**.

F. FINISH LINE PROCEDURES

1. Chutes:

Provide a sufficient area BEFORE the actual finish line. Continue the chute approximately 30 feet BEFORE distributing the finish cards. **Any change in the A/B chute system must be by unanimous agreement of the coaches involved at the meet site.** See chute diagram below:



2. Cards:

- a. Cards must be easily identified as to each race. **Use color codes for Varsity Boys, Varsity Girls, JV Boys, JV Girls, Modified Boys, and Modified Girls.**
- b. Have enough cards to handle the maximum number of runners in the race (72 for 4 schools, 90 for 5 schools). Have extra cards available just in case. Coaches should turn in their cards to the host coach within 10 minutes of the races conclusion. **USE RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUALS** to hand out cards, process runners through the chute, and to score the races. The host school's coach or coaches are ultimately responsible for the operation of the races and overall meet management.

3. Timing:

A time should be recorded for each finisher for each race. **There must be 3 watches operating for each race.**

G. SCORE SHEETS

All coaches will use the OFFICIAL CROSS-COUNTRY SCORE SHEET format, available at the coaches' pre-season meeting. Sheets should be scored as soon as possible after each race (preferably before the finish of each succeeding race). The host coach is responsible for distributing results to all coaches as soon as possible before the schools leave. Sample score sheets are in appendix 2.

H. TEAM SCORING PROCEDURE (DUAL MEET SCORING FOR ALL LEAGUE MEETS)

- 1. Copy from the 1999 Rule Book (page 59):

Art 1. Scoring shall be as shown in the following table:

Place	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th ...
Points	1	2	3	4	5	6 ...

Art. 2. All competitors who finish the race shall be ranked and tallied in accordance with the above table. The team score shall then be determined by totaling the points scored by the first five finishers of each team. The team which scores the fewest number of points is the winner.

Art. 3. If fewer than 5 competitors of a team finish, the places of all members of that team shall be disregarded and the team scores re-ranked. Dual meet score is 15-50.

Art. 4. Ties in team scoring shall be resolved by comparing the 6th place finishers from the tying teams. The team with the best 6th place finisher shall prevail. If one team does not have a 6th place finisher, the team with the 6th place finisher shall prevail.

Art 5. If only five competitors of tying teams finish, the team scoring shall be resolved by totaling the scores of the first four finishers.

2. Displacement:

Displacement must be computed before a final score is determined. Refer to sample sheet (appendix 2). Note that on each team, runners 8-18 are not figured in the scoring and the other teams' 1st through 7th runners places are adjusted accordingly. Displacement is figured because although 18 runners may compete, only the first 7 on each team count overall.

3. Protests/Appeals:

PROTEST

Either coach may protest a meet at any point in the meet. The protesting coach must notify the opposing coach and have all officials indicate, in writing, in all score books, at the point of infraction. The protesting coach, with written verification from his/her Athletic Director must write a complete explanation of the protest (including the rule violated). The written protest must be received by the Sports Chairperson, by delivery or certified mail, within 48 hours from the time of protest.

Copies of the verified, written explanation of the protest must be received by protest:

- Opposing school/schools Coaches
- Opposing school/schools Boys Coordinator
- Opposing school/schools Girls Coordinator
- Opposing school/schools Athletic Director

The decision and disposition of the protest will be rendered, in writing, by the Chairperson within 72 hours upon receipt of written protest. The Chairperson must get written statements from the opposing coach and all officials prior to reaching a decision.

The written decision, must be received by the protesting Coach/Athletic Director, by delivery or certified mail, within the stated 72 hours from the Chairperson.

Copies of the decision must be received, by delivery or certified mail within the stated 72 hours from the Chairperson, by those listed in #3 above.

Any situation not covered in this procedure should follow the procedure for an appeal. (see below)

APPEAL

The written appeal must be received, within 48 hours upon receipt of the Chairperson's decision, by delivery or certified mail, by the following:

- Opposing school/schools Coaches
- Opposing school/schools Athletic Director
- Opposing school/schools Executive Secretary/President

The Executive committee will act on the appeal and render a decision as soon as possible.

Copies of appeal and subsequent decision must be received within 72 hours of the decision being rendered in committee, and delivered as stated above, by the same. (listed #1)

Note:

All protests must be confined to MCPSAA Inter-Scholastic Varsity contest.

If the above time frame is not adhered to, protest will not be addressed.

Saturdays, Sundays, Holidays, snow days, and school vacation days are exempt in the above stated time restrictions.

In the absence of the Athletic Director the protest must be signed by the respective building principal.

I. REPORTING RESULTS

1. Host coach is responsible for reporting meet results for the boys and girls teams to the Democrat & Chronicle as soon as possible after the meet. The number is 258-2400
2. Each individual coach is required to enter their Top Ten Finishers for each league meet race to the online database located at www.tytler.net/mcxcws by 6:00 pm the next day.
3. ONLY the host coach will report team scores to the online database located at www.tytler.net/mcxcws by 6:00 pm the next day.

J. SPORTS STANDARDS FOR INTERSCHOOL COMPETITION

1. Number of practices prior to 1st scrimmage (Team 10, Individual 8)
2. **Number of practices prior to 1st contest (Team 10, Individual 10)**
3. Team and individual number of contests is 18.
4. Minimum time between contests is 2 nights.
5. Individual limitations per day – 5,000 meters or 3.1 miles.
6. To enter and run in a sanctioned meet, a runner must have met the minimum standard of practices needed to participate in the contest. (MCPSAA minutes, September 29, 1998)
7. Practices may only count when they meet the handbook description of a practice (NYSPHSAA Handbook p. 66: 23.a)

K. CROSS-COUNTRY COACHES' ETIQUETTE

1. All coaches should provide a model of good behavior for their athletes and should exemplify good professional conduct. Any departure from good professional conduct could result in a letter from the County Chairperson to the athletic director and coach. Follow the proper League Protest Procedure.
2. It is the responsibility of the host school to “properly run” all meets assigned. These obligations include starting and scoring as well as marking the course, providing traffic safety on courses where runners cross roads, and making sure that the course is cleaned up before the teams depart. It is expected that Non-hosting schools will offer assistance.

L. ALL-LEAGUE SELECTION

1. A runner must compete in two-thirds of the league schedule (4 league meets) to be considered All County. **Coaches must notify the County Chairperson with the name of any athlete that does not have the 4 required league meets and will be completing in the Monroe County Championship Varsity Race.**
2. The first 28 finishers at the Monroe County Championship Varsity Race will be named to the “First Team” All County Cross-Country Team (certificate and patch).
3. The next 28 finishers at the Monroe County Championship Varsity Race, will be named to the “2nd Team” All County (certificate only).

M. COUNTY CHAIRPERSONS

1. Limit term to 3 years (No Consecutive terms).
2. Duties of chairpersons include:
 - Prepare schedule
 - represent league to AD's and Sectional XC Committee
 - organize and run Monroe County Championship Meet
 - hear and decide protests
 - conduct pre and post season meetings and provide minutes of meetings
 - assume other responsibilities as outlined in chairman's handbook

3. Election of Chairpersons

At the pre-season meeting during the final year (3rd year) of the current tenure. These newly elected chairpersons will work in conjunction with the present chairpersons for one season in order to facilitate a smooth transition.

N. POST SEASON COMPETITION

1. An athlete must compete in **six (6) SANCTIONED MEETS IN ORDER TO COMPETE AT SECTIONALS OR STATES.**
2. If an athlete does not have six meets, a letter of appeal must be submitted for that athlete, explaining why that athlete has not competed in six meets. If it is for sickness or injury, medical documentation is needed.
3. The coach must submit his/her entries for the Sectionals by the due date. Usually, this is the Wednesday prior to the Monroe County Championship Meet. All signatures are required. Please follow the directions in the Section V Handbook, as failure to do so may result in your team being barred from the Sectional Championship.
4. **7 athletes** from the roster of 10 may compete in the Sectional Championship race.
5. The winning team in each class, and the first five individual finishers not on the winning team will advance to the NYSPHSAA Championships. In Class DD and D, only one team will advance and the top 5 individuals overall.

O. HANDBOOK VALIDITY

Each season shall be governed by those rules and policies adopted at the post season meeting of the previous season and the pre-season meeting of the current season. In **NO** case shall rules or policies be added, amended or suspended at the post season meeting and applied to the season just completed.