



Boys and Girls Cross Country Running Rules, Policies, and Bylaws

General Information

See the [MSHSL Handbook Page](#) for information regarding the following:

- Multiple-Level Teams at Sub-Varsity Level
- Official Squad Size
- Substitution in MSHSL Tournaments
- Weather Conditions (heat, cold, lightning)

See the MSHSL Official Handbook [Bylaw 501](#) for information regarding:

- Maximum Number of Contests

See the MSHSL Official Handbook [Bylaw 502](#) for information regarding:

- Daily and Season Player Participation Limitations

CONTEST RULES (Refer to [Bylaw 402](#)): Except as modified by the League, the National Federation of High School Association Track and Field rules for the current year shall be the official game rules for all interscholastic contests in which League members participate.

END OF SEASON (Refer to [Bylaw 411](#))

A. Student Participation on a Non-School Team While the Season is Still in Progress:

1. The season shall end when the student or the student's team has been eliminated from further participation in a League tournament series.
2. Students who have been eliminated from further participation in a League tournament series may participate as an individual or as a member of a non-school team in that sport.

B. School Team Practice and Competition:

The "end of season" shall be defined to be the last date of the state tournament in that sport.

1. Schools may continue to conduct practice and training for all squad members, including the students who have been eliminated from further individual competition in a League-sponsored series, until completion of the state tournament conducted by the League in that activity.
2. Dual contests may be scheduled after the start of the official League tournament series providing the school does not exceed the maximum number of games/matches/meets permitted in that activity.

C. No school may engage in any meet or meets, practice, training or other activities between the end of the season and the opening of the next season.

D. During the Summer Vacation Period ([Bylaw 208](#) Non-School Competition and Training—Team and Individual Sports) members of a high school team may participate on a non-school team, and they may

receive coaching or training from a salaried or non-salaried member of the student's sophomore, B-squad, junior varsity or varsity high school coaching staff in that sport provided the school has approved a summer coaching waiver for the coach or coaches of that sport.

VIDEO TAPING ANOTHER SCHOOL'S GAME: It shall be an ethical violation to tape another school's game, meet or contest without their permission. Further it may be a violation of the laws governing copyrights. Each school owns the copyrights to their games, meets and contests. Taping another school's game without permission could constitute a violation of the copyright law.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SPECTATOR CONDUCT

In order to elevate standards of sportsmanship and encourage the growth of responsible citizenship among the students, member schools, fans and school personnel, the MSHSL held a Sportsmanship Summit and asked student participants to identify behavior expectations they felt should be in place at every school event.

These minimum behavior expectations provide a foundation upon which member schools, conferences, administrative regions and the League's Board of Directors can build specific guidelines for activities under their control.

MSHSL [Bylaw 409](#), **RESPONSIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATING TEAMS, STUDENTS AND SPECTATORS**, speaks to this issue, directly, and [Bylaw 409.2](#) specifically states that, **"School officials shall be held responsible for the proper conduct of teams, team members, students and home spectators regardless of where the contest is being held."**

In all MSHSL activities, each participating school shall designate a person or persons from that school to serve as crowd control supervisors or chaperones. MSHSL tournament staff may require school administrators to contact the tournament manager prior to the start of the tournament game so that they can be immediately contacted to respond to behavioral issues regarding their team members, students and/or spectators at the tournament site. Each supervisor or chaperone should be immediately identifiable to the students and to the tournament site ushers and other security personnel. This will help to coordinate crowd control between school supervisors and tournament site personnel. (8/9/05)

MSHSL MINIMAL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS FOR REGULAR AND POST-SEASON TOURNAMENT COMPETITIONS:

- Respect the American flag and the National Anthem.
- Spectators must wear clothing that covers the entire torso. Those who do not comply or who wear clothing that is vulgar, obscene or that in some other way inappropriate, as determined by school/tournament personnel, will be removed from the arena/stadium if they do not cooperate with this behavior expectation.
- The use of appropriate language is expected at all times. Profanity, negative chants, booing, trash talk, name calling, personal attacks or other acts of disrespect are unacceptable and must be immediately addressed by school and/or tournament administrators.
- Respect the game/contest. Under no condition shall anyone other than the members of the official squad enter the playing surface. No one may interfere with the contest in any way.
- Handheld signs, which do not obstruct the view of others, will be permitted provided they are in good taste. Signs, message boards, "white" boards or other similar items contest/tournament officials deem to be in poor taste will be removed.

- Artificial noise makers (i.e., megaphones, cowbells, sirens, whistles, thunder sticks, and other similar items) are not allowed.
- Laser lights are strictly prohibited.

THANK YOU for supporting your student athletes and fine arts participants and for providing a positive environment in which educational activities are conducted.

CROSS COUNTRY RUNNING – Regular Season

See the MSHSL Official Handbook [Bylaw 507](#) for information regarding the following:

- Contests
- Equipment Issued
- Last Date to Join a Team
- Player Participation Limitations • Practice Sessions Before First Contest Season Begins

DISTANCE – 5000 meters (3.1 miles)

NOTE: The 5K requirement is for the varsity level meets unless the meet director or games committee adjusts the race distance because of weather or some other unforeseen reason. The race distance for lower-level meets (B-Squad, JV) may be less than 5K. The National Federation Cross Country Rules Book states that a cross country course shall be 2,500 to 5,000 meters (1.5 to 3.1 miles) in length.

Road Races: A cross country runner may run as an individual competitor in road races, fun runs, marathons, and races for a cause of any distance through Labor Day. If they run in these kinds of events after Labor Day, the distance run in the competition must be significantly different in length than the distance run in high school cross country. Significantly different is defined as one-kilometer difference in race length.

CROSS COUNTRY RUNNING INFORMATION – Post Season

ELIGIBILITY DURING MSHSL TOURNAMENTS – SUBSECTION, SECTION AND STATE

Refer to [Bylaw 206.4.B.1.d](#): A student must be fully eligible under all local school district policies, MSHSL Bylaws and Rules & Policies to be in uniform, occupy the bench or playing area, participate and receive individual/team awards, including all-tournament honors, in the awards ceremony.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN LEAGUE-SPONSORED TOURNAMENTS

Refer to [Bylaw 405](#): A member school must schedule a minimum of three interscholastic varsity games, meets or matches to qualify for League-sponsored tournament participation in that sport.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR SECTION AND STATE CROSS COUNTRY MEETS

CLASSES: Section and state cross country championships will be conducted in three classes: Class A, AA and AAA.

OFFICIAL SQUADS: A team shall consist of a maximum nine runners, two of whom are alternates, plus one coach. The minimum number of runners required for team scoring is five (5).

SECTION CROSS COUNTRY MEETS: Each Section Manager is responsible for providing schools with section meet materials such as entry forms, course information, competition schedule, etc.

ENTRIES AND ADVANCEMENT

A. School Participation Requirement

Each school must compete in three (3) separate high school varsity meets to qualify for entry into a League sponsored tournament.

B. Advancement from Section to State

1. **Team:** The first and second place teams from each section shall advance from each section.
2. **Individual:** The first 6 individual finishers from each section meet who are not members of the 1st & 2nd place teams.

AWARDS

Section

- Medals: First & second place teams (9), Individuals – first - sixth place
- Trophies: First & second place teams

NOTE: Medals will be awarded to individual qualifiers who do not finish in places first – sixth who are not members of the winning teams, but who will advance to the state meet.

State

Trophies: First – third place teams

Medals: First – third place team (9) and coach (1)

Medals: Individuals – First – tenth place

Participation Certificates—for student participants and coaches are available on the MSHSL website.

It is a violation of MSHSL policy for a member school or a representative of a member school to establish, distribute or accept any awards not provided by the MSHSL for section or state tournament.

STATE TOURNAMENT QUALIFYING SCHOOL INFORMATION: Specific information for qualifying schools is available on the MSHSL website.