

CROSS COUNTRY

DATE FOR STATE CROSS COUNTRY MEET

All Classes October 21

I - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

- (1) The Montana High School Association will promote, provide for and control all interschool cross country activities among member schools for both boys and girls.
- (2) All cross country meets shall be conducted under the Cross Country Rules of the National Federation except when modified by the Association Rules.
- (3) The Montana High School Association Executive Board shall establish the starting date for practice and the first allowable date when any meets may be held.
- (4) No individual shall compete in any Association contest until he/she has a minimum of **eight (8)** days of cross country practice and at least one practice session per day on **eight (8)** different days (no practice permitted on Sunday), prior to the date of the first allowable contest. The initial **eight (8)** practices for each individual must be completed as a comprehensive, regularly scheduled team practice with the full coaching staff.

When determining what constitutes a MHSA practice that satisfies the language above in (4), the following criteria must be applied:

1. Practice must be at least one (1) hour long.
2. At least one full squad (varsity team/J.V. team) and their coaching staff must be present.
3. The athlete must participate in the entire practice.
4. Practice should include the majority of drills and conditioning that are the norm for that team or squad.
5. A practice the day of a meet does not count (unless an athlete is practicing with another squad that does not have a meet that day, i.e. a varsity team member who stays home and practices with the JV team that does not have a meet that day).
6. Warm-ups or walk-throughs with the team prior to a meet does not constitute a practice.

If a student begins his/her initial **eight (8)** days of required practices and that period of days is interrupted by sickness, injury, academic ineligibility or any other reason for a period of two weeks, then the student shall be required to practice an additional **four (4)** days and in cases of sickness or injury to produce a doctor's release.

Athletes participating on teams competing in MHSA post season play, which overlaps the beginning of the next MHSA sanctioned activity starting practice date, may be credited for practices during the overlap period toward meeting the minimum practice requirement of the overlapped activity season.

If a student transfers to a new school after completing the required days of preseason practices for their sport or activity, the student must complete an additional number of practices (equal to half the # of required practices for that sport or activity) at their new school.

- (5) No student shall participate in more than ten (10) meets excluding Association sponsored meets.

No individual may participate in an out-of-state invitation-only meet unless approved by the MHSA Executive Director. Any out-of-state participation approved under these criteria will count toward the ten-meet limit for the particular student.

For an athlete to be eligible to compete in the State Cross Country Meet he/she must compete in at least two (2)

Association-sanctioned meets during the regular cross country season. Only a medical waiver from a certified physician stating that an athlete has sustained an injury preventing him/her from competing until that time will be accepted as a condition to be exempt from this rule. The high school for which the student will participate must file a request with the MHSA Executive Director for consideration of a waiver of this rule.

Also, athletes must meet a qualifying time in at least one regular season cross country meet prior to participation in the State Cross Country Meet. ***The minimum qualifying times are: 25.00 minutes for boys and 30.00 minutes for girls.*** Athletes who do not meet the required performance time at least once during regular season competition are not eligible for participation at the state meet and cannot be entered as a team member or alternate.

The cross country season for both boys and girls officially closes with the end of the state meet.

- (6) No school is required to take part in any contests or athletic events, but once entered, teams are obligated to participate in a contest or athletic event to its normal conclusion unless the contest is terminated by mutual consent of the school officials involved due to unusual weather or game conditions, or situations which could be hazardous to participants or spectators. Any coach is prohibited from unilaterally refusing to participate.

If a school fails to complete contests or athletic events that they have entered, the violating school would be subject to penalties as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Executive Director.

- (7) Interstate Meets: Any interstate meet must be sanctioned as set forth in Rule 16 in the Association General Rules and Regulations before any member school may participate.

- (8) All participants are prohibited from wearing any garments with alcohol or tobacco advertisements, profanity or other inappropriate messages at cross country meets. It is the responsibility of coaches and meet directors to ensure that inappropriate apparel be removed. Participants who fail to remove inappropriate apparel on request to do so shall be disqualified from participation in the meet.

- (9) Event Programs, Concessions and Corporate Sponsors

A. The program rights for all state meets will be the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board.

B. The concession rights for any state meet must be approved by the Executive Director. Concession rights include but are not limited to t-shirts, other apparel, photos, buttons etc.

C. Corporate sponsorship of any post season event is the responsibility of the MHSA Executive Board and requires Board approval. Exceptions are: a) program advertisements and b) signage or announcements acknowledging the receipt of donated goods including food or beverages for the hospitality room, the use of tents at outdoor events, or the use of other equipment necessary for staging the event. Signage should be placed only in the appropriate areas; i.e. on the tents or in the hospitality room/area.

Established facility sponsorships are not affected provided that MHSA corporate sponsorship requirements are met.

- (10) The MHSA prohibits any use and/or possession of tobacco, alcohol or other mood altering drugs during competition. Violation will cause the coach or participant to be disqualified from further participation in that event.

- (11) A state cross country meet participant may only wear one watch during competition. The watch must be unadorned and may be worn only on the wrist.

II – CLASS AA CROSS COUNTRY - BOYS AND GIRLS

- (1) Seventeen (17) schools comprising sixteen (16) teams are classified as Class AA. The schools are aligned in one division as follows:

Belgrade	Flathead (Kalispell)
Billings Senior	Gallatin (Bozeman)
Billings Skyview	Glacier (Kalispell)
Billings West	Helena
Bozeman	Helena Capital
Butte	Missoula Big Sky
*Great Falls/MSDB	Missoula Hellgate
Great Falls CMR	Missoula Sentinel

III – CLASS A CROSS COUNTRY - BOYS AND GIRLS

- (1) **Twenty-six (26)** schools comprising **twenty-four (24)** teams are classified as Class A. The schools are aligned in one division as follows:

**Beaverhead Co.(Dillon)/Twin Bridges	**Dawson Co. (Glendive)	Libby
Bigfork	East Helena	Lockwood (Billings)
Billings Central	Fergus (Lewistown)	Park (Livingston)
Browning	*Frenchtown/Alberton	Polson
Butte Central	Hamilton	Ronan
Columbia Falls	Hardin	Sidney
Corvallis	Havre	Stevensville
Custer Co. (Miles City)	Laurel	Whitefish

*Cooperative Sponsorship for Boys only – Frenchtown has a separate girls' team

**Cooperative Sponsorship for Boys and Girls

IV – CLASS B CROSS COUNTRY - BOYS AND GIRLS

- (1) **Forty (40)** schools comprising **forty (40)** teams are classified as Class B. The schools are aligned in one division as follows:

Arlee	Jefferson (Boulder)	Rocky Boy
Anaconda	Joliet	Roundup
Baker	Lame Deer	Shelby
Broadwater (Townsend)	Lincoln Co. (Eureka)	St. Ignatius
Chinook	Lodge Grass	St. Labre Indian
Colstrip	Loyola Sacred	Catholic (Ashland)
Columbus	Heart (Missoula)	Shepherd
Cut Bank	Malta	Sweet Grass Co. (Big Timber)
Darby	Manhattan	Thompson Falls
Ennis	Park City	Three Forks
Fairfield	Plains	Troy
Fairview	Poplar	Whitehall
Florence Carlton	Powell Co. (Deer Lodge)	Wolf Point
Glasgow	Red Lodge	
Harlem		
Huntley Project (Worden)		

* Girls Only

**Cooperative Sponsorship for Boys and Girls

V – CLASS C CROSS COUNTRY - BOYS AND GIRLS

- (1) **Fifty-eight (58)** schools comprising **fifty-three (53)** teams are classified as Class C. The schools are aligned in one division as follows:

Belt	Harrison	Powder River (Broadus)
Belfry	Hays-Lodgepole	Roberts
Box Elder	Heart Butte	Ryegate
Bridger	*Highwood	St. Regis
Brockton	Hinsdale	*Scobey/Opheim
*Cascade	Hobson	Seeley-Swan
Centerville	Hot Springs	Sheridan
Charlo	Judith Gap	Sunburst
*Circle	**Lambert/Richey	***Terry
**Culbertson/	Lima	Turner
Bainville	Lincoln	Two Eagle River
Dodson	Manhattan Christian	**Westby/Grenora
Drummond	Melstone	West Yellowstone
Fort Benton	Moore	Grass Range
Frazer	Nashua	Whitewater
Fromberg	***Plenty Coups (Pryor)	
Granite (Philipsburg)	Plentywood	
Gardiner	Nashua	
Great Falls Central	Northern Cheyenne (Busby)	
Harlowton		

*Girls only

**Cooperative Sponsorship for Boys and Girls

***Boys only

VI - STATE MEETS

- (1) The Executive Board shall be responsible for staging the state cross country meet for all four classes. They shall determine the sites, set the dates and appoint the state cross country meet managers. The managers shall be responsible to the Executive Board to conduct the state cross country meets in accordance with the rules of the Montana High School Association.
- (2) Judges and other meet officials shall be selected by the meet managers subject to the approval of the Executive Board.
- (3) Each member school may send a boys and/or girls team to the state meet. Each member school's boys' and/or girls' team(s) may enter seven (7) athletes and two (2) alternates in the state meet.

A. Classification:

The State Cross Country Meet for boys and girls will be run in four classifications, namely, AA, A, B and C, the same as basketball classifications.

B. Distance: boys' and girls' races will be five (5) kilometers.

C. Scoring:

Team — Total points scored by the first five (5) contestants of a team will count as the team score for Classes AA, A and B. Total points scored by the first three (3) contestants of a team will count as the team score for Class C.

Individual — If fewer than five (5) contestants per school participate in Classes AA, A and B, and fewer than three (3) contestants per school participate in Class C, contestants may compete for individual honors.

If a school enters the state meet and does not have the minimum number of runners for team's honors consideration, then the individual(s) from the incomplete team that placed holds his/her spot and no one moves up. This means that the place a runner finishes in a race remains frozen and another team's individual cannot move into that position.

D. Order of Competition:

Each classification's boys' and girls' races will alternate in the order of competition with the boys' and girls' races of another classification.

2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027
C-Boys	B-Girls	A-Boys	C-Girls
AA-Boys	C-Girls	B-Boys	AA-Girls
C-Girls	B-Boys	A-Girls	C-Boys
AA-Girls	C-Boys	B-Girls	AA-Boys
A-Boys	AA-Girls	C-Boys	A-Girls
B-Boys	A-Girls	AA-Boys	B-Girls
A-Girls	AA-Boys	C-Girls	A-Boys
B-Girls	A-Boys	AA-Girls	B-Boys

2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030	2030-2031
B-Boys	A-Girls	AA-Boys	AA-Girls
C-Boys	B-Girls	A-Boys	A-Girls
B-Girls	A-Boys	AA-Girls	AA-Boys
C-Girls	B-Boys	A-Girls	A-Boys
AA-Boys	C-Girls	B-Boys	B-Girls
A-Boys	AA-Girls	C-Boys	C-Girls
AA-Girls	C-Boys	B-Girls	B-Boys
A-Girls	AA-Boys	C-Girls	C-Boys

E. Rule 8 of the current edition of the National Federation Track and Field/Cross Country Rules will be followed for boys' and girls' cross country state meets except when modified by the Association Rules.

- (4) Each MHSA cross country school is required to share proportionally in the cost of the state cross country meet by paying a fee per qualifying participant. The MHSA Executive Board has set a \$7.00 fee per participant in the State Cross Country Meet. [Alternates are not considered participants.]