

Cross Country (Fall 2020)

Competition Protocols – Mobile & Baldwin Counties

On Thursday, July 23, cross country coaches from Mobile and Baldwin counties met via Zoom to establish consistent protocols for competitions hosted by schools from these counties during the 2020 Cross Country season. The following protocols will be in effect for all cross country competitions hosted by schools in these counties to ensure the health and safety of all athletes, coaches, officials, parents, fans, and spectators.

Team Areas

- Meet directors will designate space at meets for team areas that allow for adequate distancing between teams.
- Athletes will be restricted from visiting other team areas during meets.
- Only coaches and athletes will be allowed in team areas.
- Coaches and athletes should wear facial coverings within team areas.
- Parents and spectators will be asked to remain outside of team areas. Facial coverings should be worn by parents and spectators at all times.
- Athletes are encouraged to bring their own food and water to meets.
- Athletes are encouraged to come dressed for competition to limit use of restroom facilities.

Restroom Facilities

- Meet directors are asked to assess proper access to restroom facilities at each meet. Meet directors are encouraged to increase availability of restroom facilities (e.g., rent additional portable bathrooms) as needed based on the meet size.
- Meet directors are encouraged to provide additional handwashing stations for individuals using portable bathrooms. In addition, meet directors are asked to ensure that restroom facilities are properly stocked with soap and paper towels.
- Meet directors are asked to provide hand sanitizer throughout the meet site for use by all individuals.
- Each team is asked to have hand sanitizer available at each team area for athlete and coach use as needed.

Course Information

- Following NFHS recommendations, meet directors are encouraged to design courses to be at least 6 feet wide as much as possible.
- All parents and spectators should wear a facial covering throughout the competition in accordance with Alabama Department of Public Health mandates.

Athletes who are not competing in the current race or who are not warming up for an upcoming race should also wear a facial covering.

Starting Line

- Meet directors are encouraged to configure starting boxes to allow for social distancing between teams. Ideally, an empty box should be designated between each team at the start line. It is understood that team boxes may have to be reduced in size to allow for social distancing between teams.
- Meet directors are encouraged to consider the use of wave starts in races that have a large number of athletes participating. Seed times can be used to determine assignment of athletes to waves. Meet directors should discuss possible wave start options with the timing company managing their meet.
- Athletes should arrive to the start line with a facial covering. At a designated time prior to the start of the race, the race official will instruct athletes to remove their facial covering.
- Coaches are encouraged to supply each athlete with a Ziploc bag in which the athlete can place their facial covering to avoid contamination with other athletes' facial coverings. These bags can be collected by a parent volunteer or assistant coach and returned to the team area. At the conclusion of the race, athletes can retrieve their facial covering.
- Pre-race instructions should be limited so as to avoid prolonged time at the start line. Once athletes' facial coverings are removed, the start of the race should immediately follow.

Finishing Chute

- Meet directors are encouraged to use chip timing when possible. Port City Timing has the ability to use chip timing. Meet directors are encouraged to contact Kevin Jones at Port City Timing to set up chip timing for their meets.
- When using chip timing, finish areas should be wide enough to allow social distancing at the conclusion of the race. Athletes will be encouraged to move through the finish area quickly to avoid overcrowding in the finish area.
- Only athletes, coaches, race volunteers, and medical personnel will be allowed in the finish area.
- Athletes should be encouraged to bring their own water to the meet, as water will not be supplied by meet directors or host schools.
- Meet directors are encouraged to have medical personnel (e.g., ATCs and/or EMTs) available to assist in the finish area at the conclusion of each race.
- Race volunteers in the finish area should be provided gloves and facial coverings. Volunteers should avoid touching athletes as much as possible, and they should change gloves regularly.

Award Ceremonies

- No award ceremonies will be held at the conclusion of the competition, as social distancing would be impossible at such ceremonies.
- Individual and team awards will be given to coaches. Coaches are encouraged to recognize athletes at their team area.
- Individual and team award winners will be announced via a PA system at the conclusion of the meet.
- Social media will be utilized to post meet results and pictures of award winners following each meet to ensure that athletes and teams are properly recognized.