

CROSS COUNTRY

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CROSS COUNTRY

IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

	Week/Day	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Coaches Education Requirements	Prior to 1 st Practice & After June 1st	Prior to 1 st Practice & After June 1st	Prior to 1 st Practice & After June 1st	Prior to 1 st Practice & After June 1st
Online Rules Meeting Opens	August 1	August 1	August 1	August 1
Online Rules Meeting Ends	August 31	August 31	August 31	August 31
First Allowable Practice	Thursday, Week 6	August 15	August 14	August 13
First Allowable Contest	Friday, Week 8	August 30	August 29	August 28
Region Meet Completed by	Saturday, Week 15	October 19	October 18	October 17
State Meet/Season Ends	Saturday, Week 16	October 26	October 25	October 24
Summer Moratorium		July 1-7	July 1-7	July 1-7
Winter Moratorium		December 23-26	December 23-26	December 23-26

Participation in school activities teaches that it is a privilege and an honor to represent one's school. Interscholastic activities constitute a part of the right kind of "growing up" experiences for students. Participants learn to accept success and failures, gain poise and confidence, achieve tolerance and understanding of others and gain the self-satisfaction of accomplishing goals. Under a well-administered school program, students and spectators become better citizens through participation and observation of activities conducted under established rules. Please refer to the **Sportsmanship Section of the SDHSAA Athletic Handbook** for policies and statements concerning the following items:

- * General Sports Objectives and Coaching Responsibility
- * Fundamentals of Sportsmanship
- * Racial Harassment, Violence and Taunting (See General Section)
- * Athletic Code of Ethics
- * Code of Sport Ethics for Coaches

STATE MEET DATES & SITES

2024	Rapid City	Hart Ranch Camping Resort	October 26
2025	Huron	Broadland Creek	October 25
2026	Sioux Falls	Yankton Trial Park	October 24

2024-25 NFHS & SDHSAA CROSS COUNTRY RULES CHANGES

NFHS Rule Changes

- 8-1 Re-organization of the cross-country course layout. Rationale: Clarifies the course layout for ease of use and re-organizes the rule.
- 8-5 Section 5 on Cross Country Teams was broken into articles to increase ease of use of the rule.

No South Dakota Rule Changes

2024 Points of Emphasis

1. Fair Starts
2. Sportsmanship
3. Cross Country Safety

CLASSIFICATION

Classification shall be determined using the following ADM figures for the upcoming season:

- Class 'B' Schools – ADM of 89.999 and below.
- Class 'A' Schools – ADM of 90.000 to 449.999
- Class 'AA' Schools – ADM of 450.000 and above

GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Athletic Contest Contracts

Per the SDHSAA Constitution, all contests must be sanctioned by the Athletic Director, Principal or Superintendent of the schools involved. It is recommended that athletic contest contracts, be used for all levels of competition.

B. Rules of Competition

The rules and regulations governing this event are found in the TRACK AND FIELD RULES BOOK, Rule 8, with other applicable sections also governing Cross Country. (Adopted in 2018)**All Regular Season Varsity contests must be started by a licensed SDHSAA official.**

C. Information on Road Races During Cross Country Season (Refer to #4 & #5 in the In/Out of Season handbook page 13 under In-Season Frequently Asked Questions)

Athletes who have joined their high school cross country team may participate in road races once the high school cross country season started provided the following conditions are met to avoid violation of the “NON-SCHOOL TEAM/INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION” section of the SDHSAA Constitution and By-Laws:

1. For events that are interpreted as “competitive” in nature, such as those where times are formally kept and compared, awards issued, or events that are otherwise seen as competitive, each of the following conditions must be met:
 - a. All student-athletes who participate in Cross Country must represent their school, which includes running in their team gear
 - b. The event sponsors set up a division for high school cross country teams
 - c. Event organizers complete ‘Sanctioning’ paperwork through the SDHSAA Office
2. For events which are interpreted as “non-competitive” in nature, such as those where no places are awarded, times are not formally kept and compared, or events that may be seen as completely charitable and non-competitive, all student-athletes are allowed to compete without restriction on their athletic eligibility.

NOTES: The “In-season Participation Rule” does not apply after the cross-country season is over and sanction is not required. The SDHSAA will not sanction any competitions, road races or otherwise, for high school cross country teams that are scheduled to be held on Sunday. Participation in triathlons is not considered a violation of the in-season participation rule.

D. Length of Course

(Adopted in 2015) The distance for all SDHSAA Region and State Championship Races will be 5,000 meters. Coaches and administrators are reminded that they have the option to adjust the length of their own local, regular-season races as they see fit, however, all races for post-season competition must be run at the 5,000-meter distance.

E. Result Reporting

(Adopted in 2020) Competitive Season results for all SDHSAA Regular Season competitions will need to be uploaded per the SDHSAA.com website. For full information, see the Cross-Country page on the SDHSAA website or the annual rules meeting.

REGION AND STATE MEET INFORMATION

A. Region Committees

1. A committee shall be formed with a meeting to be held prior to the meet for organizational purposes.
2. A school shall designate an administrative staff member (superintendent, principal, athletic/activities director) who is not coaching in the sport involved to represent the school on the committee. The representative shall then inform the school personnel directly involved with the sport of the decisions made at the committee meeting.
3. A committee chairperson (superintendent, principal, athletic/activities director) is to be elected and each committee shall function following generally accepted Rules of Order. The region committee chairperson must be currently employed as an administrative staff member from a region member school. Minutes shall be kept of each meeting with a distribution made to each school represented on a timely basis.
4. All schools participating in the meet shall be notified as to time and place of any meetings.

5. The current region chairperson must submit to the SDHSAA the name of the individual that will be the chairperson for the following year. This notification, along with an indication of the date and site for the following year should be made prior to May 1st. If a committee chair can not be named for the following year, the committee must designate a school and administrative position that will assume the chairperson's duties. Failure to name either an individual or a school, including the designated administrative position, for the chair will result in naming the current chairperson as the chair for the following year. **If the above information is not supplied to the SDHSAA by May 15, a \$50.00 fine will be assessed against the region not in compliance.** Fines will be assessed for the ensuing school year. The new region committee is responsible for payment.
6. Input of Coaches - All committees are required to give coaches an opportunity to have input to the committee prior to any decision making by the committee.
7. Meet Referee and Jury of Appeals - A referee and a Jury of Appeals shall be appointed by the Region Committee. The referee may also be the starter. The Committee may constitute itself as the Jury of Appeals. A coach first makes a verbal protest to the referee. If the coach still feels that the terms and conditions of competition or the application of the rules have been misapplied or misinterpreted, a written appeal shall be made to the jury.
8. (Adopted in 2016) All Region Cross Country Meets must utilize a Registered SDHSAA Track & Field Official as the starter/referee. This can be one individual, but must be a currently registered official.

B. Region Entries

It is the responsibility of each school to have its athletes entered in the Region Meet. Even if you do not receive a notice from your region chairman, send your entries to him/her no later than one week prior to the meet. Instructions for submitting your entries can be found at: <https://www.sdhsaa.com/Athletics/AthleticNET/XC-DeclareEntries.pdf>.

Schools not assigned to a region should contact the SDHSAA office for assignment to the appropriate region.

Number of runners allowed on a team is as follows:

- i. **Class AA - 7, 5 counters plus 2 pushers**
- ii. **Class A - 6, 4 counters plus 2 pushers**
- iii. **Class B - 5, 3 counters plus 2 pushers**

NOTE:

1. It is permissible for a competitor, who drops out of competition at the regional meet to be a team member at the State Meet provided said team qualifies.
2. It is permissible for both Class "B" and "A" teams to enter pushers on their team at the State Meet even though they opted not to use pushers at the Region Meet.

C. Region Meet Format (Class A and B)

All regions are required to use athletic.net for Region Meet entries and Hy-Tek Meet Manager for running the meet. All region meet results must be exported from Hy-Tek Meet Manager and uploaded to athletic.net immediately following the Region Meet.

D. Appeal and Grievance Procedure for Region Committees

1. If at all possible, the committee shall solve its own problems and make its own decisions.
2. Protests based upon a challenge to the interpretation given to a contest regulation or administrative ruling thereon must be submitted in writing within 24 hours after the contest, to the chairman of the region committee/meet. The committee shall render its decision promptly to the SDHSAA Executive Staff, and shall notify the protester, by telephone or e-mail, to be followed by a written notice of its decision sent by first class mail to the protester. An appeal from the decision of the regional committee shall go directly to the SDHSAA Board of Directors. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final. The appeal must state the decision of the region committee and the basis for the request to overrule that decision.
3. Part V, Section 1 of the SDHSAA Constitution and By-Laws states, "Decisions of the Judges. Judges' decisions in any contest are by their nature necessarily regarded as final and shall not be considered as the basis for protest."

E. School Official Must Attend Meet

Each member school with an entrant in the Region and/or State Cross Country Meet must have a qualified staff representative from their school in attendance.

F. Qualifications for State Meet

1. Class “AA” – Schools in Class “AA” are not assigned to a region and automatically qualify a team entry for State Meet competition.

Procedure to follow for submitting “AA” state meet entries:

- a. All Class AA Schools will be required to make all entries to the State Cross Country Meet and State Track and Field Meet using the SDHSAA entry system.
 - 1.) The entry will be done electronically through the athletic.net website.
 - 2.) The deadline for entries to the State Cross Country Meet will be 10:00 AM CT on the Friday of the week prior to the State Meet.
2. **Class “A”** — Class ‘A’ is divided in to five regions; the top three teams and 20 individuals from each region meet shall qualify for the State Meet.
 3. **Class “B”** — Class ‘B’ is divided in to five regions; the top three teams and 20 individuals from each region meet shall qualify for the State Meet.
 4. **Class A & B** - Additional team entries may qualify for the state meet provided enough runners finish within the top twenty places at a region meet. A squad that qualifies a team entry in this manner cannot, however, bring additional (pusher) runners to the State Meet other than those that qualified as individuals at the region meet. (**note the following regarding corrections/changes**): Teams finishing 1st, 2nd, or 3rd at the Region Meet are allowed to make any changes (additions, substitutions, etc.) to their advancers that they wish. Teams finishing 4th or lower at the Region Meet are limited to only making corrections (spelling, etc.) to their advancers and are not allowed to add or substitute athletes.

G. State Meet Time Schedule

1. **Race Competition Starting Times (all times local course time):**

Class B Girls	12:00 Noon
Class A Girls	12:30 PM
Class AA Girls	1:00 PM
Class B Boys	1:30 PM
Class A Boys	2:00 PM
Class AA Boys	2:30 PM
Awards	Conclusion of final race of the day

NOTE: Line-up of all teams and individuals is 10 minutes prior to race time.

H. Instructions and Check-in for Coaches and Participants at State Meet

1. Final instructions for the State Meet will be posted on the SDHSAA website.
2. There is no coaches’ meeting. All necessary information will be posted on the SDHSAA website prior to the state meet. Substitutions may be made at check in on Saturday morning.

I. Course Length

All Classes - 5,000 meters (3.11 miles)

J. Substitutions

Make-up of teams need not be the same in the State Meet as it was in the Region. Substitutions will be permitted. However, those qualifying strictly as individuals cannot be substituted for.

K. Scoring

1. Individual: Individual place points shall be scored 1 point for first, 2 points for second, 3 points for third, 4 points for fourth, etc. with all competitors who finish the race ranked and tallied according to their place of finish.
2. Team: Team score shall be determined by totaling the points scored by the **first three (3) runners of a team in Class “B”**; the **first four (4) runners in Class “A”**; and the **first five (5) runners in Class “AA”**. The team which scores the smallest number of points is declared the winner. Schools not entering full teams shall be disregarded when totaling team points and team scores are to be re-ranked for only those schools entering full teams.

NOTE: Ties in team scoring shall be resolved by comparing the first “pusher” from the tying teams. The team with the best “pusher” shall prevail. If one team does not have a “pusher”, the team with the “pusher” shall prevail.

L. Ticket Prices – General Admission

State Meet tickets are available for sale on the day of the meet. An online ticket may also be available.

Adult – Session: \$10.00

Student – Session: \$5.00

M. Uniforms

See separate “Resources for Running a Cross Country Meet” handout on SDHSAA.com or by going to this link: <https://www.sdhsaa.com/Officials/XC-MeetGuide.pdf>

O. Contestant Numbers and RFID Tags

All runners will be assigned a number inclusive of an RFID tag. Numbers/bibs will be issued at check-in. NUMBERS MUST BE WORN ON THE FRONT OF THE JERSEY. It is very important each athlete wears the number assigned to him/her. The order of finish will be based on the RFID tag attached to the bib number. Numbers will be used in case of computer malfunction.

P. Starting Rule

The command shall be “On Your Marks” and when all competitors are steady, the pistol shall be fired. For an unfair start, the starter or assistant shall recall the runners with a second shot. If a runner falls during the first 100 meters due to contact with another runner, the race shall be recalled with a shot.

Q. Use of Golf Carts

The use of golf carts or any vehicle, motorized or man-powered, on the race course by individuals other than event or SDHSAA Staff is strictly prohibited.

R. Awards

The SDHSAA Office will order all medals and plaques for the region meets. Two plaques (champion & runner-up) will be awarded at each region meet. Medals will be presented to the top 20 individuals and the top two teams. Orders will be sent directly to region chairman by the companies. Region committees will be expected to pay for all awards presented. At the State Meet medals will be presented to each of the top 25 individual place finishers and members of the top six teams in each class (boys and girls). Trophies will be awarded to champion and runner-up teams with plaques to the third through sixth place teams in each class (boys and girls). All individual and team cross country awards will be presented by either the Board of Directors members, SDHSAA Corporate Partners, or the Track & Cross Country Coaches Association according to the Awards. Time schedule listed previously. No awards will be handed out prior to the regularly scheduled awards program.

S. State Meet Expenses

Each school shall pay the entire expenses of its contestants at the State Meet. **The SDHSAA does not reimburse the schools for any expenses incurred in Cross Country.**

T. Meet Referee and Jury of Appeals at State Meet

The Jury of Appeals for the SDHSAA State Cross Country Meet shall consist of the Meet Referee, Starter, Assistant Referee/Assistant Starter, and SDHSAA Executive Staff members present.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT TEAM AWARD

In an attempt to recognize the academic excellence of the athletic teams and fine arts groups in each school, the SDHSAA created the “Academic Achievement Team Award”. The “Academic Achievement Team Award” is designed to recognize “varsity” level “teams” that achieve a combined GPA of 3.0 or higher.

For additional information about the “Academic Achievement Team Award”, refer to the “Academic Achievement Team Award” section of either the ATHLETIC or FINE ARTS HANDBOOK.