

**CROSS COUNTRY**  
Coaches Advisory Committee  
November 16, 2015

**MINUTES**

This summary represents the recommendations of this Committee and is not to be construed as a change or revision of existing rules or regulations. Final action on all items will be taken by the Board of Control at their January meeting.

Committee Members: Skyler Reynolds (Boscobel), Matt Polzin (Deerfield), Paige Patenaude (Mukwonago), Shane Smith (Saint Mary's Springs), Donn Behnke (Stevens Point) and RYANNE BELL (FENNIMORE). Jim Newman (On-Site Coordinator) was in attendance for State Meet discussion. Ron Kurtz (retired) attended for Sectional Improvement Proposal discussion. The meeting was chaired by Matt Polzin and Stephanie Hauser recorded the minutes.

Donn Behnke, Skyler Reynolds, and Shane Smith received a certificate of appreciation for their three years of service on the Committee.

**I. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 17, 2014**

Motion to approve by Matt Polzin (Deerfield), seconded by Shane Smith (Saint Mary's Springs). Passed 5-0  
RYANNE BELL (FENNIMORE) was not in attendance yet.

**II. SEASON REGULATIONS**

**A. Review of 2015-16 Season Regulations, pages 3-6**

**B. Review of Girls 5K** - Matt Polzin (Deerfield) wondered how many schools were still hosting 4K events for girls during the regular season. After group discussion, it sounded like most of the 4K events have been changed to 5K events, or are changing for next season.

**C. Maximum Allowed Meets vs. Varsity Reserve Schedule** – There was discussion regarding the ethics of this, but no recommendations for change.

**D. Wheelchair Cross Country** - Stephanie Hauser gave an update on the Wheelchair Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes (May 13, 2015) and the OCR Finding Review (Lake Mills situation). The group is comfortable with what is currently being done and there are no recommendations for any changes at this point.

**III. TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES**

**A. Review of 2015-16 Season Regulations, pages 7-10**

**B. Definition of Alternates, Page 7, 3, c, (1)** - Stephanie Hauser shared the concerns regarding the language (or lack thereof) with the designation of "alternates" for sectionals and State. Group discussion clarified that it is not required that coaches list alternates. Coaches can make a substitute on race day without having an alternate listed. Listing alternates in advance is for the convenience of the timing system. Stephanie Hauser will include some defining language in the Sectional Entry Information that is sent out to coaches. Matt Polzin (Deerfield) recommended that timing system companies have bibs available at sectionals for alternates, which would be helpful for late changes in competitors.

**C. Course Markings/Inspirational Slogans** - The Committee is not seeing many schools doing this and does not feel that it is an issue of concern.

**D. Competitive Equity Committee** – A brief summary of the Annual Meeting discussion and results was given by Stephanie Hauser. Matt Polzin (Deerfield) and Donn Behnke (Stevens Point) shared that there is some discussion among the cross country coaches about this topic.

**E. Missed Entry Deadline** - No teams missed the sectional entry deadline this year. The sanctions that were put into place last year seems to have had an effect on the importance of the completion of this task. Matt Polzin (Deerfield) said that he heard of some schools that didn't show up at all. Stephanie Hauser asked that the names of schools that don't show up be sent to our office, and we will follow up with them.

**F. Possible Changes to State Meet Program -**

1. Committee would like to keep last year's team photos (both champions and runners-up), and add last year's Top 10 Individual qualifiers for each division/gender.
2. Clearer Parameters for Team Photos – NO, each school does things a little differently.
3. Eliminate Sectional Runner-up Photos – NO.

4. Add Lists by Bib # - YES, add coach name and lane assignment, but eliminate qualifying times.
  5. Add Lists by Alpha – NO, not needed.
  6. Replace Current Lane Assignment Pages with the Lists by Bib # - The lane assignment pages would still need to be created for coaches to preview and also for Jim Newman's crew that prepares the team packets, but they can be completely removed from the State Meet program.
- G. **Sectional Site Determination** - Concerns brought to Stephanie Hauser's attention regarding schools running on sectional sites throughout the season (both host schools and non-host schools) were shared with the Committee. The Committee does not feel that this is a large concern with coaches statewide. The WIAA could add a couple of questions on the hosting form for schools to be taken into consideration when sectional assignments are selected:
1. Is this a regularly used practice site?
  2. Do other schools use this as a practice site?
- H. **Sectional Hosts Posting Video of Their Course (1 week prior to Sectional Race)** – The Committee does not feel that this is a practical request to ask of schools.
- I. **Sectional Site Input** - Stephanie Hauser shared that she requested input on the sectional sites from the assigned sectional officials after the season. There was a large response from meet officials with both excellent sites and also sites that were not adequate sites. Matt Polzin (Deerfield) suggested that Stephanie Hauser reach out to schools which were identified as excellent sites to encourage them to volunteer to host next season.
- J. **Sectional Improvement Proposal from 2014/Proposal Survey** – Matt Polzin (Deerfield) and Ron Kurtz (retired) gave a summary of the Sectional Improvement Proposal. This proposal was brought forward last year, but was sent back to the Committee to address certain aspects. That was done and adjustments have been made to the 2014 proposal. In addition, the Coaches Association was surveyed in relation to this proposal. 88% of the coaches in the Association responded to the survey. Of that 88%, 51.3% supported the proposal. Whether they were in support of the proposal or not, 56.9% of the coaches supported some type of change to the current sectional assignment process.
- Matt Polzin (Deerfield) stated that regardless of where this proposal goes, a positive factor that came as a result of this was that the coaches rankings were done better and more thoroughly this year.
- After much discussion by the Committee (both in support and against) a motion was made by Matt Polzin (Deerfield), seconded by Paige Patenaude (Mukwonago) to approve the Sectional Improvement Proposal. (1-5)
- There are some other sectional plans that have been discussed. Matt Polzin (Deerfield) will revisit those and consider presenting some other options at the Coaches Clinic in January.
- K. **State Meet Time Schedule** - Stephanie Hauser received a request to consider restructuring the State Meet schedule and run genders in the same division back to back, rather than all one gender first, followed by the opposite gender. The group shared concerns from coaches who have both boys and girls teams qualify for State and that there is not enough time to meet with the gender that runs second.
- Donn Behnke (Stevens Point) shared his concern that if you are a Division 1 school, you will always run the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> race, so when the course condition diminishes over the course of the day, your athletes are running on a poor course. This could affect the All-State selections.
- Skyler Reynolds (Boscobel) stated that in the current schedule, it is a long wait for coaches and teams. However, you would not have the opportunity to watch the results board with your team because the next race is already started.
- Matt Polzin (Deerfield) suggested the State Meet Schedule rotate divisions each year. A motion was made by Paige Patenaude (Mukwonago), seconded by Matt Polzin (Deerfield) to use a 6-year rotation State Meet schedule of divisions. Year One: Division 3-2-1. Year Two: Same order, but reverse the gender. Year Three: Division 1-3-2. Year Four: Same order, reverse the gender. Year Five: Division 2-1-3. Year Six: Same order, reverse the gender. Year Seven: The cycle starts over. Motion passed 6-0.
- Due to conditions that are somewhat unique to cross country, such as frost issues, weather conditions, course conditions, All-State selections based on times, etc., the Committee believes that this rotation is in the best interest of the sport.

- L. **Addition of a Division** - Matt Polzin (Deerfield) stated with the addition of a division in softball, this could come up again in the sport of cross country. There was discussion among the Committee as to how the State Meet would be formatted to accommodate two additional races, given daylight constraints. It was suggested that maybe we should look at the enrollment numbers as well, instead of adding a division. Basketball designates the divisions a little differently. There is concern that the increasing number of very small schools, which often drop out of the tournament series or send incomplete teams, are causing an imbalance in divisions.

Skyler Reynolds (Boscobel) and Donn Behnke (Stevens Point) stated that adding a division would probably just make some teams happy and others unhappy. Matt Polzin (Deerfield) will take a look at enrollment divisions as a possible future proposal.

- M. **Umbrellas at State Meet** - Paige Patenaude (Mukwonago) would like to see umbrellas banned from the State Meet. She stated that coaches can't see their runners, and she wishes that spectators had a better sense and awareness of where they are standing on the course because they were often leaning over onto the course with their umbrella impeding runners.

Stephanie Hauser stated it would be nearly impossible to ban umbrellas from the State Meet, but she and Jim Newman (On-Site Coordinator) will work with the course workers to do a better job of monitoring it. It was suggested that the Cross Country Coaches Association members who do not have State qualifiers be asked to assist with this, similar to how track coaches assist with monitoring the infield at the State Meet. This will be added to the Point of Emphasis for the Rules Video and the State Meet tournament information.

Jim Newman (On-Site Coordinator) suggested the State Meet PA person could also do additional announcements to remind spectators of the importance of awareness with reference to umbrella use.

- N. **State Meet Awards Ceremony** – Stephanie Hauser shared her disappointment with several items at the awards ceremony (teams leaving early, athletes and coaches wearing hats to the medal stand, athletes carrying “props” to the medal stand, athletes not wearing team apparel on the medal stand). Ron Rasmussen will add these items to his script that he covers in the cafeteria with the athletes and Gus Mancuso will also address as he announces kids names. Stephanie Hauser asked that Matt Polzin (Deerfield) make this a Point of Emphasis at the Coaches Clinic as well.
- O. **State Meet Course Damage** - Jim Newman (On-Site Coordinator) shared that The Ridges course sustained significant damage, due to the rainy weather at the State Meet. He shared a map showing the areas that were most affected. He added that sodding would be done in the fall to repair these areas. He noted that if we have another rainy event, we need to consider making changes to the course map. He shared a handout of the change that was made in 2010.

Matt Polzin (Deerfield) added that if we anticipate course changes, we should make coaches aware in advance. He also liked the video of the course and the elevation map that is provided.

#### IV. **CROSS COUNTRY RULES**

- A. **Review 2015 NFHS New Rules** – Discussed.
- B. **NFHS 2015 Questionnaire** – Discussed.
- C. **Suggestions/Points of Emphasis for Rules Video:**
1. State Meet Awards Program Expectations
  2. Potential Amateur Status Issues with Regard to Prizes Awarded at Cross Country Meets
  3. Umbrellas at the State Meet
  4. WIAA Committee Flowchart
- D. **Items from Committee Members** – Ron Kurtz (retired) shared that Time Warner Cable will be airing the State Meet this week. Stephanie Hauser will talk with Todd Clark to make sure that this is communicated with the public.

#### V. **MISCELLANEOUS**

- A. **Amateur Status, Senior High Handbook, pages 34-35** - List of allowed and not allowed items from the Senior High Handbook were reviewed by Stephanie Hauser. The group shared a few tournaments that

they are aware of that currently awards prizes that are not allowed, but agreed that this is not a state-wide problem. The majority of tournaments are within the limitations to awards for teams and individuals. Stephanie Hauser will include this as a Point of Emphasis on the Rules Video.

- B. **Suggestions for New Committee Members** - Paul Brown (Lourdes Academy), Sarah Lazarescu (Wisconsin Heights), John Morgen (Neenah), Casey Hopp (Madison Memorial), Brian Huebner (Westby)

Skyler Reynolds (Boscobel) and Matt Polzin (Deerfield) motioned to adjourn the meeting at 2:33 p.m.