



September 9, 2025

NFHS Cross Country Weekly Rule Interpretations

UNIFORMS

SITUATION 1: Competitor is seen using their watch listening to their coach give them updates on other athletes on the course. An official on the course sees this occurring and reports to the meet referee. The meet referee disqualifies the athlete. **RULING:** Correct Procedure. **COMMENT:** The jewelry restriction was removed from the NFHS rules book in 2015. With this change came the ability for athletes to wear watches. However, electronic devices are still not legal to transmit/communicate to a competitor during a race.

SITUATION 2: The officials are checking the starting boxes when the starter calls for the athletes to remove their sweats. One clerk notice that Team A runners have the same colored shorts or pants, but some are wearing tights while others have shorts. The uniform tops are all the same. The clerk notifies them they must have the same bottoms on and mut change before the race. **RULING:** Incorrect Procedure. **COMMENT:** The teams jersey's clearly make it clear they are from the same school and all their bottoms are the same color so the team should be able to participate in the race.

SITUATION 3: Team A arrives at their box to be clerked for the cross country race. The entire team has on navy blue shorts, but two team members have solid red tank tops and 3 have red and white tank top. The competitors are told they must make their uniforms legal prior to competing. The clerk notifies the meet referee who notifies the coach of the issue. **RULING:** Correct Procedure. **COMMENT:** The teams must wear uniforms that clearly indicate that they are members of the same team. Having red and white tops and solid red tops could be confusing to other competing teams. The meet referee should also notify the state association of this uniform violation. [4-3-2]

SITUATION 4: In a cross country race, A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 are wearing maroon bottoms with a white top and a maroon sash, while A6 is wearing white bottoms and a maroon T-shirt and A7 is wearing blue bottoms and a blue top. The school colors are maroon and white, and the coach claims all uniforms were issued by the school. **RULING:** Warning to A6 and A7 for illegal uniforms. **COMMENT:** All cross country team members must wear uniforms clearly indicating through predominant color, the school logo and color combination of all outer garments worn as a uniform, that members are from the same team. A7's blue uniform does not meet this requirement. A6's uniform, while in the school colors, the

flip of the color combination does not clearly identify the athletes as being from the same team, therefore, a warning should be issued and the uniforms corrected before the next race. [4-3-1, 2]

SITUATION 5: Team A arrives at their box to be clerked for the cross country invitational. The entire team is wearing watches. The clerk informs the athletes that they must remove their watches to participate in the race. The coach protests this removal to the meet referee. **RULING:** Incorrect procedure by the clerk. **COMMENT:** The jewelry restriction was removed from the NFHS rules book in 2015. With this change came the ability for athletes to wear watches.

SITUATION 6: An official at the State Cross Country Meet observes A1 wearing a head covering prior to the start of the race. The official informs the player that a note is needed from the state association to run in the meet. The incident is reported to the meet referee prior to the start of the race. The referee checks with A1 and observes that the garment in question is a religious head covering and therefore legal. **RULING:** A1 is not in violation of Rule 4-3-1b(8). No warning. **COMMENT:** Athletes are permitted to wear head coverings for religious reasons without approval from the state association. The head coverings should not be made of abrasive, hard or unyielding materials; and must be secured to the body and/or uniform.

SITUATION 7: A1 reports to their starting box wearing compression shorts with a manufacturer's logo on the thigh just above the knee as well as around the entire waistband. The trademark around the leg is no larger than 2¼ square inches. A1 wins the race. After the completion of the race the coach of Team B protests to the meet referee that A1's uniform shorts are illegal. **RULING:** A1 uniform is legal. **COMMENT:** Bottoms may have manufacturer's logo/trademark/references larger than 2¼ square inches around the waistband. Additionally, there may be a logo on the thigh if it meets the 2¼ square inches requirement.