



September 23, 2026

NFHS Cross Country Weekly Rule Interpretations

SITUATION: Team A attended a meet where the host school said they were using FAT timing for state records. Coach of team A realized there was no electronic start happening and the timing company was starting the time at the sound of the gun manually. The state association required FAT timing for state records which meant that the meets champion's time could not be submitted. **RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** If the timing company manually starts the time this is not Fully Automated Timing. [8-3-2]

SITUATION: Transponders/computerized chips are being used to determine times in a cross country meet. Runner A dives across the finish line to barely edge out Runner B. The finish judges pick Runner A, because the torso clearly crossed the line first. When the official results came in, Runner A had the second fastest time but was awarded first place. **RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** No matter what the timing system used, the order of finish is based on when the torso crosses the finish. [8-3-3]



SITUATION: After being called to the starting line at a cross country meet for the starter's final instructions, all members of Team A run away from the starting line for a team cheer. The starter warns the team that if any further runouts occur before the start, those involved will be disqualified for unacceptable conduct. **RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** Once teams have been called to the starting line by the starter for final instruction, no further runouts shall be permitted. Any second violation shall result in a disqualification. [8-4-4]

SITUATION: In a cross country race, Team A has six runners competing. Runner A5 runs off course. Runners A1-A4 were the top finishers in the race. Runner A6 came in last. The referee (a) disqualifies the entire team and Team A runners displace other runners for scoring; (b) disqualifies the entire team and Team A runners do not displace other runners for scoring; (c) disqualifies A5 and uses A6 for scoring. **RULING:** (a) and (b) Incorrect procedure; (c) correct procedure. **COMMENT:** The team is not punished for one runner running off course. [8-6-1]