

# **CROSS COUNTRY ADVISORY MINUTES**

## **November 29, 2017**

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Dale Otte with the following members present: Sheryl Book, Kevin Kearney, Erik Belby, Dan Sauser, Brian Knapp and Tim Sanderson. Absent: Kirk Schmaltz. Gary Ross represented the IGHSAU and Jared Chizek the IHSAA.

Committee members were introduced and review of committee purpose was given.

**Motion by Sanderson to approve the November 30, 2016 Advisory Committee minutes, second by Knapp and unanimously approved.**

### REGULAR SEASON

Belby questioned the practice of coaches who do not enter their top runners or leave spots open in varsity competition, but have a stacked team in j.v. Otte suggested, if hosting an event where this happens an option would be to not invite this school back in future years. Ross suggested expectations be put into regular season meet and conference guidelines. Belby stated a rule is in place with his local invitational, but no penalties have been given. Book suggested the coach of the school who uses this practice out of common courtesy should let the host know if a coach is not going to field a team.

Chizek discussed the regular season rankings. At this point the IHSAA and the IGHSAU management do not know the members of the ranking committee. This would be helpful in the event there are questions regarding any of the rankings. When teams do not run their complete teams in the regular season meets, these coaches are to notify the rankings committee to assist in making the rankings as accurate as possible.

Book appreciates the convenience of hosts providing water on the courses this past season.

The uniformity of the starting grid needs to be stressed as this is a safety issue. Ross stated that the IHSAA and the IGHSAU will make this a point of emphasis on the rules meeting for next year. The rules book recommends the width of the grid be six feet in width. Due to facility width issues and number of teams participating, this isn't always possible. Sauser also suggested to emphasize the boxes are supposed to be randomly assigned in the regular season and post-season.

Sanderson stated there is still some concerns regarding pets at regular season and some state-qualifying meets. Committee acknowledges this is difficult to enforce as some sites hold their meets at parks or other public facilities. Suggestion was made for the host school to send out a reminder to coaches and spectators regarding pets not being permitted at events sanctioned by the IGHSAU/IHSAA. Local policy dictates regular season events.

Questions were asked and answered regarding guide runners. Schools must contact the IGHSAU and/or IHSAA if accommodations are needed for runners. The associations then

provide a letter to these schools outlining the accommodations for the runners. Chizek stated schools with a guide runners must notify meet management one will be used, so the starter can be informed. Specific rules related to the guide runner includes the following: the guide runner cannot lead the runner during the race, the guide runner cannot cross the finish line first, and the guide runner must be someone affiliated with the school.

Chizek asked for feedback regarding sites charging for parking. Knapp stated he had not heard any complaints, and the money received from parking helps offset costs. Several schools who had charged for parking appreciated this money to help in covering the costs of hosting the state-qualifying meet.

## POST SEASON

The difficulty in securing state-qualifying meets was discussed. Management would like to have each site host just one class, but it is currently not always possible due to the lack of facilities available suitable to host or the lack of schools willing to host. There are several positive aspects to a meet with two classes: one timing device, one starter, additional reimbursement but the downside is some schools have to miss more school due to the earlier start time.

Chip timing was discussed. Chizek stated not every site wants to use chips. Knapp stated his site used a different system and it worked great with no issues. Knapp stated it's difficult to arrange for timers at the meets in certain parts of the state. The Committee concurred the help at the finish line is critical to running a great meet.

Sausser wondered about having the state-qualifying meet on a Saturday. Chizek stated it would be difficult to secure enough volunteers on a Saturday.

Book asked about costs incurred and the minimum requirements of hosting a state-qualifying meet. Ross/Chizek stated each site receives a \$500 stipend. Portable restrooms and a timing system are some of the costs. Otte stressed a site needs a great community and program support to run a successful meet. Chizek asked Committee to notify one of the State Offices if a site hosts a great meet as new sites are always being sought for hosting state qualifying meets.

The later release date of state-qualifying assignments was discussed. Committee felt the timing was sufficient and greatly appreciated. Ross stated many things often shift after the last rankings (injury, improvements, etc.) which with the later assignments hopefully a more accurate balance of teams at the state qualifying meet will occur.

The Committee discussed the current state qualifying method regarding the number of runners who qualify for state that are not on a team. Committee was reminded of the increased number of state qualifiers from 10-15 individuals. The committee felt it is important to not water down the competition by allowing more runners at the state meet. Committee agrees to keep the current qualifying format as is.

Ross asked for feedback regarding the “ticket punched” placards from the IGHSAU sent out for those who earned immediate qualification from the state-qualifying meet. Sauser stated the girls loved it. Kearney agreed, stating this was well received by everyone.

The new awards (medallions) from the IGHSAU were well received by female participants.

Belby asked if the boys banner should say “district champion” instead of “state qualifier”. Chizek will look into this.

Ross asked for feedback regarding awards that are not picked up by girls’ coaches. Even though this reminder is given throughout the day over the loudspeaker, many coaches fail to pick up their awards after the meet. Book asked if these could be in the packets that are picked up at the beginning of the meet. Ross will look at some options to deal with the number of awards not picked up following the meet.

The photos taken by all participating boys teams are currently taken indoors. Question was asked if these photos could be taken outdoors as cross country is an outdoor sport. Chizek will look at options. The ease of having the photos taken close to the area in which the coaches pick up the packets make the inside photos more feasible.

Sauser asked if there is a reason why the race schedule is not on a class rotating basis. Some feel it would be nice to rotate this from year to year, while others like the consistency in knowing from year to year what time they will run, if they have to secure hotel reservations, etc. Chizek/Ross will look into the reason behind not rotating the class schedule and discuss the current schedule vs a rotational schedule.

Utilizing a display board at the State Cross Country Meet was discussed. All agree results released on display boards are not practical (due to the crowds), however the Committee suggested display boards could be placed at various locations, including the clubhouse, finish line, awards area, etc. Sauser suggested when results are posted to put a time on the results which would help in the event there is a need for appealing the results. Ideally results are first posted by going online, but with wi-fi issues at the state site, this is almost impossible. Management is constantly looking for ways to improve online capabilities at Fort Dodge.

Belby asked if one and two mile splits could be recorded on the results. Unfortunately, as wi-fi has a lot to do with recording splits, our concern has to be the final time, so recording splits is not feasible. Chizek and Ross will put an emphasis at the rules meeting discussing the issues of having 1 chip vs 2 chips.

Otte asked about the possibility of live streaming the state meet. Chizek stated this has been done in the past but feedback has been that there has been very little viewing.

Committee was reminded drones are not allowed at IHSAA/IGHSAU events (state qualifying and state meet) and this should be posted in meet information.

The committee extended its appreciation to Otte, Knapp and Sanderson for their years of service to the Cross Country Advisory Committee.

The date for the 2018 Cross Country Advisory meeting will be November 28 at the IHSAA in Boone.

There being no further business, **motion to adjourn by Book, Knapp second and unanimously approved.**

Heidi Reed  
Recorder