

Uniforms

Q: Can runners wear black or white shirts under their uniform?

A: Runners can wear clothing under their uniform but runners on the same team must wear the same color. EPGJH runners have chosen to wear black. It is allowed to have a mix of runners wearing undergarments and those not wearing undergarments, but if wearing visible undergarments, they must be of the same color.

Q: Can runners wear watches?

A: Yes. Competitors may wear a watch during regular season and/or state series competition.

Race Distance

Q: How far are cross country races?

A: At the Junior High level, races are approximately 2 miles. Courses vary, but the official IESA distance is 3200 meters – approximately 1.99 miles.

Q: Why are there two race times listed for some races on the EPGJH team website's Girls Results and Boys Results pages?

A: Since most races are 2 miles, I list the equivalent 2-mile time for races that are significantly different in distance. This facilitates comparing times for these "odd-distance" races, although it should be noted that there are many variables in cross country running (hills, terrain, weather, etc.)

Separate Races at Meets

Q: Are there separate races for 7th and 8th grade?

A: No. IESA allows 5th grade through 8th grade to participate in cross country, and all grade levels run together. There are exceptions at some meets, but almost all meets, including the IESA State Series do not make any distinction between grade levels.

Q: What is the difference between Varsity and Open races?

A: Typically Varsity races consist of a maximum of 7 runners from each team, and are team-scored. Open races typically allow an unlimited number of entries and are not team-scored.

Team Scoring

Q: How are team scores determined?

A: The first thing to keep in mind is that low score wins. The top 5 runners from each team count toward its team score by adding each runner's place. The #6 and #7 runners do not count toward its team score, but can affect another team's score by placing in front of the other team's top 5 runners, thus "pushing up" the other team's scores. These runners are sometimes called "pushers" and denoted with a "P" in computerized results. If more than 7 runners from one team are allowed to participate in a race, those not finishing in the top 7 for their team do not figure into team scoring – the race is scored as if those runners were not entered.

Origin of Cross Country

Q: Who invented cross country running?

A: Cross country competition traces its history to the 19th century and an English game called "hare and hounds" or "the paper chase". Participants called themselves harriers – "hare hunters"-- because they were imitating their fathers' sport of hunting. Two runners would run ahead by a few minutes – designated as the "hares" or "foxes". They would often lay a "scent" of shredded paper. The pack was the younger runners – the hounds. Skilled hares would zigzag and double, and lay false trails to make the hounds' job difficult. So when you modestly say you are a mid-pack or back-of-the-pack runner, you are linking yourself to those young hounds of the early 1800s. The field was the older students – the pursuing huntsmen. They followed the hounds, and once the hares were sighted, they began the serious run in. If they caught the hares, it was "the kill." So if you're "ahead of the field," you are indeed winning the race, just as the best schoolboy runner did as he chased the hares on some misty October day back in 1839.