



# OHIO ASSOCIATION OF TRACK & CROSS COUNTRY COACHES

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## COVID-19 Return to Competition Recommendations for OHSAA Member Cross Country Teams Presented on July 31, 2020

The Ohio Association of Track & Cross Country Coaches (OATCCC) was established in 1941 by a group of dedicated coaches led by the legendary Ed Barker. The OATCCC prides itself based on three key purposes: 1) to promote Track & Field and Cross Country in all the junior and senior high schools of Ohio; and also extend support to those programs in the state's colleges and universities, 2) to cooperate with and assist the OHSAA and Ohio's colleges and universities in all the matters pertaining to maintenance, promotion, and improvement of Track & Field, and Cross Country and 3) to recognize and award outstanding achievement and/or contribution by athletes, coaches, officials.

The OATCCC is over 1,800 members strong. The membership is represented by the Executive Board of the President, Vice President, Past President, Secretary, Treasurer and 16 District Representatives. Additionally, the OATCCC has non-voting members including the OHSAA Liaison who provide guidance and serve as important stakeholders as the OATCCC continues the rich traditions and positive impact established by the founders.

In response to the ever-changing athletic environment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the OATCCC has drafted the following Return to Competition Recommendations for OHSAA member Cross Country teams.

All general "Return to Play" recommendations issued and implemented by the OHSAA not otherwise specified in the recommendations are considered incorporated herein including any updates made after the adoption of these recommendations.

These recommendations do not supersede guidelines, mandates, requirement and/or orders put into place by the Ohio Governor's Office and/or the Ohio Department of Health and/or guidelines, mandates, requirements and/or order put into place by federal, local or county organizations or health departments and/or local school districts.

## **General Considerations: Athletes and Coaches**

## **General Considerations: Coaches**

## **General Considerations: Equipment and Supplies**

### **Recommendation**

- Athletes and coaches must conduct daily symptom assessments.
- Anyone experiencing symptoms must stay home.
- Athletes and coaches should wear a face covering except when running or engaging in physical exertion.
- Social distancing of at least 6 feet should be maintained at all times.
- No touching allowed including hugging, shaking hands, fist bumps or partner stretching except if a coach needs to administer assistance for a medical emergency.
- No spitting.
- No congregating before or after team practices or competitions.
- Communicate guidelines in a clear manner to athletes and parents.
- Keep accurate records of those athletes and staff who attend each team practice or competition in case contact tracing is needed.
- Limit group workout sizes with same students always training and rotating together to ensure more limited exposure if someone develops an infection.
- Complete verification form acknowledging symptom and temperature checks prior to receiving check-in packet at competitions.
- Each athlete and coach responsible for bringing their own supplies including water bottles, towels and any other necessary items which should be labelled with their name and kept in a bag only for that athlete or coach.
- Each athlete to wear their own appropriate workout clothing which is not to be shared and is to be washed and cleaned after every workout or competition upon returning home.
- Hand sanitizer should be plentiful at all practices and competitions.
- No water coolers for shared team use.
- No sharing of food, drinks or personal items.

## **Competition Considerations: Officials/Event Workers**

### **Recommendation**

- Wear a face covering at all times.
- Conduct symptom assessment prior to travel to competition venue.
- Upon arrival at competition venue, temperature should be assessed.
- Anyone experiencing symptoms must stay home.
- Social distancing of at least 6 feet should be maintained at all times.
- No touching allowed including shaking hands, fist bumps or any other physical interactions with anyone at the competition venue except to administer assistance for a medical emergency.
- Supply own water bottle, equipment, hand sanitizer and personal items which are not to be shared with anyone.

## Competition Considerations: Starting Line

### Recommendation

- Team starting boxes should allow for 18 square feet of space for each runner to maintain acceptable social distancing space with at least 6 feet in-between each box. Suggested box dimensions: 12' x 12'. Allows for 144 square feet of space per box with a maximum of 9-10 runners per box from the same team lined up in rows of 3 to allow for 6' distance in between each runner. (See attached diagram)
- Consider using staggered, wave, interval or break-in starts.
- If break-in start used, then break-in line should be marked at least 200m from starting line and be 20' long per every 10 runners in the race as space allows.
- No more than 100-150 runners in a race dependent upon venue size and as mandated by the venue's local health department guidelines.
- No pre-race instruction/meeting conducted by officials.
- Runners to arrive at starting line no earlier than 5 minutes before the start.
- No pre-race run-outs or team huddles.
- Runners to wear masks to the start area.
- Runners may choose to continue to wear masks during the race, pull them down around the neck during the race or place them in individual bags labeled with their name and collected by a team representative prior to runners entering the starting line area.
- No coaches or spectators within 30 feet of the starting line area. Area should be marked with flags, cones, roping or other markings as available.
- No clerking or check-in at starting line. All check-in to be completed at packet pick-up.
- No items to be left or stored in the starting line area.
- No water bottles allowed.

## Competition Considerations: Finish Line

### Recommendation

- No spectators or coaches within 30 feet of the finish line area.
- No finish corral or chutes.
- When using FAT timing for larger meets use longest finish line possible to allow for more space as runners cross the finish line.
- When using FAT time system, consider alternative means of finish place and time to avoid the use of finish line corrals or chutes.
- Consider using image-based equipment to help with picking places and avoid congestion at finish line.
- Consider using disposable bibs with timing tags.
- If using chips, coaches to collect chips and return them in a bag after the race. Chips not to be placed in common receptacles by athletes.
- Athletes to maintain 6 foot social distancing in finish area at all times.
- No touching of any kind except by event workers for the purpose of assisting with a medical emergency.
- Masks must be made available to athletes by a team representative as they exit the finish line area.
- Athletes to return immediately to their team camp area after finishing the race.
- Athletes not to congregate in the finish line area.
- Water supplied in finish area by event workers for emergency medical purposes.
- Individual, bottled water available for all runners placed away from the finish line area by 50 meters when possible.
- Any frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected frequently.
- Disposable towels should be available for the purpose of covering coughs prior to athletes having their face masks returned to them.
- In accordance with NFHS possible rule modification: 8-1-3a: Consider widening the course to at least 6 feet at its narrowest point.
- See starting line and finish line recommendations for additional considerations.

## Competition Considerations: Course Layout

**Recommendation**

**Competition Considerations:  
Race Schedule**

- Consider grouping races into sessions by categories such as divisions by size, keeping genders and middle schools for each school in the same session.
- Separate each session by at least 1 hour to allow athletes, coaches and spectators to leave venue prior to the arrival of athletes, coaches and spectators for next session.

**Competition Considerations:  
Results and Awards**

- No results to be posted at venue.
- All results to be posted online, sent by email and/or mailed.
- No awards ceremonies allowed.
- All awards to be received by the coaches prior to leaving the venue or to be collected or delivered as arranged by meet management.

**Competition Considerations:  
Team Camps**

- Team camp areas should be designated and marked as practicable.
- Team camps should be at least 20' apart from each other.
- No tents allowed.
- Team camp area should be for athletes and coaches only, no spectators.
- No team food or meals to be made available or served in team camp area.

**Competition Considerations:  
Medical Staff**

- Host site should provide athletic training and medical personnel on site for any medical needs.
- Medical personnel are expected to follow all guidelines as applicable to the medical profession that allows for administering safe, medical treatment.

## Recommendation

### Competition Considerations: Spectators and Crowd Control

- Conduct symptom self-assessment prior to travel to competition venue.
- Anyone experiencing symptoms must stay home.
- Wear a face covering at all times.
- Social distancing of at least 6 feet should be maintained at all times.
- Use signage to remind all spectators to maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet and to wear masks.
- Consider having hand sanitation stations available.
- Have clearly marked spectator zones with a maximum number of people allowed for proper social distancing.
- Consider having clearly identifiable “safety staff” available to help monitor spectator zones and enforce safety protocols.
- Limit parking availability in order to limit number of spectators at competition venue.
- No smoking or vaping allowed anywhere at the venue including parking areas.
- Meet directors communicate information to coaches to share with spectators about safety guidelines and expectation of spectators.
- Make course and venue map available to spectators with no-spectator zones clearly marked.
- No concessions or food/beverage sales or distribution of any kind.

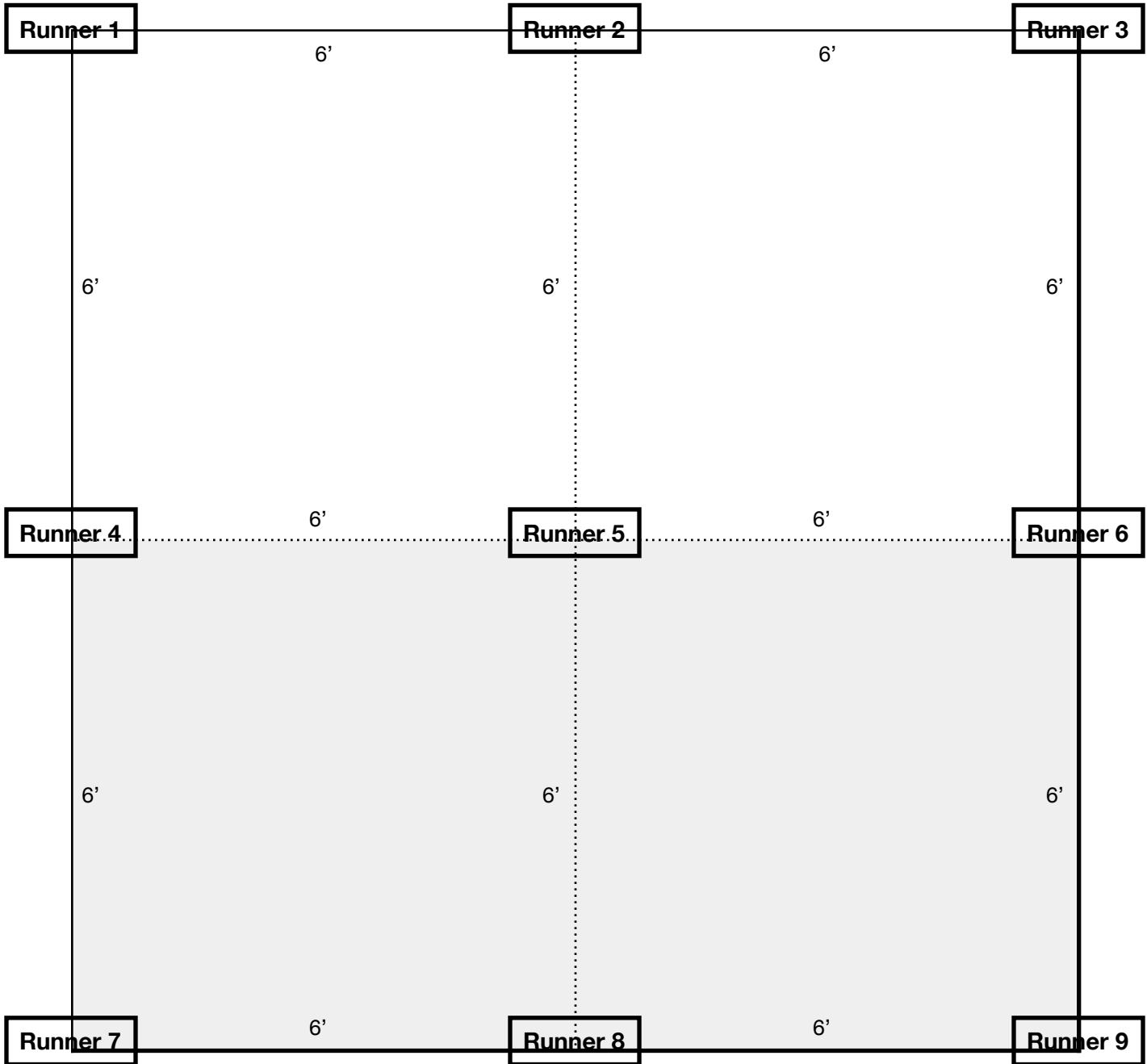
### Competition Considerations: Restrooms

- As practicable, restrooms should be made available using permanent, indoor facilities.
- The number of persons allowed in the restrooms at one time should be consistent with the guidelines associated with the facility in which they are situated.
- Temporary restroom facilities may be used in accordance with the guidelines provided by the venue’s local health department or other applicable guidelines.
- Restrooms should be cleaned and disinfected frequently.

### Competition Considerations: General Statement

- Every venue is different and all efforts are to be made to allow for social distancing and frequent sanitation.

**Starting Box Dimensions: 12'x12' with 6' in between each team's starting box.**  
*(10th runner option would need to be 6' behind 3rd row of runners)*



**100 runners in a race**

7 runners per team allows for 14 teams  
 (Starting line length = 246' (75 meters))

9 runners per team allows for 11 teams  
 (Starting line length = 192' (59 meters))

10 runners per team allows for 10 teams  
 (Starting line length = 174' (54 meters))

**150 runners in a race**

7 runners per team allows for 21 teams  
 (Starting line length = 372' (114 meters))

9 runners per team allows for 16 teams  
 (Starting line length = 282' (86 meters))

10 runners per team allows for 15 teams  
 (Starting line length = 264' (81 meters))



## Resources:

Ohio Department of Health Responsible RestartOhio:

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/Contact-Sport-Practices-Non-Contact-Sport.pdf>  
<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/General-Non-Contact-Sports.pdf>

Ohio High School Athletic Association:

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports/2020/OHSAAReturnToPlayRecs.pdf?sv=2017-04-17&sr=b&si=DNNFileManagerPolicy&sig=OQL3CIQfORCsyMX6sH9okmixdLlaxCCAie9PMAXPbJ4%3D>

<https://ohsaaweb.blob.core.windows.net/files/Sports/Cross%20Country/2020/CrossCountryRecommendations.pdf?sv=2017-04-17&sr=b&si=DNNFileManagerPolicy&sig=s9u9UXJCOrnqE%2B3YIm7v%2Bh9McW//%2BvaazmkpTPurz6o%3D>

National Federation of State high School Associations:

<https://www.nfhs.org/articles/plans-to-preserve-high-school-sports-performing-arts-continue-amid-pandemic/>