

Proposal for High School Cross Country Competitions for St Louis County (8/17/2020)
NOT YET FINALIZED/APPROVED BY THE COUNTY OR CITY

1. Considerations

- a. Current local health ordinances on gathering size (currently capped at 50)
- b. Cross country can be considered moderate risk if run as usual. With proper modifications can easily be made into a low risk sport.
- c. Events are outdoors, where spread is already known to be less likely
- d. Even with potential for spectators, courses are spread out over a great distance with race courses covering a 3.1 mile (5km) distance.
- e. When competition is allowed, competitions should be limited to the recommended competition area per the St Louis Sports Medicine COVID Task Force (Metro East, St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles County, Jefferson County and Franklin County)

2. Proposals

- a. Race size
 - i. Cap individual races to 80-100 runners per race
 1. Individual teams are generally as small as 7 (varsity) but can be larger in JV events.
 2. During a race, runners become very spread out so there is not sustained close contact between individuals.
- b. Team tent 'villages'
 - i. In order to minimize congregation of athletes, meet directors should reconsider the need for team tent areas
 - ii. If tent areas are used, planning should be made to provide appropriate distancing.
 - iii. Masks should be required for athletes who are congregating at their team tent
- c. Starting line
 - i. Start line/boxes – Boxes are sized a 2 meters wide with an open box between teams, allowing for social distancing at the start between teams
 - ii. Warm up "run outs" would be restricted to the space directly in front of the team start box
 - iii. Warm up apparel should be removed prior to coming to the start line.
- d. Masks would be required up until 3 minutes prior to the start of the race
 - i. At 3 minutes, masks will be given to a representative of the team to either be kept for the athlete to use after the race or to discard if it is a disposable mask.
 - ii. Recommend that athletes put their mask into a brown paper bag labeled with their name to be provided back to the athlete at the end of the race.
 - iii. Athletes, race officials, finish line personnel and spectators are required to wear masks. The only exception to the mask is when strenuous

physical activity is being performed, which essentially applies to the athletes only during their event.

- iv. Strong consideration should be made for personnel working the finish line to wear face shields or protective eye wear, masks and gloves.
- e. Race course
 - i. Course width should be looked at to ensure that the minimum width of the course is 2M
 - ii. Courses also need to be assessed for unnecessary overlap if an area is run multiple times in its traditional configuration to avoid potential congestion.
 - iii. If spectators are allowed on the course, spectators should wear masks and maintain social distancing throughout the course viewing areas.
- f. Finish line
 - i. Races should use FAT timing methods
 - ii. Runners should be encouraged to stay on their feet and clear the finish area quickly after crossing the finish line to allow for appropriate social distancing following the race where more sustained close contact may occur. Medical attention
 - iii. Finish corrals should be used instead of finish chutes
 - iv. Personnel working the finish line should have masks and gloves and are encouraged to wear a face shield or eye protection.
 - v. Hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes/sprays should be readily available at the finish line.
 - vi. If events have spectators, no spectators should be allowed within the last 200 meters before the finish line
- g. Race starts
 - i. Consideration can be made to staggered starts separated by 5 minutes to decrease number of runners on the course at one time
 - ii. Adequate time should be planned in between races to clear the course and avoid congregation between start and finishes of races
 - iii. Meet sizes (ie. numbers of teams competing) should be reconsidered to avoid overcrowding
- h. Awards/Results
 - i. Award ceremonies will not be held. Coaches should be sent home with medals at the end of the meet
 - ii. Result boards should not be used to avoid unnecessary congregation.
 - iii. Online result information should be provided to coaches prior to the meet to distribute to parents to access if spectators are restricted.
- i. Concessions/T-shirts
 - i. T-shirts and other race gear should be considered to be sold online prior to the race and distributed to teams at the event
 - ii. Concessions stands should sell only pre-packaged items and lines should maintain social distancing.

- j. Spectators
 - i. Given the size of cross country courses, most are easily sustainable for socially distancing spectators.
 - ii. If restrictions for spectators are necessary, consider limiting to 2 per athlete.
 - iii. Consider having runners leave the course after their race is completed to limit individuals on site
- k. Permitting
 - i. The County should provide necessary permits to allow proper planning to occur prior to races