

MARIN MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC LEAGUE

Cross Country Rules & Expectations

What Middle School Cross Country Is All About

The purpose of middle school athletics is to provide a fun, safe, positive, and educational experience that promotes skill development, personal growth, and healthy competition. Through participation, student-athletes develop confidence, character, discipline, teamwork, and respect for others while learning the values of sportsmanship, responsibility, and perseverance. Middle school athletics are designed to foster a lifelong appreciation for physical activity and encourage every participant to reach their full potential in a supportive and inclusive environment.

AT A GLANCE

Race Distance	1.5 to 2.0 miles (course set by host school)
Race Format	Girls' races (6th,7th,8th), Boys' races (6th,7th,8th)
Start Time	4:00 PM unless arranged otherwise
Finals Timing	6th grade girls start at 4 PM, 6th grade boys ~4:20 PM, 7th grade girls~4:40pm, 7th grade boys~5PM, 8th grade girls~5:20PM, 8th grade boys~5:40PM
Team Size	No limit to # of runners per school
Medals	Awarded to the top 10 finishers from each race, All participants will receive a ribbon.

How a Cross Country Meet Works

- Meets are under current NFHS Cross Country Rules unless modified by league rules.
- Cross country meets are conducted on a designated course approved by the host school.
- Athletes run a designated outdoor course, typically 1.5 to 2.0 miles, set up and marked by the host school.
- All grades have their own race for the Championship Meet – girls' races (6th, 7th, 8th) and boys' races (6th, 7th, 8th)
- Runners must compete in at least one meet before the County Championship.
- No pacing runners.
- All runners will be given a bib and RFID chip for the race.
- The first athlete to cross the finish line wins.
- Athletes must stay on the marked course the entire race. Cutting the course or leaving the route can result in disqualification.
- Athletes are expected to finish under their own power unless medical help is needed.

- Coaches Responsibilities-Coaches are responsible for ensuring athletes are familiar with the course, race procedures, and expectations for sportsmanship. Coaches should encourage proper training, hydration, and healthy competition.
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Officials

Practice Meets

- The host school's coach serves as the judge for the race.
- Adults or high school students are responsible for keeping time.

Championship Meet

- Each coach is assigned a specific role and will know their assignment at least one week before the meet.
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Ejections & Conduct

If a runner, coach, or spectator is ejected from a game:

- The home team reports the incident including the name and role of the person to the league commissioner within 24 hours
 - The ejected person may not attend or participate in the next league contest
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Safety Rules for Everyone

- Athletes must follow all instructions from meet officials and event supervisors.
- Jewelry should be removed or secured according to league and school policies.
- Any athlete showing signs of injury, illness, heat-related concerns, or concussion symptoms will be removed from competition and evaluated according to school and league protocols.
- Race modifications or cancellations may occur due to extreme heat, air quality concerns, or unsafe course conditions.
- When temperatures are forecast to reach triple digits, meets should be rescheduled.

Physical Examination

- Each competitor must have on file with his/her school a verification of a
- physical examination within the last calendar year.
- Coaches must have runners' medical release forms at all meets.

Parent Permission

- Each school must have on file a permission slip signed by a parent or guardian.
- Please include a media release for photos.

Insurance

- Each school represented is to confirm district/school policy prior to race.

Uniforms & Equipment

- Athletes should wear school-issued or school-approved uniforms when available.
- Appropriate running shoes are required. Spiked or cleated shoes are not allowed.
- Jewelry should be removed or secured according to league and school policies

The host school provides all timing equipment, course design, and any necessary materials such as cones and course markings.

Sportsmanship

Cross country has a strong tradition of mutual respect — athletes often cheer each other on even in the middle of a race. MMAL embraces that spirit.

- Coaches, athletes, and spectators are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times.
 - Intentionally interfering with another runner may result in disqualification or additional disciplinary action.
 - Athletes should show respect toward competitors, coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators.
 - Encouraging teammates and competitors is strongly encouraged.
 - Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their athletes and spectators.
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League Finals

The MMAL Championship Meet (League Finals) is organized by MCOE. The location is determined each year.

- Finals race order

Group	Start Time
6th grade girls	4:00 PM
6th grade boys	4:20 PM
7th grade girls	4:40 PM
7th grade boys	5:00 PM
8th grade girls	5:20 PM
8th grade boys	5:40 PM

- Every effort is made to ensure runners can complete the 3K (approximately 1.75 miles) course in under 20 minutes.

Each coach is assigned a specific role at League Finals and will be notified at least one week in advance.

Awards

- League championships and postseason events will follow league-specific qualification procedures.
- Medals are awarded to the top 10 finishers from each race
- All participants receive a ribbon.

Fun • Safety • Skill Development • Confidence • Character • Teamwork • Sportsmanship