

CONNECTICUT INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

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www.ciacsports.com

52nd ANNUAL 2026 CIAC GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

94th ANNUAL 2026 CIAC BOYS CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

Tournament Director

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CIAC Boys/Girls Committee Chair

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The Cross Country Tournament information is arranged as follows:

1. Authority
2. Awards
3. Dates, Meets, Sites, Times
4. Divisions
5. Entry Procedure
6. Meet Director
7. Inspection of Course
8. Park and Admission Fee
9. Late Entry Fee
10. Meet Regulations
11. Numbers
12. Uniforms / Dressing Facilities
13. Road Race Participation
14. Triathlon Events
15. Out-of-Season – During Summer
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17. Students with Special Needs
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19. Unmanned Aerial Systems at CIAC Events
20. Sportsmanship

52nd ANNUAL 2026 CIAC GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY SPORTS PACKET
94th ANNUAL 2026 CIAC BOYS CROSS COUNTRY SPORTS PACKET

1. **AUTHORITY** – The decisions of the CIAC Girls and Boys Cross Country Committees and/or the Meet Director relative to the operation of the meets shall be final.
2. **AWARDS** – Individual awards will be given to the first twelve (12) finishers in each Divisional Championship, and also the first twenty-five (25) finishers in the Open Championship. Awards will be given to a maximum of twelve (12) runners listed on the entry form of the first and second place team in each divisional and open championship. A plaque will be awarded to the winner and runner-up teams in each divisional and open championship event. Awards will be presented at the finish area **approximately 30 minutes after the conclusion of the race. (Coaches please have your athletes in the area soon after the race.)**
3. **DATES OF MEETS / SITES / STARTING TIMES**

The **Girls and Boys Divisional Championship Meets** for 2026 shall be as follows:

All divisional championship races will be held at:

Wickham Park, Manchester, CT

Saturday, October 31, 2026

(Weather date – Sunday, November 1 and/or Monday, November 2 and/or Friday, October 30)

Please note – if it becomes necessary to reschedule to Monday or Friday, the meet will be held during the school day.

Boys starting times for each race will be:

S Division	–	10:00 a.m.	MM Division	–	1:20 p.m.
SS Division	–	11:00 a.m.	L Division	–	2:20 p.m.
M Division	–	12:00 p.m.	LL Division	–	3:20 p.m.

Girls starting times for each race will be:

S Division	–	10:30 a.m.	MM Division	–	1:50 p.m.
SS Division	–	11:30 a.m.	L Division	–	2:50 p.m.
M Division	–	12:30 p.m.	LL Division	–	3:50 p.m.

All races will start **promptly** at the time listed.

The **Girls and Boys State Open Championship** will be held at:

Wickham Park, Manchester, CT

on Friday, November 6, 2026

(Weather date – Monday, November 9)

Boys starting time for the race will be 10:00 a.m. / **Girls starting time** for the race will be 10:45 a.m.

Award ceremony will be at 11:30 a.m.

****** Meet schedules may be subject to change due to course and/or weather conditions ******

The **New England Championship** will be held at:

**Troy Howard Middle School
173 Lincolnville Ave Belfast, ME**

on Saturday, November 14, 2026 – Boys 11:30 a.m. and Girls 12:15 p.m.

4. **DIVISIONS** – The 2026 Boys and Girls Cross Country Championships will be operated in six (6) divisions. Placement of schools is based on the 2025-26 girl or boy enrollment in grades 9-12.

Boys Divisions:	LL Division – 680 and over	M Division – 301-389
	L Division – 550-679	SS Division – 190-300
	MM Division – 390-549	S Division – Up to 189

Girls Divisions:	LL Division – 700 and over	M Division – 318-429
	L Division – 560-699	SS Division – 215-317
	MM Division – 430-559	S Division – Up to 214

Note: Schools should notify the CIAC of any incorrect placement by September 25, 2026. No changes will be made on the day of the event.

NOTE: Tournament divisions are available on the cross country page at ciacsports.com.

5. **ENTRY FEE / SUBMITTING ENTRIES USING ATHLETIC.NET**

- Each girls and/or boys team entering the championships will be assessed an entry fee of \$100, which must be mailed to the CIAC office, 30 Realty Drive, Cheshire, CT 06410. Make check payable to CIAC.
- Schools will have until Noon, Monday, October 26, 2026, to submit Eligibility Rosters to CIAC and final tournament roster in Athletic.net. Schools may change their initial tournament roster entries as many times as they want up until the Noon deadline on October 26. The entry system will close at Noon on October 26 and divisional meets will be set. Schools are also responsible for ensuring that their Athletic.net roster of student-athletes exactly matches their eligibility roster sent to the CIAC including correct first and last name, grade and gender.**
- As announced previously by the CIAC, all entries for the CIAC Division and Open Championships will use Athletic.net procedures noted in the following pages. *All CIAC schools who have entered as having a team or individual for this year's CIAC Cross Country Division Championships must have Athletic.net accounts for each head coach and an athletic director. Schools are also responsible for ensuring that their Athletic.net roster of student-athletes exactly matches their Eligibility Roster sent to the CIAC including correct first and last name, grade and gender.*

ATTENTION COACHES: Please remember to continually check your roster for duplication of athletes generated from results recorded on Athletic.net! Check out how to add, deactivate, edit athletes, FIX DUPLICATE ATHLETES on your Athletic.net cross country roster to match your CIAC eligibility list: <https://support.athletic.net/category/h5xhvrqf3x-roster>

Please see the additional **Athletic.net Tutorials for CIAC Cross Country Teams** guidance available included in this document and at the meet info page at each CIAC Divisional Championship meet in Athletic.net.

- The following online method for entry must be used for all divisional championship entries. Please follow these directions for submitting entries.
 - Go to www.athletic.net, the site hosting the online entry process.
 - Log into your coach account.
 - Your divisional meet should appear on your team's season calendar. Select the meet and then click the "Register Athletes" button. Please make sure that if your boys and girls teams are competing in different divisions that you select the appropriate meet.
 - Enter/confirm your contact info and select the gender(s) in which you wish to complete entries for and then click Enter Team.

- To help verify your entry complete the brief form:
 - First-Last Name
 - Phone Number
 - Email Address
 - Position (Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Athletic Director)
 - You are now able to enter athletes in events for the divisional meet.
 - You may choose to complete entries “by event” or “by athlete”.
 - A maximum of seven (7) athletes from a school can be entered to represent the team in the race in which that school is assigned to compete. An athlete may only run in one race. Substitutions of eligible athletes may be made to the original seven up to thirty (30) minutes before the start of the race.
 - After completing entries, print a confirmation copy of your entries by clicking on the Finalize Entries button (print entries) at top of your entry summary. The coach should bring a copy of their entry confirmation to the division meet. Under no circumstances will printed form be accepted in lieu of submissions via Athletic.net.
 - Please see the additional **Athletic.net Tutorials for CIAC XC teams’** guidance available included in this document and at the meet info page at each CIAC Divisional Championship meet in Athletic.net.
- e. **Start List** – Start list will be posted on CIAC web site and the Athletic.net meet site approximately five (5) days prior to the class meets. Substitutions of eligible athletes may be made to the original seven up to thirty (30) minutes before the start of the race using the championship substitution procedures and form available at the meet.
- f. **Results – Class** – Results of individual Class Meets will be announced and posted following the conclusion of each race. **Results will be available on the CIAC web site – www.ciacsports.com and Athletic.net.** Coaches should report any errors or omissions immediately to the finish line tent.
6. **MEET DIRECTOR** – The Boys and Girls Meet Director for both the Divisional and Open Championships will be Bill Baron, 29 Apple Tree Lane, South Windsor, CT 06074 – Telephone (860) 644-1264 (home) / Email: baronwm71@gmail.com
- The Boys and Girls CIAC Cross Country Chair is Jason Magao, Rockville High School, Vernon, CT 06066 – School (860) 870-6050 / Email – Jason.Magao@vernonct.org .
7. **INSPECTION OF COURSE** – Schools are encouraged to inspect the course prior to the day of the meet to keep the course free of traffic for the racers. On the day of the class meets the Wickham Park course will not be open for inspection until 8:00 a.m. On the day of the Open Meet the park will not be open until 8:00 a.m.
8. **PARKING FEE** -- Be advised that a spectator parking and CIAC event admission fee of \$15 per car will be collected for both the Class and Open Championships.
- Cars illegally parked outside the Wickham Park facility, especially on Tolland Turnpike near the back entrance to the park, may be ticketed and towed.
9. **CIAC LATE ENTRY POLICY**
- a. **No tournament entries will be accepted after the established deadline except those approved by the CIAC Board of Control.**
 - b. Corrections requested by a school to an entry form that was submitted by the established deadline but prior to seeding/pairing data being published on the web site, will be assessed a fee of \$50 per corrections to a maximum of \$250.
 - c. All requests for corrections must be submitted the CIAC office – hrondon@casciac.org . **No telephone requests will be considered.**

TOURNAMENT REGULATIONS VIOLATIONS – If a school fails to comply with tournament regulations and such requires the CIAC tournament sports committee, central office staff, or the CIAC Board of Control to redo any portion of the tournament pairings which non-compliance adversely impacts the management of the tournament, an administrative violation fee of \$500 will be imposed upon the school before entry into the tournament will be allowed.

10. **MEET REGULATIONS** – All state meets shall be governed by the following regulations:

- a. Only institutional members of the Conference may enter these championships.
- b. For girls races – All courses will be 5,000 meters
For boys races – All courses will be 5,000 meters
- c. The team roster for the state and open meet shall consist of seven (7) runners, plus all others eligible to compete. There is no minimum as to the number of competitors a school may enter be it 1, 2, 3, etc., there is a maximum of seven (7) runners who may run in an event. Seven (7) runners may compete in the state and open meets, these seven (7) runners need not be the same for each meet. Substitutions may be made to the original seven up to thirty (30) minutes before the start of the race.
- d. The Open Meet will be made up of the top two (2) teams from each division decided by points, plus eight (8) additional teams decided by having the fastest team times. In a division, any team ranked higher in place scoring than a team advanced to the Open based on time will also advance.
- e. Individual qualifiers for the Open Meet will include the top **twelve (12)** runners in each division plus the twenty (20) fastest runners overall on time beyond the automatic qualifiers, who are not on qualifying teams. Athletes who have qualified as part of a team are withdrawn from the pool of individual qualifiers for the Open Meet.
- f. Qualifiers for the New England Championships will be the **top six (6) teams** and the **top twenty-five (25) individual** finishers from each boys and girls race at the Open Meet. Athletes who have qualified as part of a team are not withdrawn from the pool of individual qualifiers for the New England Championship. Coaches must register and pay for their team and individual qualifiers on athletic.net prior to the New England Meet. More information will be provided in the New England Cross Country information packet.
- g. Each runner must be eligible for interscholastic competition under the Rules of Eligibility and Control for Boys and Girls High School Athletics in Connecticut and have been a member of his/her team for four (4) separate regular season meets held on four separate dates.
- h. Coaches are expected to maintain discipline over their runners at all times. We are guests at the Championship site and every precaution must be taken to ensure that the site is not damaged or that acts of theft and vandalism do not occur. Coaches and their schools will be held liable for the action of their runners. **PRINCIPALS AND COACHES ARE ASKED TO INFORM THEIR RUNNERS AND FANS THAT GRILLS, FOOTBALLS, FRISBEES, RADIOS AND OTHER SUCH ITEMS ARE NOT TO BE BROUGHT TO THE CHAMPIONSHIP SITE.**
- i. **COMPETITORS / FINISH LINE** – Coaches are to instruct their runners to continue forward to the end of the exits. Runners are not to stop after crossing the finish line. 180 plus runners compete in each race.
- j. Runners will not be allowed to participate without the presence of their coach or an adult officially designated in writing by their principal.
- k. Scoring will be in accordance with National Federation Rules.

NOTE: If fewer than five (5) competitors of a team finish, the places of all members of that team shall be disregarded and all other team scores re-ranked.

1. ANY RUNNER WHO USES AN ILLEGAL AID OTHER THAN A WATCH, SUCH AS A HEART RATE MONITOR, SHALL BE DISQUALIFIED.

m. Athletic trainers will be available on site and located past the finish area.

n. The finish line area is “off limits” to coaches, spectators and parents. Team or competitor disqualification may occur.

o. Coaches are to bring a large plastic garbage bag so that what the team packs in may be packed out.

11. **NUMBERS** – Coaches are to check in at the registration area no later than 30 minutes prior to the start of the race in which their runners are competing. Numbers will be given at that time. Pins will be provided by the meet director.

12. **UNIFORMS / DRESSING FACILITIES** –Uniforms must be in compliance with the National Federation rules as stated in the National Federation rule book. All team and individual runners must come dressed for competition. Dressing room accommodations will not be available.

For safety and weather-related conditions, the CIAC cross country committee has the authority to permit wearing additional attire for competitors.

13. **ROAD RACE PARTICIPATION** – With the approval first given by the Coach and then with the approval of both the Athletic Director and Principal, a member of the cross country team may enter a road race of 5K or less as an “UNATTACHED ATHLETE” in a maximum of four (4) road races per season provided he/she complies with weekly limitations and satisfies all of the requirements of an “UNATTACHED ATHLETE” stated in the CIAC Handbook. **“Maniac Type” races and other similar events that usually include obstacle courses and other risky and physical challenges are prohibited.** (Sunday is considered the first day of the week. Coaches are responsible for ensuring that their team members know the “road race regulations.”)

NOTE: Teams and individual runners qualifying for the New England Championship are subject to all CIAC rules. The season for those competing in the New England Championship ends after the New England Meet.

ROAD RACE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1) **After obtaining the permission of the coach first and then the athletic director and the principal, may a cross country team member run in one regular season meet on Tuesday and then run unattached in a road race of 5K or less on Saturday of the same week?**

YES, provided this race does not exceed the four (4) road race limit per season, the road race would count as the second meet of the week, which complies with the weekly limitation of two (2) meets per week. For clarification, the two (2) meets per week limit includes all regularly scheduled meets, all invitational meets and all road races. When calculating the number of meets per week, it is important to note that the calendar week starts on Sunday and ends on Saturday.

2) **After obtaining the permission of the coach first and then the athletic director and the principal, may a cross country team member participate in a league meet on Monday, an invitational meet on Friday and then run unattached in a road race of 5K or less on Sunday?**

YES, since Sunday is the first day of the new week, the athlete would be in compliance with weekly limitations in both weeks, provided he/she only competes in one (1) additional meet in this particular week. The Sunday road race would count as meet #1 and the additional meet would be meet #2, which complies with the weekly limit of two (2) meets per week.

- 3) **May a cross country team member compete unattached in a charity road race of 5K or less on Sunday, a regular season meet on Tuesday and an invitational meet on Saturday?**

*NO, since the first day of the week is Sunday and the last day of the week is Saturday, this would be considered three (3) meets in the same week, which violates the weekly limitation of two (2) meets per week. The coach is responsible for knowing the weekly limitations and how it is calculated. In this scenario the coach should NOT give approval for the road race. **Note:** regardless of whether a road race is for charity or not, ALL road races are counted when calculating the weekly limitations and the four (4) road races per season limit.*

- 4) **May a cross country team member compete in a road race if the coach denies approval?**

NO, once the coach says "No" to the road race, the decision is final. The coach is responsible for monitoring the training program of all team members, and therefore, the athlete cannot pursue the matter any further when the coach says "No"!

- 5) **What is the penalty if a cross country team member competes unattached in a road race that violates the distance limit, the weekly limitations or the four (4) meets per season limit?**

It is important to note that this violation will render the athlete ineligible for further competition that season unless the athlete is reinstated by the CIAC Board of Control. When applicable, the coach, the team and/or the athletic department will also be subject to additional sanctions.

14. **TRIATHLON EVENTS** – Competing in a triathlon event during the cross country season will not jeopardize the eligibility of a cross country runner provided that the running segment is 5K or less.

A member of the cross country team:

- 1) MAY enter track events up to and including two (2) miles, (under track conditions only).
- 2) MAY enter any and all field events.

15. **OUT-OF-SEASON – DURING THE SUMMER** – The following regulations pertain to any out-of-season activity that occurs only during the prescribed summer months.

Individual and Team Sports

Member schools' coaches may allow their coaches to coach their member school athletes during the summer months beginning on the Monday following the designated spring state championship weekend (prior to Decathlon) and concludes no later than the second Saturday of August provided ALL the following conditions are adhered to:

- 1) Coaching is restricted to no more than two (2) days per week per sport.
- 2) Each day may not exceed two (2) total hours of practice time per day OR the amount of time needed to complete an official single game/contest. (Note: Multi-contest events, round robin tournaments, double header games, etc. are not permitted.)
- 3) Although NOT required, coaches may receive compensation provided it is not directly or indirectly derived from fees charged to student-athletes. However, coaches may collect fees from member school student-athletes to cover administrative costs such as transportation, entry fees, insurance, officials, etc.
- 4) Any person providing instruction during this summer activity must comply with all CIAC Coaching Credential Requirements and Mandates.
- 5) Any summer activities conducted by member schools, or their coaches cannot be mandatory for their student-athletes.
- 6) School districts may allow the use of school equipment, transportation and insurance ONLY for these two (2) per week activities.
- 7) None of the above exception/conditions (1-6) may be used simultaneously with any other part of the existing restrictions for the out-of-season regulation.

16. **SCRIMMAGES** – Teams must have a minimum of three (3) days of practice prior to scheduling a full team scrimmage. All sports teams and individual athletes must have a minimum of ten (10) physical/exertional practice days with their school before the date of the first scheduled competition. No team/athlete shall practice/compete with their school more than six (6) consecutive days to provide a day of rest. Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays may be used unless prohibited by local board policy. Sunday practices may be counted to fulfill the 10-day requirement.
17. **STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS** - Coaches are reminded to inform contest officials prior to each competition of any students with special needs who could be competing in the contest when his/her disability could impact the individual's performance or the conduct of the competition.
18. **DECISIONS BY GAME OFFICIALS** – Protests arising from the decisions, interpretations and misapplication of the National Federation or CIAC game rules by officials during the contest must be in accordance with the NFHS rules and the CIAC protest procedure stated in the packet. Protests will not be considered after the official conclusion of the meet. The decisions and interpretations of the rules by the officials are final. The record of the official scorekeeper at the conclusion of the contest is final unless an error is discovered. Such error shall be corrected as covered by specific contest rules. Any team leaving the contest area before the conclusion of the contest because of dissatisfaction with the officiating will render the school liable to disciplinary action by CIAC.
19. **UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS AT CIAC SANCTIONED EVENTS** – The use of unmanned aerial systems, often referred to as drones, are prohibited for any purpose by any persons at all CIAC-sanctioned events. This policy includes not only the restricted playing area of the venue(s), but also the physical confines of the entire stadium / field / arena structure. For the purposes of this policy, an unmanned aerial system is any aircraft without a human pilot on board.
20. **SPORTSMANSHIP** – Member schools are expected to conduct their relations with each other at all levels of competition in a spirit of good sportsmanship. The school administration is responsible for the athletic program, including the policies and procedures relating to sportsmanship and the conduct of activities in the school. The CIAC “Class Act” standards will be used in all CIAC contests. The CIAC Standards for Sportsmanship as defined in the Class Act program are found at http://ciacsports.com/site/?page_id=10438.

CIAC Tournament Spectator Expectations (Including Parents)

Positive Cheering and Behavior

- Spectators will cheer positively to support their team, not negatively against the opponent. “No Negatives, No Names, No Numbers”.
- Spectators will show respect for the game officials and their decisions.
- Spectators will respect CIAC tournament/site directors, tournament staff, and security when behavior is addressed and if asked to leave the event.

Dress Code

- For CIAC tournament contests, all spectators should be appropriately attired according to their school's policy. No attire with visible degrading or demeaning writings/logos is permitted.

Signs, Banners, Flags and Powder

- Any signs must be positive in nature, reference only the school supported by the sign maker, be small enough not to obstruct the view of other spectators and be pre-approved by the school's athletic director reference in the sign. Spectators are not permitted to bring flags for safety reasons. When asked to remove a sign, banner, or flag, participating schools will respect and follow the direction of any CIAC tournament/site director, tournament staff, or security personnel.
- All signs, banners, and flags may be restricted pending facility usage requirements or at the discretion of the CIAC tournament director. CIAC tournament directors/staff will notify the athletic director when such restrictions are necessary.
- Powder or powder-like substances are prohibited at all visiting and neutral sites.

Noisemakers

- Outdoor Sports – No air horns, horns of any kind, or whistles will be used. Any other noisemakers may be allowed with approval from the host athletic/site director and the spectator's school athletic director. Noisemakers can only be used during "dead ball" situations to celebrate good play.
- Indoor Sports – No noisemakers will be allowed. Pep bands are allowable with the prior approval of the CIAC tournament and site director, provided the school band has adult supervision, and the band only plays during "dead ball" situations.

Tailgating

- Tailgating is prohibited on the grounds of any CIAC tournament or championship event.

Streaming

- CIAC championships are streamed on the NFHS Network. Any streaming, broadcasting, or reproduction of a CIAC tournament game or championship without the expressed written consent of the CIAC is strictly prohibited.

21. **CERTIFICATIONS / COACHING CERTIFICATIONS**

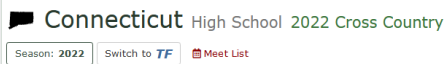
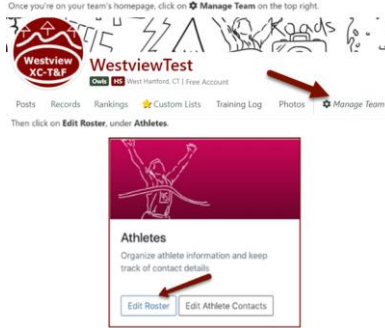
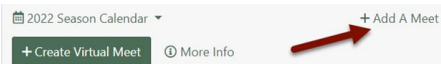
For a list of all coaching certifications and links to forms go here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KnzXy81GK9x88bY1-5JBSuP-8SY34sdc/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=104830910406558409235&rtpof=true&sd=true>



Athletic.Net Tutorials for CIAC XC Teams

The Athletic.net links listed below provide AD's, coaches, and meet managers the necessary instructions on how to complete the corresponding task. For answers to additional items, please use the "Contact Us" link at the bottom of any page in Athletic.net where you have a question or an issue.

How to setup an Individual Account on Athletic.net:	https://support.athletic.net/article/2ngw43npwr-creating-your-account-on-athletic-net
How to access your School Account on Athletic.net:	https://www.athletic.net/CrossCountry/Connecticut/ 
How to build your Athletic.net XC Roster:	https://support.athletic.net/article/g3l6e4jp3z-uploading-a-roster#overview 
How to add, deactivate, edit athletes, FIX DUPLICATE ATHLETES on your Athletic.net XC Roster to match your CIAC Eligibility List:	https://support.athletic.net/category/h5xhvrqf3x-roster
How to establish your meet calendar:	https://support.athletic.net/article/brvetv3jcz-adding-a-meet-to-your-calendar 
How to submit entries for the CIAC Division Championships:	https://support.athletic.net/article/978100e5y4-submitting-entries-for-a-cross-country-meet
How a host school can upload XC meet results:	https://support.athletic.net/article/4o8014t0b6-uploading-cross-country-results-2-upload-tab
Uploading XC Results #2-Overview:	https://support.athletic.net/article/dsohusyxcp-uploading-xc-results-overview
Quick Start Guide for Event Managers/Timers:	https://support.athletic.net/article/lil5s5h41q-quick-start-guide-for-event-managers-timers

