



2026-27 NJSIAA Boys and Girls Cross Country Tournament

NJSIAA reserves the right to adjust, change or cancel dates, times, and locations for any round of competition during NJSIAA state tournaments. Schools entering the tournament will not be granted a change of date/time due to any conflicts with school trips, proms, banquets, SATs, unless agreed upon by both schools. During the spring tournament season, we will make every effort to accommodate schools that have a conflict with their graduation.

Member schools will not be eligible to participate in any NJSIAA Tournaments if it has violated the NJSIAA Constitution, Bylaws, Rules, Regulations, Guidelines, Policies, or Procedures. Any student-athlete who transfers after the competition start date will not be eligible for this tournament.

State tournament sites will not be declared unsuitable merely because conditions are less than perfect unless Leagues or Conferences have ruled such sites unsuitable for League or Conference play. However, NJSIAA reserves the right to move an event to another facility if the playing conditions are not considered suitable for that competition, or if the facility will significantly limit anticipated attendance at the event.

Schools are to be reminded of the 3-team DQ rule for state tournament eligibility, which states “Any varsity team accumulating three or more player or coach disqualifications prior to the team’s participation in the state tournament will not be permitted to participate in the state tournament. The 3-team DQ rule is not applicable during participation in the state tournament.

The NJSIAA will follow the procedure below for schools that are disqualified from state tournament competition:

1. If a school is disqualified, either for the use of an ineligible player or violating the 3-team DQ rule, from state tournament competition after the tournament has been seeded but prior to the bracket being final, then the bracket will be reseeded and the next ranked school who entered the tournament will be included.
2. If a school is disqualified, either for the use of an ineligible player or violating the 3-team DQ rule, from state tournament competition after the tournament has been seeded and after the bracket is final, then the bracket will not be reseeded, and no additional school will be included.
3. If a school is disqualified from state tournament competition due to the use of an ineligible player during the state tournament, then the school will be removed from the tournament immediately and their last opponent will advance in their place.

Schools participating in any NJSIAA tournament are responsible for the actions and behaviors of their spectators. Schools are required to provide adequate staff security to ensure there is proper oversight of their spectators. In addition, schools are financially responsible for any damage to the property or premises caused by their student-athletes, staff, or spectators (spectators include, but are not limited to, cheerleaders, marching band participants, students, and other fans).

NJSIAA requires Certified Athletic Trainers at all its tournament events. The ATC must document all injuries on an injury report form. This form must be available to the NJSIAA upon request.

Member schools that are not willing or able to comply with NJSIAA tournament regulations and any relevant procedures found in the state tournament operating procedures handbook should not enter the tournament. Member schools are encouraged to review NJSIAA tournament regulations with the school administration. Coaches must have a copy of the tournament regulations as well as a copy of the rule modifications (if any) available at all contests. Copies of these documents are available on the NJSIAA website.

NJSIAA Cross Country Tournament Staff

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Tournament Assignor

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New for this year's state tournament

1. The NJSIAA will assign all officials for the tournament.
2. Group meets only – starting time will be 9:30 am
3. Group meets only – award ceremony- awards will be presented by combining the girls and boys. For example- group 1 boys followed by group 1 girls in the same time slot.
4. New qualification standards: To qualify for the Meet of Champions a runner /team must:
Team:
 - a. All six (6) Group Champions will automatically qualify.
 - b. All non-qualifying teams will be merged- the top eight (8) schools after the merger by TEAM SCORE will advance to the Meet of Champions. All ties will be broken by the 6th runner rule.

NOTE: THE GROUP CHAMPIONS WILL NOT BE PART OF THE MERGER PROCESS.

Individuals:

- a. Be in the top ten (10) fastest runners in each Group.
 - b. Be in the next thirty (30) individuals with the fastest times across all Groups who have not already qualified via their teams. (Wild cards)
5. Coaches and teams will be allowed seven (7) pre-entries for the sectional, groups, and MOC, however, on the day of the meet coaches can make up to seven entry changes provided the athletes being inserted are on the Milesplit team roster by the entry date. **AND the entry change is completed with the timer before the start of the school's designated race.**
 6. All teams must check in at least 20 minutes before the start of their races. Failure to do so will result in a disqualification from the race.
 7. Holmdel Park – use of the park prior to the state championships- please go to the cross-country website- www.njsiaa.org – there will be a link with instructions about using the park for practices. Do not just show up and use the park.

Cross Country Important Dates

Event	Dates	
First Practice:	August 17, 2026	
First Competition:	August 24, 2026	
Opening Day:	August 24, 2026	
Transfer Date:	August 24, 2026	
MileSplit Opens:	October 1, 2026	
MileSplit Closes:	October 24, 2026	
Regular Season Competition Ends:	November 22, 2026	

Cross Country Tournament Dates

State Sectionals	Dates	Location
North I	October 31, 2026	Garret Mountain,
North II	October 31, 2026	Central Park Morris County
Central	October 31, 2026	Thompson Park
South	October 31, 2026	Dream Park
State Group Championships	Dates	Location
All Groups	November 7, 2026	Holmdel Park
Meet of Champions	Dates	Location
Boys & Girls	November 14, 2026	Holmdel Park

Tournament Eligibility

1. Teams must be competing on a varsity interscholastic basis.
2. Sixty percent (60%) of the games played on or before the cutoff date must be against New Jersey schools.
3. Any player with two (2) or more disqualifications in the current season, prior to the start of the tournament, will be unable to compete in the state tournament.
4. Any varsity team accumulating three (3) or more player or coach disqualifications prior to the start of the tournament will not be permitted to participate in the state tournament.

To Qualify for the Team Tournament

There is no qualification procedure for the public sectional championships or the non-public group championships. All eligible teams and individuals may enter. Teams and individuals will need to qualify from that point. Please see qualifying procedures for the group meet and the meet of champions on page 6, 7 & 8.

Independent Athletes

An Independent athlete is a student enrolled in a NJSIAA member school that does not sponsor a particular sports program and would like to enter a state individual tournament. Independent athletes are permitted, provided the school follows all independent entry requirements listed in the tournament regulations for their sport. In addition to the sports-specific tournament entry regulations, the following general procedures for all sports must be followed.

Independent Athlete Procedures

1. All independent athletes must be accompanied by a certified faculty member (chaperone), or a coach approved by the schools administration.
2. The independent athlete will be disqualified if they are not accompanied by a certified faculty member (chaperone), or a coach approved by the schools administration.
3. The chaperone must have with them written authority from the school's administration and remain with the

athlete throughout all contests.

4. Independent athletes will not be able to check-in to the event with a parent, a coach/chaperone must be present at the time of check-in.
5. Any properly appointed "coach" will be subject to all out-of-season practice rules.
6. The school district must be able to certify the independent athlete has met the required six (6) practices.
7. The school district must be able to certify the independent athlete has a completed physical on file.
8. The penalty for failure to comply will be the disqualification of the athlete.
9. If you compete on a co-ed team, you cannot be an independent athlete. You will have to follow the tournament regulations on how to qualify as an individual.
10. Member schools with independent cross-country athletes may enter the individual tournament at the sectional level. They will be assigned a section at a later date.
11. The maximum number of independent athletes per school is 2 per gender.
12. Independent athletes will not qualify for team scoring.
13. Independent athletes will not qualify for awards until the state individual finals.

Tournament Entry Procedure

1. All varsity scores must be reported to www.njschoolsports.com as soon as possible after each contest. If you encounter problems, please contact hssupport@nj.com.
2. Teams and Individuals must be entered on MileSplit NJ by the date listed above.
3. All directions for claiming and entering your team or individuals will be listed on the NJSIAA website under sports menu then cross country.
4. The entry process will be paperless going forward. Upon your entry on MileSplit, a voucher will be generated (from MileSplit) for your school which can be used as your invoice for payment. This is different from an official NJSIAA invoice which will be sent to you upon completion of the tournament if payment has not yet been received.
5. Once entries have been submitted, no refunds will be made for any entrants failing to compete, regardless of the reason.

Tournament Entry Fee

- \$175.00 per team/per gender (\$350 for boys and girls)
- \$25.00 per individual.
- Payable to the NJSIAA (Please note XC Tournament).
- Forward all entry fees to: NJSIAA, 1161 Route 130 North, Robbinsville, NJ 08691

Tournament Rules & Information

1. The NFHS Track and Field/XC rules along with any NJSIAA Track and Field/XC rule modifications will govern this tournament.
2. Please direct all questions regarding the entry procedure to your sectional meet director or the NJSIAA director for cross country.
3. Contestants who appear at sectionals, state group championships, or state championships without their coach (or certified member of the faculty) will be disqualified.
4. Since there is no qualification necessary for entry, coaches are urged to submit entries and rosters well in advance of the deadline. **Entries not received by the due date will not be accepted.**
5. Non-Public Schools, A & B will not compete in a Sectional competition; however, they will compete in the State Group Championships.
6. Non-Public Boys and Girls schools may be classified together; therefore, it is possible for a dual-gender school to be in the same group and section for boys and girls.
7. Seven (7) runners shall constitute a team, five (5) to qualify for scoring. Fewer than seven (7) runners may enter from one school; however, no more than seven (7) runners from one school may compete the day of the meet. MileSplit rosters may be updated by the date listed above.
8. School entering individuals and not presently competing on an interscholastic basis must be accompanied by someone in a coaching capacity must be properly certified and appointed by the Board of Education. If a chaperone is used to accompany the athlete, written authority from the school's Principal must be presented.
9. Meets will be postponed ONLY when threats of severe weather, such as thunderstorms, are forecast. If you have any doubt about meet changes, check the NJSIAA website: www.njsiaa.org, or call your meet director.

10. There shall be no appeal or waiver for advancement from one level of the championships to another regardless of reason.
11. Failure to be present at the time the event is called due to transportation problems, misunderstanding of instructions, tournament regulations, injury or illness will result in disqualification.
12. At the sectional championships, public schools may alter their roster the day of the meet up to seven runners. **However, all those names must have already been entered in the team roster on MileSplit.** No Day of Meet name additions will be allowed. Any changes must be completed no less than 20 minutes before the start of your sectional race. The form will be in your packet. No Entries will be processed after the event closes.
13. At the state Championships, non-public schools only may alter their roster on the day of the meet up to seven runners. However, all those names must be already entered in the Team Roster of Mile Split. No Day of Meet name additions will be allowed. Any changes must be completed no less than 20 minutes before the start of your sectional race. The form will be in your packet. No Entries will be processed after the event closes.
14. Scoring (including ties) will be based on the NFHS Rules. Individual runners will be scored separately and will not affect the scoring of teams. Teams advancing beyond the Sectional Meet must enter a full team (5 or more), not part of that team as individuals.
15. 40 minutes after the start of any race in the cross-country tournament (Sectionals, Group Meet, and Meet of Champions), the race will be declared official, and no additional scoring will take place.
16. Any runner disqualified will be removed from the team roster and may not be replaced.
17. Any coach/team member guilty of aiding a team member or impeding another runner will disqualify that team from the meet. Any coach or non-competing team member guilty of misconduct will be referred to the NJSIAA Executive Committee.
18. All team personnel for this tournament must be approved by the school district. Fans, private coaches or club coaches are not permitted on the sidelines.

19. To qualify for the Meet of Champions a runner/team must:

Team:

- 1. All six (6) Group Champions will automatically qualify.**
- 2. All non-qualifying teams will be merged, - the top eight (8) schools after the merger by TEAM SCORE will advance to the Meet of Champions. All ties will be broken by the 6th runner rule.**

NOTE: THE GROUP CHAMPIONS WILL NOT BE PART OF THE MERGER PROCESS.

Individuals:

- 3. Be in the top ten (10) fastest runners in each Group.**
- 4. Be in the next thirty (30) individuals with the fastest times across all Groups who have not already qualified via their teams. (Wild cards)**

Awards- Only NJSIAA Awards will be awarded at each meet.

Sectional Meets

A trophy and ten (10) certificates for the first-place team in each section and group. Medals to the top ten (10) individual finishers in each section and group

State Group Championships

A trophy and ten (10) certificates for the first-place team in each group. Medals to the top ten (10) individual finishers in each group.

Meet of Championships

A trophy to the individual first place finisher and medals to the 2nd through 20th place individual finishers. Seven (7) medals each for the first, second and third place teams.

State Sectional Tournament Schedule

Sectional Championships – Saturday, October 31, 2026					
North I: Garrett Mountain, West Paterson, NJ			North II: Central Park Morris County- Parsippany Troy Hills		
Meet Director: Victor Wu			Meet Director: Marc MacNaughton		
Phone: (201) 554-3560			Phone: (201) 213-1149		
E-mail: vwuxc1@gmail.com			E-mail: mmacnaughton3839@gmail.com		
RAIN DATE: TBD					
Central: Thompson Park, Monroe, NJ			South: Dream Park, Logan Township, NJ		
Meet Director: Marty Holleran			Meet Director: Kathy Hunter		
Phone: (732) 567-0969			Phone: (609) 707-3138		
E-mail: metuchen2003@yahoo.com			E-mail: kholdmoran@gmail.com		
Start Times for all Sectional Championships					
10:00	Group 1	Boys	12:00	Group 2	Boys
10:30	Group 4	Boys	12:30	Group 3	Boys
11:00	Group 1	Girls	1:00	Group 2	Girls
11:30	Group 4	Girls	1:30	Group 3	Girls

Meet Notes:

Non-Public Schools, A & B will not compete in a Sectional competition; however, they will compete in the State Group Championships.

Public Schools Advancement– The first five (5) teams plus the first fifteen (15) place runners in each group in each Section will qualify for the State Group Championships. ***At the Sectional level- medals will be awarded to the fastest 10 runners in the Section, the next 5 runners in each Section will qualify to move on to the Group Championship but no medals will be awarded for places 11 through 15.***

At the sectional championships, public schools may alter their roster the day of the meet up to seven runners. However, all those names must have been already entered in the team roster on MileSplit. No day of the Meet name additions will be allowed. Any changes must be completed no less than 20 minutes before the start of your sectional race. The form will be in your packet. No Entries will be processed after the event closes.

State Group Championships Tournament Schedule

State Group Championships – Saturday, November 7, 2026								
Holmdel Park, Holmdel, NJ								
Meet Director: Marty Holleran								
Phone: 732 567-0969								
E-mail: Metuchen2003@yahoo.com								
Start Times for State Group Championships								
9:30	Non- Public B	Boys	11:30	Group 2	Boys	1:30	Group 1	Boys
10:00	Non- Public A	Boys	12:00	Group 4	Boys	2:00	Group 3	Boys
10:30	Non- Public B	Girls	12:30	Group 2	Girls	2:30	Group 1	Girls
11:00	Non- Public A	Girls	1:00	Group 4	Girls	3:00	Group 3	Girls

Meet Notes:

Qualifying from the Group Meet to the MOC:

To qualify for the Meet of Champions a runner/team must:

Team:

- 1. All six (6) Group Champions will automatically qualify.**
- 2. All non-qualifying teams will be merged - the top eight (8) schools after the merger by TEAM SCORE will advance to the Meet of Champions. All ties will be broken by the 6th runner rule.**

NOTE: THE GROUP CHAMPIONS WILL NOT BE PART OF THE MERGER PROCESS.

Individuals:

- 3. Be in the top ten (10) fastest runners in each Group.**
- 4. Be in the next thirty (30) individuals with the fastest times across all Groups who have not already qualified via their teams. (Wild cards)**

At the state Group Championships, non-public schools only may alter their roster on the day of the meet up to seven runners. However, those names must be already entered in the Team Roster of Mile Split. No Day of Meet additions will be allowed. Any changes must be made no less than 20 minutes before the start of your sectional race. The form will be in your packet. No Entries will be processed after the event closes.

Non-Public Boys and Girls will be classified separately into North and South Group A and Group B; therefore, it is possible for a dual-gender school to be in one group for boys and a different group for girls. These classifications can be found on the Cross-Country website.

State Group Championships Award Ceremony Approximate Time Schedule	
11:15 - Non-Public B – Boys followed by Girls	1:45 – Group 4 – Boys followed by Girls
11:45 - Non-Public A - Boys followed by Girls	3:15 – Group 1 – Boys followed by Girls
1:15 - Group 2 - Boys followed by Girls	3:45 – Group 3 - Boys followed by Girls

Check awards rotations

Coaches should encourage all award winners (anyone receiving a medal as a team member or individual place medal) to report to the staging area near the starting line as soon as possible after their race results have been announced.

Meet of Champions Tournament Schedule

Meet of Champions – Saturday, November 14th, 2026	
Holmdel Park, Holmdel, NJ	
Meet Director: Marty Holleran	
Phone: 732 567-0969	
E-mail: Metuchen2003@yahoo.com	
Start Times:	
11:00 am – Boys Championship Race	
12:00 noon – Girls Championship Race	
12:45 pm – Awards Ceremony (Boys followed by Girls)	

FYI TO COACHES – SEE BELOW:

Meet Notes:

To qualify for the Meet of Champions a runner/team must:

Team:

- 1. All six (6) Group Champions will automatically qualify.***
- 2. All non-qualifying teams will be merged - the top eight (8) schools after the merger by TEAM SCORE will advance to the Meet of Champions. All ties will be broken by the 6th runner rule.***

NOTE: THE GROUP CHAMPIONS WILL NOT BE PART OF THE MERGER PROCESS.

Individuals:

- 3. Be in the top ten (10) fastest runners in each Group.***
- 4. Be in the next thirty (30) individuals with the fastest times across all Groups who have not already qualified via their teams. (Wild cards)***