



**MINUTES**  
**Cross Country Sports Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**November 20, 2013**

Chair Laura Sample called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Dean Visser welcomed everyone in the room and acknowledged those on the phone; attendance was noted and the meeting began.

**Members Attendance:**

Laura Sample (Mesquite)

Rick Baker (Hopi)

Scott Giddings (Greenway)

Paul Bonnett (Central)

\*Eric Fogle (Blue Ridge)

\*Dan Nero (Corona del Sol)

\*John Rickey (Glendale Prep)

\*Mark Goligoski (Prescott)

\* Ivan Brown (River Valley)

\*Trina Painter (Flagstaff)

\*indicates members present on phone for conference call into meeting

**Members Absent:**

Nate Agostini (Horizon Honors)

**Guests & AIA Staff present:**

Dean Visser, AIA Tournament Coordinator

Dennis Hansen, T & F Rules Official

Dan Reynolds T & F Rules Official

Dave Shapiro CC State Meet Director

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes for the Cross Country committee meeting held on January 16, 2013 were approved by unanimous verbal vote. Scott Giddings (Greenway). (Mesquite) moved to approve the minutes with a second from Paul Bonnett (Central).

**Discussion Items:**

**Schedule for 2014:**

Second item on agenda was the schedule for the 2014 season. Laura noted that we are entering the second year of a two-year block, so the schedule that was made for this season would remain the same with the home sites flipped/changed. Paul Bonnett posed the question about what would happen with the changes that individual schools/coaches made to their schedule in the season with dates of meets or canceling of Wednesday meets. Laura pointed out that because those changes were made between

schools and not before the schedule was finalized, the old schedule would be in effect and if schools wanted to change dates etc. then they were free to do that with agreement from the other schools. Committee members agreed. Scott Giddings posed the question about schools who chose to cancel meets without notice and if the AIA is going to look into any possible solution this. At this time there is not a solution to this issue and Laura pointed out that those changes/cancelations should be going through the ADs at the sites to make sure everyone is in agreement, although that is not always the case. There was brief discussion about any other changes, adjustments to the schedule, and it was agreed that with the exception of possibly adjusting for fall break schedules for schools, that there will be no other major changes unless there are new coaches who specifically contacted the committee. It is the chair's opinion that those issues are pretty minor and not really hard to deal with, so if a school calls and wants more or less meets or whatever, that those changes can be made within reason. Scott Giddings called on Dean Visser to give a concrete deadline for schedules to be finished to send to him for approval, and we were given a deadline of April 15<sup>th</sup> for this. Paul Bonnett will be working on Phoenix Union, Scott Giddings will help and also handle the west side, Laura Sample will work with the East Valley. Dean Visser will get the southern schedule (Tucson area). Dean Visser noted that the small schools do their own schedules and that the northern schools do not really do any Wednesday meets so things should be covered.

A question was also posed by Paul Bonnett regarding the start times for Wednesday meets and the heat issues that may arise with the meets in September. We briefly discussed the standard on this and the heat index, but no conclusion was reached, just that coaches should be aware of the weather situation and make adjustments to the time schedule if there was a heat-related issue that warranted a time change.

Scott Giddings asked about new schools that may open for next year and where they are placed in the scheduling process. Dean Visser explained that new schools are either charter or associate member schools and if they are added to the schedule it is by him telling the appropriate person to find places for them in the schedule.

There was a brief delay in the meeting because of some phone issues that came up. The members that were on the phone could hear those of us speaking in the room, but when others on the phone tried to talk, there was feedback that made it difficult for them to hear what was being said. Dean Visser apologized for this but said that he did not have a solution for the problem, but, would look into it.

### **State Meet Schedule:**

We moved on to the race day schedule and any issues that came up at the meet. The biggest issue was the parking lot for the golf course on race day. Dean Visser commented that this is always an issue and that he is constantly looking for ways to change/improve this situation each year. He noted that he is still trying to work on keeping other cars out of lot except for busses and people with parking passes as well as keeping people from crossing through the parking lot and staying on the pathways created in advance by the set up crew.

One of the changes that will be in place to next year's state schedule is to move the first race up (earlier) 15 minutes to get the first group out of the course sooner. Dean Visser also noted the schedule for next year is rotated so that Division IV and II will be in the first portion, and Div III and Div I will be in the later portion with Div I running last.

### **Sectional Races:**

Moving to section races, it was noted that October 31 (Friday) and November 1 (Saturday) would be the dates for the section meets next year. Most will be held on Friday, with Marana being held on Saturday. Options for the course at Skunk Creek and the possible issues that arose there were discussed. One of the issues is that the course is closed until the section meet with the exception of the invitational that is run there (but not all schools in those sections are able to attend). One of the solutions that was posed was to

have a weekend day (or two) where the course is open for schools to come and visit to check out and run through. Something we do need to look into for this.

An additional option is to move one of the sections from the Skunk Creek course to the Gilbert Crossroads Park Course run by Dave Shapiro and Laura Sample. This seems to be a viable option and one that makes sense. Other discussion came about whether there were other west-side courses that would be an option, but needing to make things equitable. We do not want to make schools drive further to their sections than necessary. The issues with Skunk Creek seemed to be the safety of the course, and the accessibility to schools that were out of town. Mark Goligoski posed the same issues for his school and wanted to know about past courses (specifically Thunderbird Park) and why those are not used at this point. Scott responded that the city has put restrictions on the use of that park so it is not on the list for us. Mark also asked if it was a possibility for a northern school to host section meets. Trina Painter agreed that it would be nice to have a northern school host and suggested Flagstaff, but realizes that others would not like that option because of the travel. Mark suggested options in Prescott, Prescott Valley, or Dewey. The chair asked Scott and Paul about their willingness to travel and what they thought other schools that are in those sections would think about having to go up north for a section meet. Both said they would go wherever it ended up being, and that it was not too unreasonable to travel to Prescott Valley or Dewey, but that Flagstaff was probably not something they were willing to do. The solution at this point is to research some options in the West Valley for these sections (Paul and Scott) as well as some possible sites up north (Mark and Trina) and contact Dean so that he can look into those sites and possibly go there to look at the course to see if it would work for us.

There was a brief discussion about Friday vs. Saturday sectional races. Trina Painter said that having it on Friday was awesome and wanted to keep that, the option is to either do all 3 sections on Friday or Saturday, but that is something that would have to be looked at for the site and what those options are.

Scott Giddings remarked that the AIA went to only 1 section plaque and if there was any way to go back to 2...this is an AIA Executive Board issue and not one that we can really do much about as a committee.

### **Pre Season Coaches meetings:**

The next item on the agenda was pre-season meetings and communication issues. There is a plan to hold several preseason meetings in various locations for coaches in those areas to talk about aspects of the season that are important for all coaches to know and understand. Topics such as athletic.net, sectional sites/races, state meet information, the AIA website etc. are all things that can be discussed at these meeting and information can be given to coaches at the same time and all coming from one source. It was suggested by Dean Visser that Dave Shapiro, Dean and Laura Sample will be the individuals traveling to these meetings to visit with and inform the coaches. Suggested areas to hold meetings are the West side of the Valley, the East Valley, Tucson area, and up north possibly in Flagstaff. The chair added to this by saying that we do need an increase in the quality of communication that goes out to coaches. It was her suggestion that perhaps the committee members can all form email lists of coaches from the state (maybe ones that are in their section or section sites) who they are in charge of emailing and giving information to on a regular basis). The beginning of season, middle, and after season ends maybe. It was commented on by several coaches that there is disconnect between coaches and the AIA. There are some coaches who have contact with people they can ask questions, but there are many coaches who are new or who do not know who they can contact if they have questions or need information.

Dennis Hansen added to the conversation by explaining that they already have this communication in the South with the Tucson area schools. There are 2 email banks in relation to the sections that are held down there that they use to communicate with those coaches. It was suggested that we can get a spreadsheet by section made with emails for coaches and ADs that can be used by the site reps to communicate with these coaches.

Discussion was moved towards the section meets this year and the change in the wording of the “qualifying teams”. This language was clarified for all and no one seemed to have much of an issue with how things worked this season with the “trial”.

Then there was talk of the coyote that was on the course for the Division II boys’ race!

Comment was made that the leader board was very valuable and worth the money spent to have it. Scott Giddings posed the question of if the issue of the large sections will be addressed, and if they will be evened out at all? Dean Visser responded that we are working on this and will visit at a later date. Paul Bonnett commented that the some sections are uneven, meaning that some are loaded and some are not loaded resulting in a skewed distribution of state qualifiers.

### **2013 State Meet:**

The next item on the agenda was to ask our guests in the room to talk about the state meet and discuss anything for the committee about the meet in general.

Dan Reynolds handed out a sheet that has the sectional and state check-in procedures as well as any equipment needed for the meet director/check in person to have at the start of the meet. The chair asked if this could be put online in electronic format for coaches to see in advance and perhaps emailed to coaches for next season. Dennis Hansen commented that the meet went very well overall and there was only a minor issue of a missing runner that was taken care of at the finish line.

Rick Baker from Hopi asked about the state meet course markings. He commented that there needs to be flags on the other side of the bridge that heads to the finish line. There were runners who went off course there and caused some confusion. Trina Painter also brought up the issue of markings on the course before that bridge, and that there was some confusion about that area on the course as well.

### **Member & Guest Comments:**

The chair brought up an issue from Chris Hanson at Desert Vista in regards to official results with the AIA and if there is any possibility of sharing with mile split, or at least making those results available to them after official results have been posted so that they can be used with other season results similar to other states. There was not really any solution at this point except to look into the possibility and see if there was a way to share the information.

One of the other issues Chris asked about through the chair was if there could be “merged state meet results” that covered all of the divisions together to see the results. This is something that has been done in the past and something we seem to have stopped doing since we have not been using arizonatrack.com. Dave Shapiro said this is something that he can look into as well.

Dennis Hansen had asked the chair to bring up the issue of having certified meet officials at the cross-country invites as we do in track. The big issue here is that track has “qualifying meets” and cross-country does not, so when teams go to a big meet, not all meet directors are following the same rules in regards to jewelry and uniforms. Dennis said that there are a number of coaches/teams who tell him at section meets and at state that they “did not know” those rules were even enforced because they were able to wear items at their invites. The issue is consistency overall and opening up the communication between coaches and meet directors about adhering to the rules all season long and not just at the end of the season meets. The discussion on this involved asking who of the committee members about the meets they host and if they have certified officials at those invites or not. Trina Painter said she would be happy to have that if she had a contact list of who she could ask to come up and work that meet. Dennis also

asked about the issue of games' committees at these meets and the chair explained that most XC invites do not have a games committee formed. Any appeals would then be done through the meet director. The chair then asked Dean Visser if we could possibly include a check list of these issues for a meet director to consider for an invitational they choose to put on in the season. Outside of this, the chair did ask the meet director for the Conley invitational about the same issue and she was told that there is a certified official who starts the races there, so that is a start. Dennis just wanted to start the dialogue about this issue among coaches so that perhaps we can move towards more consistency at these big invites. Perhaps this is something we can put on the agenda for our preseason meetings with coaches that we talked about earlier in the meeting.

The issue was brought up about All-state recognition. The question was asked if we wanted to do a true all-state or if we would like to consider just by division. There are medals given out at the meet, but no real recognition of All-state teams. It was suggested by Scott Giddings that we still keep it by Division, but that we recognize first and second team all-state. This is something that used to be done in the past, but then we stopped for some reason. The chair mentioned that this is something that we have talked about in the past but has still not been pinned down to start doing. The suggestion of a template that can be sent to ADs to create certificates to recognize these athletes would be cost-effective and then it would be on the AD/coach to fill in the blank for the athlete and print out so that the recognition can happen. This is an easy way to do this that will enable these athletes to get that honor. Dean Visser said that he can work on this getting accomplished. Certainly the chair will help if she is needed. It was suggested that we could do the same for section meets as well.

The chair thanked everyone for attending and for their work.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Next Meeting TBD

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