



October 7, 2026

NFHS Cross Country Weekly Rule Interpretations

Interference

Rules References: 4-6-3, 8-4-4, 8-6-1

SITUATION 1: After the cross country race begins, runners from Team A join arms to form a barrier forcing other participants to go around this human wall. After 200 yards, the runners drop their arms and run a regular race without incident. By the end of the race, two runners from Team A advance to the next level of competition. Team A's total score afforded the entire team a first-place award, and the chance to advance. The referee (a) advances all team members, (b) disqualifies the team but allows the top two individuals to qualify, (c) disqualifies the entire team. **RULING:** (a) and (b) Incorrect procedure; (c) correct procedure. **COMMENT:** The referee's opinion based on Rule 8-6-1b is each competitor interfered with other competitors. With the entire team in violation, individuals do not have the opportunity to advance, even when individuals have outstanding performances. (8-6-1)

SITUATION 2: At the start of a large cross country invitational in the opening 100 meters of the race, Runner A1 (a) accidentally trips C2 and C2 falls, (b) inadvertently bumps B1 who stumbles and falls. The starter recalls the race and the meet referee disqualifies A1 in both situations. **RULING:** (a) and (b) Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** If a runner falls in the first 100 meters due to contact with another runner, the race shall be recalled by firing the starting device. A competitor is disqualified if they interfere with another competitor. (8-4-4, 8-6-1)

SITUATION 3: At the start of a large cross country invitational in the opening 100 meters of the race, runner A1 stumbles and falls without contact with anyone. The officials let the race continue. **RULING:** Correct procedure. **COMMENT:** If a runner falls in the first 100 meters without contact with another runner, the race should continue. (8-4-4, 8-6-1)