



October 8, 2025

NFHS Cross Country Weekly Rule Interpretations

SITUATION 1: During the clerking for an invitation, the official notices (a) runner C1 is not wearing shoes. The official notifies the athlete and their coach that they must wear shoes to participate in the race.

RULING: Correct Procedure **COMMENT:** Each competitor must wear a shoes on both feet and the shoes must have an upper and recognizable sole and heel. The shoe must be designed so that it can be designed so that it can be fastened securely to the foot. The sole and heel may contain grooves, ridges or track spikes which are no longer than 1 inch. The games committee may determine the length of spikes allowed in cross country events. [4-3-1]

SITUATION 2: A1 reports to the clerk of the course wearing a slip-on (sock type for each toe) footwear. The clerk indicates A1 will not be allowed to compete. A1's coach files a protest claiming that the shoes have a definite recognizable sole and heel and designed so that it can be securely fastened to the foot. **RULING:** A1 is allowed to compete because it is determined that the footwear is legal as there is a recognizable sole and heel and the shoe is securely fastened to the foot by elastic. **COMMENT:** Changes in manufacture of shoes now include a variety of fasteners and styles that are acceptable. [4-3-1]

SITUATION 3: The umpire at a cross country invitational observes A1 wearing a religious head covering prior to the start of the race. The official informs the athlete that a note is needed from the state association to run in the meet with the head covering. **RULING:** Incorrect procedure. **COMMENT:** Athletes are permitted to wear head coverings for religious reasons without approval from the state association. The head coverings should not be made of abrasive, hard or unyielding materials; and must be secured to the body and/or uniform. [4-3-1]