
Cross Country Rules and Regulations

Cross Country

Regulations

1. All competitors must wear official team colours Club or County
2. In Inter County (Senior and U20) all entries must be approved by relevant County Board

Grading

1. Graded teams within a competition, the last finishing team in a grade shall not be relegated where there exists in that grade a team that has not completed within that grade. Such noncompeting teams shall be relegated instead. If there is more than one such team, lots shall be drawn to determine the team to be relegated.
2. Applications for regrading will be accepted in October on a date published prior to the Cross-Country Season for individual Senior, Intermediate and Novice.
3. There are three (3) Grades within the competition for Senior Men, two (2) for Senior Women
4. Relegation will apply, **first** team Grade B and C promoted
5. The last finishing team in a grade shall not be relegated where there exists in that grade a team that has not completed within that grade. Such non-competing teams shall be relegated instead. If there is more than one such team, lots shall be drawn to determine the team to be relegated
6. Teams who are awarded 2nd or 3rd positions **cannot** be demoted
7. Club and County teams who do not compete for (2) two consecutive years may be demoted.
8. The first three (3) teams are declared the winners irrespective of grades allocated (with Grades B&C as appropriate only applying from 4th place teams onward)

National Senior, U/23 & U/20 Cross Country Championships

1. Registered athletes of AAI or ANI only
2. Senior and U/20 County teams, entry by relevant County secretary
3. Senior and U/20 Club teams, entry by Club secretary
4. Teams can be entered without having to enter names
5. Athletes entered in Senior must be 18 years of age or over on the 31st of December in the year of competition
6. Under 23 athletes must be aged between 20 and under 23 years on the 31st of December in the year of competition, under 23 athletes must declare and must indicate correctly on entry form.
7. First 3 Under 23 Athletes across the line shall be awarded the medals regardless of Senior Position
8. Under 20 athletes must be 16 years on the 31st of December in the year of competition and Under 20 years on the 31st of December in the year of competition
9. An under 18 athletes may score both on Under 20 and Under 18 teams if declared or part of an undeclared County Team.
10. Athletes can run as individual and as part of a team, all athletes entered as part of a team are deemed to have entered individually
11. Status of an athlete will not be altered during a cross-country season (September to April) other than in the case of an individual win
12. Teams' events:
 - Athletes can be entered on a single club & a single county team only
 - Teams may substitute athletes on the day of the event
 - County Teams have the option of not declaring individuals on the team in which case the first scoring athletes across the line shall count as the team.
 - Club teams entered by club secretaries only
 - County teams entered by county secretaries only, Including non-declared teams.

Club & County	Distance	Club Run	Score	County Run	Score
Senior M	7,500m	8	4	12	6
Senior W	7,500m	8	4	8	4
Under 23 M	7,500m	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Under 23 W	7,500m	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Under 20 M	4,500m	8	4	12	6
Under 20 W	4,500m	8	4	8	4

Autumn Open Cross Country

1. Senior Athletes must be 18 years of age or over on the 31st of December in the year of competition
2. Under 20 athletes must be 16 - 19 years of age in year of competition
3. All ages categories are catered for in the masters O35, O40, O45 etc
4. Individual competition only
5. All women plus Masters Men 65+ will compete together in one race
6. All other male categories will compete in one race.
7. Order Mixed Relays F, M, F, M

U20 Women	4500m
Masters Women 65+	4500m
Masters Women	6000m
Senior Women	6000m
Masters Men 65+	6000m
U20 Men	6000m
Masters' Men 35+	8000m
Senior Men	8000m
Mixed Senior Relays	4 x 1500m W,M,W,M

National Novice Cross Country

1. Novice athletes must be 19 years of age or over on the 31st of December in the year of competition.
2. An athlete who has never been an individual medal winner or a scoring member of the winning club or county team at the National Novice Championships.
3. An athlete who has never been an individual medal winner or a scoring member of the winning club or county team at National Intermediate Championships.
4. An athlete who has never been an individual medal winner or a scoring member of the winning club or county team at National Senior Grade A Championship.
5. An athlete who has never been an individual medal (Senior) winner at National level in any senior track indoor, outdoor or Road Championships at 1500m or greater.
6. An athlete who has never represented Ireland or any World Athletics member federation at any World Athletics or EAA Senior International Championships.
7. Status of an athlete will not be altered during a cross country season (September to April) other than in the case of an individual win.
8. Entries open to all AAI & ANI registered members
9. Athletes can run as individual and as part of a team, all athletes entered as part of a team are deemed to have entered individually as well.
10. Team events:
 - Athletes can be entered on a single club & a single county team only
 - Teams may substitute athletes on the day of the event.
 - County Teams have the option of not declaring individuals on the team in which case the first scoring athletes across the line count as the team.
 - Club teams entered by club secretaries only
 - County teams entered by county secretaries only, Including non-declared teams.

Inter Club & County	Distance	Run Club	Score	Run County	No to Score
Novice Men	6,000m	8	4	12	6
Novice Women	4,000m	8	4	8	4

National Intermediate Cross Country

1. Intermediate athletes must be 20 years of age or over on the 31st of December in the year of competition.
2. An athlete who has never been an individual medal winner or a scoring member of the winning club or county team at National Intermediate Championships.
3. An athlete who has never been an individual medal winner or a scoring member of the winning club or county team at National Senior Grade A Championships.
4. An athlete who has never been an individual medal winner at National level in any senior track indoor, outdoor or road championships at 1500m or greater.
5. An athlete who has never represented Ireland or any World Athletics Member Federation at any World Athletics or EAA Senior International Championship.
6. Status of an athlete will not be altered during a cross-country season (September to April) other than in the case of an individual win.
7. Entries open to all AAI & ANI Registered members
8. Athletes can run as individual and as part of a team, all athletes entered as part of a team are deemed to have entered individually as well.
9. Team events:
 - Athletes can be entered on a single club & a single county team only.
 - Teams may substitute athletes on the day of the event.
 - County Teams have the option of not declaring individuals on the team in which case the first scoring athletes across the line will be made a team.
 - Club teams entered by club secretaries only.
 - County teams entered by county secretaries only, Including non-declared teams.

Inter County & Club	Distance	Run	Score	Run	Score
		Club		County	
Inter Women	5000m	8	4	8	4
Inter Men	7000m	8	4	12	6

National Masters Cross Country

1. 5-year age groups, (O35, O40, O45 etc) on day of competition.
2. Any shoes used in Master exclusive competition must have a sole with a maximum thickness of no more than 40mm, shoes that contain spikes must have a sole with maximum thickness of no more than 30m.
3. Entries open to all AAI and ANI Registered members.
4. Athletes can run as individual and as part of a team, all athletes entered as part of a team are deemed to have entered individually as well.
5. Team events:
 - Athletes can be entered on a single club & a single county team only.
 - Teams may substitute athletes on the day of the event.
 - County Teams have the option of not declaring individuals on the team in which case the first scoring athletes across the line count as the team.
 - Club teams entered by club secretaries only.
 - County teams entered by county secretaries only, Including non-declared teams.
 - An over 50 can be declared for a O35 team or an O50 Team but not both.

Inter County & Club	Distance	Run	Score	Run	Score
		Club		County	
Men 35+ / 50+	7000m	8	4	12	6
Women 35+/50+	4000m	8	4	8	4
Men 65+	4000m	6	3	8	4

Juvenile Cross-Country Championships

See Juvenile Competition Booklet 2025

List of Regulations:

1. WA Rules apply.

Club singlets and appropriate footwear must be worn.

Athletes may move up one age group only, U10 may run U11 Cross Country.

All entries must be approved by the Regional Secretaries

Regional Secretaries must forward a copy of the regional results to Head Office

2. Qualifiers:

Top 12 from each Region

First four (4) club teams in the U11-U19 age group must qualify from the Regional Cross-Country Championships.

Three (3) teams each from Munster, Ulster, Connaught, 4 from Leinster and 1 Team from the Region of Dublin qualify for County Teams

In the U17-U19 age races individual open entry will apply provided the athlete has been entered in the Regional Cross-Country Championships.

There is no open entry for Club or County Juvenile teams.

Open entries must be with National at closing date for competition, entries must first be approved by the Regional Secretary.

3. Teams:

Province,	12 athletes to run with 6 to score.
County,	10 athletes to run with 6 to score.
Club,	6 athletes to run with 4 to score.

NOTE: U19 Girls

Province,	12 athletes to run with 6 to score.
County,	8 athletes to run with 4 to score.
Club,	6 athletes to run with 3 to score.

U18 Athletes can enter both U18 and U20 race and score on Club and County teams in both age categories as long as they are entered in both age groups.

U18 athletes are considered for the u20 Euro Cross team based on their finishing position in the race.

Athletes must be registered.

Pacing of athletes will mean disqualification. Please inform club officials and parents.

Only athletes declared on the team sheets will score.

Spot Checks will be undertaken.

No electronic devices are allowed at any time in the call up area or competition.

4. **Medals:**

First 12 Individuals

First 3 Regional, County and Club Teams, 6 medals awarded.

5. **B Championships:**

Juvenile "B" Championships are open to athletes who have not received an Individual, Regional, County or Club Cross Country medal at the National 'A' Championships.

All athletes must be registered in 2026. (2025 Ages apply for February Comp)

All competing athletes must be entered online either by their club or county whether competing as an individual or on a team.

Club teams; 6 to run, 4 to score.

County teams, 6 to score.

To score, a county team must be entered online by the County Secretary, they may choose to enter individual athletes' names or allow the result to be determined by the first 6 county athletes across the line who have all been entered by their own clubs.

NOTE: in order to get a race number every athlete must be entered by their name, either by their club or their county, even if on an undeclared County team.

6. **Inter Club Relays**

No Entries on the day of competition

All teams must be pre-entered online by Club Secretaries

Clubs may enter more than one team in each age group.

Athletes may move up one age group only, U10 may run U11 Cross Country.

Mixed Relay: 2 girls and 2 boys, order of run female-male-female-male.

An athlete can only take part in ONE relay team on the day.

First three teams receive medals.

For the mixed relay 2 subs may be entered, one of each gender and 6 medals may be awarded if the subs are present.

For single gender relays 2 subs may be entered, and 5 engraved medals may be awarded if the sub is present and one blank.

Club singlets and appropriate footwear must be worn.

There will be a 20m changeover zone with the passing of a baton.

All Distances are available to Girls & Boys

	A Cross Country	B Cross Country	Club Relays	Mixed Relays
Under 11	1500m	1000m	4x 500m	
Under 12	2000m			4x500m
Under 13	2500 m	1500m	4x500m	
Under 14	3000m			4x500m
Under 15	3500m	2500m	1x1000m	
Under 16	4000m			
Under 17	4500m	3000m		4x1000m
Under 18	4500m			
Under 19	5000m			

Schools' Cross-Country Championships

See Irish Schools Handbook

1. DATE:

The All-Ireland Cross-Country Championships shall be held on a date in March approved a year in advance by the Irish A.G.M. The championships, where possible, shall be hosted by each Province in turn and shall start at 12.00Noon. Where possible the championships shall be held in conjunction with the Universities' Championships and at a venue approved by both associations.

The provincial championships will be held at least two weeks prior to the All-Ireland Championships, and each Region/District shall hold their championships before the provincial, preferably two weeks before the provincial.

2. DISTANCES

The distances for the All-Ireland shall be as follows:

Minor Girls	2,000m	Minor Boys	2,500m
Junior Girls	2,500m	Junior Boys	3,500m
Intermediate Girls	3,500m	Intermediate Boys	5,000m
Senior Girls	3,500m	Senior Boys	6,000m

The distances for the provinces and regions/districts may be slightly less but should still be recognised cross country distances.

3. THE COURSE

The following are the recommended procedures:

1. The course should be marked with ropes or tapes. It is advisable to tape all parts of the course on the inside.
2. A start-line of adequate width should be roped into pens, one for each team, and at least four for individual runners. In the All-Ireland Championships, there shall be two pens per province for the individual runners.
3. There should be a clear run of at least 200 metres before any turn or obstruction at the start.
4. There should be at least a 200m clear run into the finish.
5. The finishing-funnel should be adequate for a race of 200 runners finishing close together. The funnel should be doubled if necessary.
6. A minimum of 6 stewards should be at the finish line to ensure that good order is maintained.

4. TEAMS:

In the Minor, Junior, Intermediate and Senior a Boys' team consists of up to eight runners, of whom the first four shall count.

In the Minor, Junior, Intermediate and Senior a Girls' team consists of up to eight runners, of whom the first three shall count.

5. RULES

1. Athletes must run in their own age-group except in the team event where **one athlete** from the age group immediately below may complete a team.

2. No athlete may run in more than one race.

3. In the event of a tie in the team competition, the last scoring runner who finishes nearer the first place shall determine the result.

6. ENTRIES:

For the All-Ireland each Province may nominate the following for each Race:

(a) The first three teams in the Provincial Championship.

(b) Any runner who finished in the first fifteen in the Provincial Championship.

In the Provincial and Region/District Championships a similar qualification system should be put in place to maximise the numbers taking part.

Qualification from each Region/District for Cross Country should be based on the number of Regions/Districts in a province and should include as many as is practical.

7. SUBSTITUTIONS:

(a) A school may make substitutions within its own team.

(b) Only a Province may substitute for an entire team.

(c) Substitutions should be handed to the organisers in writing at least one hour before the start of the race.

8. ADDITIONAL ENTRIES:

Each Province will make a decision on any 'bye' and inform the Administrative Director of the decision. The athlete must have competed in either Zone / District or Provincial Championship to qualify at any capacity to compete with a 'bye'.

The athlete must apply through his/her school with a signed letter (school headed paper) by the Principal of his/her school requesting the reasons as to why his/her athlete should gain access to the All-Ireland Championships. The Provincial Executive will consider this request and the school (Principal and Athletics Teacher) will be informed via email/phone call after the Executive meeting.

Main criteria for consideration are outlined below.

- International competition with selection by National Governing body
- Sitting a State Examination
- Family Bereavement

9. NUMBERS:

Each athlete must wear on their front the number provided, secured by four safety-pins.

10. PROTESTS:

All protests must be made verbally by a school representative or an official of the province or Region/District before the presentation of medals and then in writing within 30 minutes of the end of the specific event. Schools should be told of this procedure in advance by the Secretaries.

11. JURY OF APPEAL:

In the All-Ireland if either party engaged in dealing with a protest is dissatisfied, the matter shall be referred to a Jury of Appeal, consisting of one representative of each Province and the President of the ISAA. The decision of the Jury of Appeal shall be final.

12. RESULTS:

The organisers should make every effort to provide a full set of results for distribution on the day of the Championships.

13. TROPHIES:

In the All-Ireland the winning team in each race receives a trophy. Medals are awarded to the first three teams and the first six individuals.

The *Brother Clarke Trophy* is awarded to the Boys' team with the lowest score.

The *Maeve Kyle Trophy* is awarded to the Girls' team with the lowest score.

Each Province may award trophies to the winning teams in their provincial championships.

Cross Country Trophies

1. Minor Girls Team
2. Minor Boys Team
3. Junior Girls Team
4. Junior Boys Team
5. Intermediate Girls Team
6. Intermediate Boys Team
7. Senior Girls Team
8. Senior Boys Team

14. SIAB International Cross Country Selection Criteria

First 10 athletes across the line at the All Ireland Schools Cross Country in that current year who are within the correct SIAB Age Category at Junior & Intermediate Age Categories only will be selected. (NB. In 2019 SIAB introduced a (4x1500m mixed relay) and as a result the first 10 athletes at Junior and Intermediate level with the correct age will be selected.

Schools International Athletic Board – Age Categories

- **Junior:** Under 15 years of age on 1st September in the year of competition
- **Intermediate:** Under 17 years of age on 1st September in the year of competition

Irish Universities Cross Country Championships

See Universities Constitution

The Association shall hold a Cross-Country Championship every year.

The length of the courses over which the men's and women's Cross-Country Championships are to be run shall be between 8,000m – 10,000m and approximately 5,000m respectively.

The course shall be bona fide cross-country.

MEN

Each competing Member shall be allowed in the case of the men's Cross Country Championship to enter a team of up to sixteen (16) athletes of whom up to four (4) athletes may be entered under the terms of Section 8.2 (iv) and an additional ten (10) under the terms of Section 8.7.

Athletes entered under the terms of Section 8.7, who have not been used as substitutes, may compete as non-placing athletes.

The first six (6) athletes of a men's Member's team across the finishing line shall be the scoring athletes.

WOMEN

Each competing Member shall be allowed in the case of the women's Cross Country Championship to enter a team of up to fourteen (14) athletes of whom up to four (4) athletes may be entered under the terms of Section 8.2 (iv) and an additional ten (10) under the terms of Section 8.7.

Athletes entered under the terms of Section 8.7, who have not been used as substitutes, may compete as non-placing athletes.

The first four (4) athletes of a women's Member's team across the finishing line shall be the scoring athletes.

Combines Team Score

The combined score of a Member's men's and women's team shall be the score of the first four (4) women across the finishing line plus 4/6 of the score of the first six (6) men across the finishing line multiplied by the total number of women finishing their race divided by the total number of men finishing their race.

The trophy for the winning men's Member's team in the Association's Cross Country Championship is "The Green Fox" and that for winning women's Member's team is "The Cheetahs", Smyth Trinity 400 Perpetual Trophy". The trophy for the winning Member's combined men's and women's team is the "The Badger".

The Association will host a novice category within the existing championships that will be structured as per a set of criteria/guidelines published by the Universities Committee of the Athletics Association of Ireland from time to time.