



# 2019 CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIP MANUAL



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Preparing student-athletes for life's challenges since 1921.

## **SOUTHERN CONFERENCE CODE OF SPECTATOR CONDUCT**

The Southern Conference and its member institutions are committed to principles of good sportsmanship. We believe that all student-athletes, coaches and spectators should strive to represent the very best spirit and tradition of college athletics. We request your cooperation by supporting the participants and officials in a positive manner at all times.

## **CROSS COUNTRY SPORTS COMMITTEE**

Jamie Severns, Senior Woman Administrator ..... VMI (Chair)  
Mark Wharton, Athletic Director..... Chattanooga  
Jeff Hugdahl, Faculty Athletic Representative ..... Mercer  
Rob Gary, Head Coach ..... Furman  
Chad Pearson, Head Coach..... UNC Greensboro

## **SOUTHERN CONFERENCE STAFF**

Commissioner ..... Jim Schaus  
Executive Assistant to the Commissioner..... Neili Akridge  
Senior Associate Commissioner ..... Geoff Cabe  
Associate Commissioner..... Sue Arakas  
Associate Commissioner..... Jason Yaman  
Associate Commissioner for Compliance..... Doug King  
Assistant Commissioner for Media Relations..... Phil Perry  
Assistant Commissioner for Video Productions ..... Paul Lollis  
Director of Championships ..... Stanley Broaden  
Director of Creative Services..... Haley Shotwell  
Assistant Director of Media Relations..... Hannah Bradley  
Championships Assistant..... Eynde Frazier  
Operations Assistant ..... Sara Yang  
Media Relations Assistant..... Jon Perdue



**SOUTHERN CONFERENCE**  
702 N. Pine St.  
Spartanburg, South Carolina 29303  
864-591-5100  
[www.soconsports.com](http://www.soconsports.com)



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

2019 SOUTHERN CONFERENCE MEN'S & WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS INFORMATION .....	2
2019 Race Information – Saturday, November 2 .....	2
Future Southern Conference Championship Dates .....	2
CHAMPIONSHIPS CONTACT INFORMATION .....	3
CHAMPIONSHIPS INFORMATION .....	4
ADMISSION .....	4
AWARDS .....	4
AWARDS ENGRAVING .....	5
BANNED ITEMS .....	5
BIB NUMBERS AND TIMING CHIPS .....	5
COURSE MARKINGS .....	5
CROSS COUNTRY COMMITTEE .....	6
CROWD CONTROL .....	6
DISQUALIFICATION .....	6
EVACUATION PLAN .....	6
FINAL DECLARATIONS .....	6
FINISH LINE PROCEDURES .....	7
GAMES COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT .....	7
INSURANCE .....	7
LODGING .....	7
MEDIA .....	8
MEDICAL .....	8
MERCHANDISE .....	8
OFFICIALS .....	8
PRACTICE (Course Inspection) .....	9
PROGRAMS .....	9
PROTESTS .....	9
RULES .....	9
STUDENT-ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY .....	9
STUDENT-ATHLETE GIFTS .....	9
SCORING .....	10
SPORTSMANSHIP .....	10
SQUAD SIZE .....	10
START LINE PROCEDURES .....	10
TEAM ENTRY AND PARKING .....	10
TIE-BREAKING PROCEDURES .....	10
UNIFORMS .....	11

## APPENDICES

COURSE MAP .....	APPENDIX A
TEAM ENTRY AND PARKING .....	APPENDIX B
DRIVING DIRECTIONS TO PINE OAK GOLF CLUB .....	APPENDIX C
COACH OF THE YEAR BALLOT .....	APPENDIX D
PROTEST FORM .....	APPENDIX E
RISK MANAGEMENT STATEMENT .....	APPENDIX F
CONCUSSION PROTOCOL .....	APPENDIX G

**2019 SOUTHERN CONFERENCE MEN'S & WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY  
CHAMPIONSHIPS INFORMATION**

The following is a checklist of items that must be completed leading up to the championships:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Due</b>	<b>To Whom/ Location</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Online Entry Forms on Direct Athletics <a href="http://www.directathletics.com">www.directathletics.com</a>	Monday, October 28 by Noon ET	Jimmy Stephens <a href="mailto:jimmy@timinginc.com">jimmy@timinginc.com</a>	
Team Entry Form	Monday, October 28 by Noon ET	Sara Yang <a href="mailto:syang@socon.org">syang@socon.org</a> (No faxes accepted)	
Course Available for Practice	Friday, November 1 2:00 p.m.–4:30 p.m. ET	Pine Oaks Golf Club	
Mandatory Head Coaches Meeting	Friday, November 1 4:30 p.m. ET	Pine Oaks Golf Club	

**2019 Race Information – Saturday, November 2**

**Location:** Pine Oaks Golf Club  
**Admission:** Free

**Women's 5K Championship Race:**  
10:00 a.m. ET

**Men's 8K Championship Race:**  
10:45 a.m. ET

**2019 NCAA Regional Championships – Saturday, November 15**

**South Regional:** Apalachee Regional Park, Tallahassee, FL (Florida State)

**Southeast Regional:** Panorama Farms, Charlottesville, VA (Virginia)

**2019 NCAA Championships – Saturday, November 23**

LaVern Gibson Championship Cross Country Course, Terre Haute, IN (Indiana State)

**Future Southern Conference Championship Dates**

Saturday, October 31, 2020 – Macon, Georgia (Mercer)

Saturday, October 30, 2021- Lexington, Virginia (VMI)

## CHAMPIONSHIPS CONTACT INFORMATION

### HOST (EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY)

**Mac Hart**, Championship Director

Email: [hartpm@etsu.edu](mailto:hartpm@etsu.edu)

Phone: 423-439-6140

**Caitlyn Harter**, Athletic Trainer

Email: [harterc@etsu.edu](mailto:harterc@etsu.edu)

**Kevin Brown**, Media Relations

Email: [brownk@etsu.edu](mailto:brownk@etsu.edu)

Phone: 423-439-4220

### SOUTHERN CONFERENCE

**Stanley Broaden**, Director of Championships

Email: [sbroaden@socon.org](mailto:sbroaden@socon.org)

Cell: 864-398-9377

**Doug King**, Associate Commissioner, Compliance

Email: [dking@socon.org](mailto:dking@socon.org)

Cell: 864-525-5166

**Paul Lollis**, Assistant Commissioner, Video Productions

Email: [plollis@socon.org](mailto:plollis@socon.org)

Cell: 864-580-9947

**Eynde Frazier**, Championships Assistant

Email: [efrazier@socon.org](mailto:efrazier@socon.org)

Cell: 706-614-2378

**Jon Perdue**, Media Relations Assistant

Email: [jperdue@socon.org](mailto:jperdue@socon.org)

Cell: 843-307-5189

**Sara Yang**, Operations Assistant

Email: [syang@socon.org](mailto:syang@socon.org)

Cell: 704-996-6233

## CHAMPIONSHIPS INFORMATION

### ADMISSION

Admission is free for the 2019 Southern Conference Cross Country Championships.

### AWARDS

Immediately following the conclusion of the Championship meet, an awards ceremony shall be held at the awards presentation area onsite. The head coaches and student-athletes of all teams should remain for the awards ceremony. The following awards shall be provided by the Conference office and distributed to both men's and women's teams:

#### All-Freshman Team

Seven certificates (seven men and seven women) will be awarded to the top 7 freshman (true freshman, redshirt or otherwise) finishers in the cross-country championship.

#### First and Second All-Conference Team

One to seven places receiving First Team All-Conference and eight to fourteen places receiving Second Team All-Conference.

#### Freshman of the Year

The Freshman of the Year awards shall be presented to the first true freshmen to finish the men's and women's championships.

#### Runner of the Year

The Runner of the Year awards shall be presented to the individual winners of the men's and women's championships.

#### Coach of the Year

This award shall be voted on by all the head coaches at the championship site. Voting shall be conducted by the conference office.

#### Runner-up Trophy

One trophy presented to the head coach and captains of the men's runner-up team, and one trophy presented to the head coach and captains of the women's runner-up team.

#### Championship Trophy

One trophy presented to the head coach and captains of the men's winning team, and one trophy presented to the head coach and captains of the women's winning team.

#### Individual Championship Team Plaques

Nine individual championship plaques will be presented to the winning head men's and head women's coach for presentation to the student-athletes of those squads. These plaques will be presented at the head coach's discretion.

### Pinnacle Award

One plaque presented to the student-athlete with the highest cumulative GPA on the men's and women's winning teams.

### AWARDS ENGRAVING

Each institution is responsible for returning their plaques to Levy Marketing & Awards for individual engraving if desired. The Conference contact at Levy Awards is Brian Liotta ([brian.liotta@levyrecognition.com](mailto:brian.liotta@levyrecognition.com)). His contact information is below:

Brian Liotta-DeVivo  
1916 W. Beach St.  
Tampa, Fl. 33607  
(813) 252- 2082

### BANNED ITEMS

Artificial noisemakers, air horns, electronic amplifiers and weapons are all prohibited and shall not be permitted on site during competition.

### BIB NUMBERS AND TIMING CHIPS

The timing company will provide the numbers and timing chips. The conference is responsible for their distribution. One number large enough for identification shall be worn by each competitor. The number shall be securely pinned on the front of each contestant's shirt to allow for plain visibility.

Each runner will wear a reusable shoe timing chip that will be returned to the timer at the conclusion of the race. **Institutions will be charged for any timing chips that are not returned.**

### COURSE MARKINGS

The "course" is defined as the ground lying between the starting line and the finish line, assigned by the legal path of the runner while in the race. The course shall be properly measured. It must be marked by a continuous, clearly visible, unbroken line (or suitable flag system) on the running surface from start to finish. The inside edge of the course extending from the inside edge of the first box, position or alignment on the starting line to the first turn shall be laid in a straight line.

**Direction Changes:** All changes of directions on the course should be indicated by the use of painted lines on the course and/or flags (blue when the course lies straight ahead, red when it lies to the left, yellow when it lies to the right) on seven-foot high guide posts. Signs and directional boundaries can be used to augment course directions. The construction and placement of these markings on the course shall not permit confusion on the part of the student-athlete as to the direction which the runner is to run and shall act as a curb toward the entire distance of the course.

## **CROSS COUNTRY COMMITTEE**

The Southern Conference Cross Country Committee shall provide general oversight of the Men's and Women's Championships. The Cross Country Committee shall have the authority to discipline and/or fine any member institution that does not abide by Conference regulations.

### **CROWD CONTROL**

The responsibility for crowd control rests with the athletics director or designated representative of the host institution.

**Grounds for Removal.** Profanity, racial or sexist comments, or other intimidating actions directed at officials, student-athletes, coaches or team representatives will not be tolerated and are grounds for removal from the site of competition. Also, the consumption of alcoholic beverages and tobacco products is prohibited.

### **DISQUALIFICATION**

Competitors, who fail to complete the prescribed course as defined by the legal marking system, thereby gaining an advantage, shall be disqualified if detected by an official at the meet.

### **EVACUATION PLAN**

The host institution should provide a copy of its evacuation plan as well as other crowd control measures for review by the Games Committee.

### **FINAL DECLARATIONS**

Each institution is responsible for submitting an entry form that may include up to twelve (12) participants.

Entry forms shall also be electronically submitted to the timing company information listed in the checklist. Online registration shall begin on Monday, October 14, 2019. If you have any questions concerning the web based entry system, please contact Jimmy Stephens at [jimmy@timinginc.com](mailto:jimmy@timinginc.com) (please put SoCon XC Championship in the subject line).

Each team shall make a final declaration of a maximum of nine runners at the coaches' meeting on the evening prior to the Championships. Final declarations can be made by team's head coach or his or her designee. A representative from the timing company will attend this meeting and make the necessary changes.



## **FINISH LINE PROCEDURES**

A videotape of the finish line shall be made from an elevated side view to determine order of finish in case of protest. The finish line shall be at least 10 meters wide and should narrow to a single person funnel in a length of between 15 and 25 meters from the line. An area should be roped off a distance of 100 feet from the finish line out toward the course on each side for crowd control purposes at the finish area.

**Finish line Construction.** The finish corral shall be constructed of rope, banners and stakes (padded if sharp or if dangerous edges protrude). The corral should be a minimum of 100 feet long from the official finish to the end where the student-athletes exit.

## **GAMES COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT**

A Games Committee shall be appointed for the Men's and Women's Championships consisting of Cross Country Committee members on site, the athletics director of the host institution or his/her designee, the Southern Conference liaison on site (who shall serve as chair of the committee), the championships director and all head coaches. The Games Committee shall:

- Ensure that the Championships are conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Southern Conference as contained in the Southern Conference Sport Regulations and this manual;
- Make decisions regarding situations that occur where resolution is not covered in the rules and regulations of the NCAA or the Southern Conference as stated in the Southern Conference Sports Regulations or this manual;
- Inspect the meet facilities prior to the start of the event.

## **INSURANCE**

The host institution must have in place primary comprehensive general public liability insurance coverage, with combined single limits of at least \$1 million per occurrence for bodily injury and property damage.

## **LODGING**

Teams are responsible for booking their own travel and lodging. We encourage all groups to utilize [www.socontravel.com](http://www.socontravel.com) for team travel and share this site with parents and fans attending the championships.

## **MEDIA**

All head coaches and student-athletes shall be available for interviews with the media following their respective meets. Interviews with the media may take place following a 10-minute cooling off period, which shall begin when the final competitor has completed the course.

A work area with electrical outlets, internet access, phone, statistical and team information will be available at the Championships for all working media.

The Southern Conference retains the radio and television rights for the Championships. For information contact Geoff Cabe, Senior Associate Commissioner at [gcabe@socon.org](mailto:gcabe@socon.org) or 864-591-5100.

## **MEDICAL**

**Physician:** A physician is on-call before, during and after all competitions.

**EMS:** An EMS unit will be on-site for the Cross Country Championships.

**Medical Facilities:** Pre-arranged access to a medical facility, including transportation service on site, is available at all times.

**Athletic Training:** Athletic training facilities and training supplies are available for all Championship events. A tent with treatment options (e.g., ice, first aid supplies and water) will be available on-site during the championships near the finish line area.

**Medical Information:** Information concerning medical and training accommodations is distributed to all head athletic trainers and head coaches prior to their arrival at the Championships site.

**Water:** Water will be provided at the course for all teams before, during and after competition.

## **MERCHANDISE**

The Southern Conference retains the rights to all souvenir merchandising at the Championships. For information on merchandising contact Eynde Frazier, Championships Assistant at [efrazier@socon.org](mailto:efrazier@socon.org) or 864-591-5100.

## **OFFICIALS**

Officials and their duties are outlined in the NCAA Rules. The head official must stay on-site at least 30 minutes after the final results are posted and drafts a written report, of all actions, protests, and controversial decisions that may have affected the meet. The head officials for the championship are as follows:

- **Head Referee:** Brian McCue
- **Assistant Referee:** Sirena Williams
- **Starter:** Donnie Graham
- **Public Address Announcer:** Frank Aycock

## **PRACTICE**

The competition course shall be made available for inspection and/or practice for all institutions on the afternoon prior to the Championships. The course will be open for a minimum of two hours. The course shall be available for inspection Friday, November 1 from 2:00 p.m. ET until 4:30 p.m. ET.

## **PROGRAMS**

The Southern Conference is responsible for a program for the Championships. The program will be available in print and for download at [soconsports.com](http://soconsports.com).

## **PROTESTS**

Protests relating to matters which develop during the conduct of the Championships should be made at once and not later than 15 minutes after the results of the meet in question have been posted. Any such protests should be made in writing by a head coach and submitted to the head referee, who will render a decision. An official protest form is included in Appendix D of this manual.

## **RULES**

The rules for the Southern Conference Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships shall conform to those rules adopted by the NCAA for the Division I Cross Country Championships, and the Southern Conference as stated in this manual and the Southern Conference Sport Regulations.

## **STUDENT-ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY**

Each institution is responsible for submitting an entry form. The Conference office shall compare the list to previously submitted institutional squad lists and will notify an institution if a problem arises with any of its student-athletes. Student-athletes not deemed eligible to compete may not be in uniform during the Championships.

## **STUDENT-ATHLETE GIFTS**

The student athlete gift for the Cross Country Championships will be distributed at the head coaches meeting. Please contact Eynde Frazier at [efrazier@socon.org](mailto:efrazier@socon.org) or 252-292-1214 for further information regarding the student-athlete gift.

## **SCORING**

Each team in the Southern Conference Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships may run nine competitors. First place shall score one point, second place two points, third place three points, etc. The first seven runners from each team who finish the course shall be ranked and tallied in this manner. The team score shall then be determined by totaling the points scored by the first five runners of each team to finish. The team scoring the lowest number of points shall be declared the winner. If fewer than five runners finish for an institution, the places of all members of that team shall be disregarded except for individual awards purposes.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

The athletics directors of the competing institutions are expected to communicate with their student-athletes and other fans to encourage enthusiastic support within the confines of good sportsmanship.

## **SQUAD SIZE**

Squad restrictions for the Southern Conference Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships shall be limited to twelve (12) student-athletes, of which nine (9) may compete. Final declaration of championship-eligible student-athletes will be made at the coaches meeting the afternoon prior to the championship meet.

## **START LINE PROCEDURES**

NCAA Cross Country Rules and Regulations shall be followed at all times by the starter. The location and width of the starting line shall conform to NCAA Rules and Regulations. The starting boxes shall be numbered from left to right. Team starting positions shall be drawn by lot by the Conference office prior to the championship. Each team shall be allotted 10 feet or more if possible in the starting box. There shall be a minimum of 200 meters between the starting line and the first turn on the course. A recall starter shall be located up to the 100-meter mark.

## **TEAM ENTRY AND PARKING**

See Appendix B of this manual. Teams traveling in vans can park in the club house parking lot. Buses are asked to park in the golf course maintenance lot. designated parking area.

Clubhouse Parking Address - 1709 Buffalo Rd, Johnson City, TN 37604

Maintenance Parking Lot - 1904-1976 Buffalo Rd, Johnson City, TN 37604

## **TIE-BREAKING PROCEDURES**

In case of a tie for first place in the team or individual championships, the tying teams or individuals shall be considered co-champions.

## **UNIFORMS**

When engaged in competition, each competitor must wear an official team uniform with components governed by NCAA playing rules or be subject to disciplinary action. Wearing any part of the official team competition uniform illegally (that is, top off or intentionally shortened, shoulder straps lowered) while in the area of competition shall lead to a warning by the nearest official and a report of uncorrected violations shall be made to the games committee, referee and offending competitor's coach.

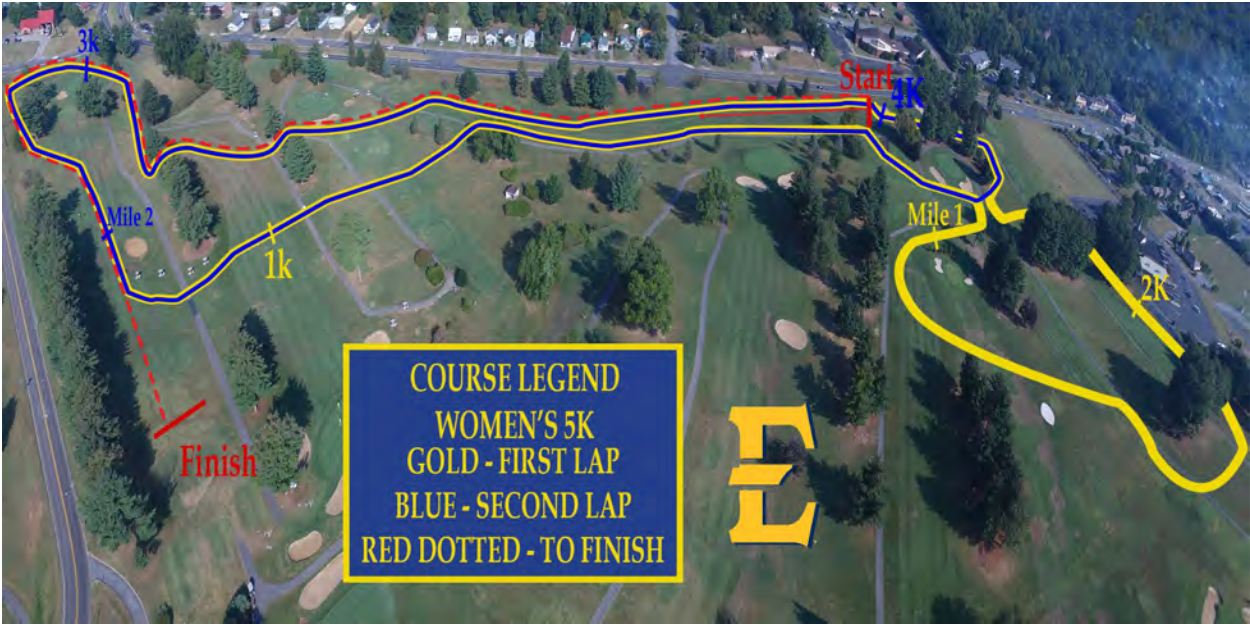
Team members must wear uniforms clearly indicating (through color, logo and combination of all other garments worn as a uniform) that members are from the same team. Men's and women's programs are considered separate teams, and are not required to have uniforms of identical color.

Other visible garments useful in team recognition (that is, T-shirts, arm warmers, tights of any length, leg-warmers, each taken separately) worn by team members must be of an identical solid color. This does not apply to items of apparel above the shoulder or those covering the hands/feet.

In accordance with NCAA rules, the institutions' official uniform (including warm-ups) and all other items of apparel (socks, head bands, t-shirts, wrist bands, towels, etc.) should bear only a single manufacturer's or distributor's normal label or trademark. The label or trademark may not exceed 2¼ inches square in size. Equipment (i.e., shoes, bags) may bear only the manufacturer's normal label or trademark as it is used on all such items for sale to the general public. Failure to comply with this regulation may cause disqualification or may jeopardize a student-athlete's eligibility.



**COURSE MAP**



# TEAM PARKING





## **DRIVING DIRECTIONS**

### **DIRECTIONS TO THE PINE OAKS GOLF CLUB**

**GPS Address:**

Pine Oaks Golf Club  
1709 Buffalo Rd, Johnson City, TN 37604

<https://goo.gl/maps/LJv17FCBFGGEG6tUA>

## COACH OF THE YEAR BALLOT

INSTITUTION: \_\_\_\_\_

### **MEN'S COACH OF THE YEAR (Dave Walker Award)**

**(CIRCLE ONE NAME)**

1. Jody Huddleston, The Citadel
2. George Watts, ETSU
3. Robert Gary, Furman
4. Josh Hayman, Mercer
5. Chad Pearson, UNC Greensboro
6. Chad Balyo, Samford
7. Andy Meyer, Chattanooga
8. Drew Ludtke, VMI
9. Cale McDaniel, Western Carolina
10. Johnny Bomar, Wofford

### **WOMEN'S COACH OF THE YEAR**

**(CIRCLE ONE NAME)**

1. Jody Huddleston, The Citadel
2. George Watts, ETSU
3. Robert Gary, Furman
4. Josh Hayman, Mercer
5. Chad Pearson, UNC Greensboro
6. Chad Balyo, Samford
7. Andy Meyer, Chattanooga
8. Drew Ludtke, VMI
9. Jesse Norman, Western Carolina
10. Johnny Bomar, Wofford

**This form must be returned to Jon Perdue ([iperdue@socon.org](mailto:iperdue@socon.org)) no later than 10 minutes following the conclusion of the last race of the championships.**

**PROTEST FORM**

**Event (Men or Women):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Athlete/Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time of Protest:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Issue:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Submitted by (Coach):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Referee's Decision** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Referee's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

- 1. Protests must be made in writing and submitted to the head referee no later than 15 minutes following the posting of results, who will render a decision.**
- 2. A second protest (appeal) may be made to the referee. Upon receipt of an appeal, the referee will turn over the decision to the Games Committee. The decision of the Games Committee is final.**



**SOUTHERN CONFERENCE  
RISK MANAGMENT STATEMENT**

The Southern Conference recognizes that the host institution is familiar with the facilities it will be providing for use for the Southern Conference Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships and that the institution's staff members are in the best position to oversee safety preparations and inspections. Accordingly, on behalf of the host institution, its staff members must agree to perform such preparations and inspections and to provide such facilities free from all defective and hazardous conditions that are known to be reasonably defective. If any conditions cannot be cured before the championships, specifics must be provided to the Southern Conference in writing as far in advance as possible. Receipt of any such notice will obligate the Southern Conference to cure the condition in question or to relieve the host of its legal duties with respect hereto.

## CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

A concussion is a brain injury that may be caused by a blow to the head, face, neck or elsewhere on the body with an “impulsive” force transmitted to the head. **Concussions can occur without loss of consciousness or other obvious signs.** A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the previous one (hours, days or weeks) can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussions can result in brain swelling, permanent brain damage and even death.

**Recognize and Refer:** To help recognize a concussion, watch for the following two events among your student-athletes during both games and practices:

1. A forceful blow to the head or body that results in rapid movement of the head.

-AND-

2. Any change in the student-athlete’s behavior, thinking or physical functioning (see signs and symptoms).

### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

#### Signs Observed By Coaching Staff

Appears dazed or stunned.  
Is confused about assignment or position.  
Forgets plays.  
Is unsure of game, score or opponent.  
Moves clumsily.  
Answers questions slowly.  
Loses consciousness (even briefly).  
Shows behavior or personality changes.  
Can’t recall events before hit or fall.  
Can’t recall events after hit or fall.

#### Symptoms Reported By Student-Athlete

Headache or “pressure” in head.  
Nausea or vomiting.  
Balance problems or dizziness.  
Double or blurry vision.  
Sensitivity to light.  
Sensitivity to noise.  
Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy.  
Concentration or memory problems.  
Confusion.  
Does not “feel right.”

An athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion, either at rest or during exertion, should be **removed immediately from practice or competition** and should not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional. Sports have injury timeouts and player substitutions so that student-athletes can get checked.

### IF A CONCUSSION IS SUSPECTED:

1. **Remove the student-athlete from play. Look for the signs and symptoms of concussion if your student-athlete has experienced a blow to the head.** Do not allow the student-athlete to just “shake it off.” Each individual athlete will respond to concussions differently.
2. **Ensure that the student-athlete is evaluated right away by an appropriate health care professional.** Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Immediately refer the student-athlete to the appropriate athletics medical staff, such as a certified athletic trainer, team physician or health care professional experienced in concussion evaluation and management.
3. **Allow the student-athlete to return to play only with permission from a health care professional with experience in evaluating for concussion.** Allow athletics medical staff to rely on their clinical skills and protocols in evaluating the athlete to establish the appropriate time to return to play. A return-to-play progression should occur in an individualized, step-wise fashion with gradual increments in physical exertion and risk of contact. Follow your institution’s physician supervised concussion management protocol.
4. **Develop a game plan. Student-athletes should not return to play until cleared by the appropriate athletics medical staff.** In fact, as concussion management continues to evolve with new science, the care is becoming more conservative and return-to-play time frames are getting longer. Coaches should have a game plan that accounts for student-athletes to be out for at least the remainder of the day. For further details please refer to the “NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook Guideline on Concussions” or online at [www.NCAA.org/health-safety](http://www.NCAA.org/health-safety) and [www.CDC.gov/Concussion](http://www.CDC.gov/Concussion).