



**EUROPEAN CROSS  
COUNTRY  
CHAMPIONSHIPS  
GUIDELINES**

## [ VENUE ]

When selecting a venue, the following factors should be considered:

- > **Description:** the course must be on a very open area that is covered by grass.
- > **Size:** the area should be large enough to accommodate the course and all the necessary facilities including start and finish areas.
- > **Security control:** it must be possible to fence in and control access to all parts of the venue (including warm-up area, Call Room, finish area and Mixed Zone) during the event.
- > **Vehicle access:** there should be easy and suitable access for event operation personnel and equipment, teams, spectators, media personnel and television vehicles.
- > **Setting:** a scenic setting will project a favourable impression to media audiences.
- > **Facilities:** buildings and areas that can be used for the various operations of the event reduce the amount of temporary facilities that need to be installed.

## [ COURSE DESIGN ]

### Important points to consider in the planning of the course:

- > A natural, undulating course with smooth curves and short straights is recommended.
- > Only the start and finish areas should contain long straights.
- > A "loop" course, with laps between 1200m to 1500m is recommended. If necessary, a small loop can be added in order to adjust the distance; in such a case, the small loops must be run in the early stages of each race. The entire course should be at least 5m wide.
- > The first bend should be at least 200m after the start and be a minimum of 7m wide.
- > Narrow gaps or obstacles in the first 500m of the course must be avoided.
- > Natural obstacles, if existing, should be used. Artificial obstacles should simulate natural obstacles.
- > If the course crosses roads or other similar surfaces, these must be covered by grass, earth or mats.
- > Distance markers (40cm x 30cm), displayed above head height, should be placed at every kilometre point.
- > The course must be clearly marked with tape on both sides.
- > It is recommended that a corridor 1m wide be marked with tape along each side of the course. It may be necessary to have a wider corridor in places to accommodate the needs of television.
- > Points where the public must cross the course should be well designed and marshalled by Stewards.

## [ START AREA ]

### Important points to consider in the design of the start area:

- > The start area should be clearly marked and be as wide as possible (30m at least).
- > The start boxes must be clearly numbered and should be between 0.7m and 1.2m wide in order to accommodate all members of a team.
- > A warm-up area, toilettes, a covered Call Room (tent), facilities for the deposit of tracksuits, and team/athlete tent(s) should be provided adjacent to the start area.
- > A platform should be provided for the Starter. The positions for the timekeepers and judges should have an unobstructed view of the start area.
- > Only athletes and accredited officials should be able to access to the start area.

Notes on start procedure: Prior to the start, officials in the Call Room must confirm that all athletes are wearing the correct team uniform, their bib and the chip in accordance with IAAF rules.

- > Verbal warnings should be given 3 and 1 minute(s) before the start time.
- > After the one-minute warning, the athletes are allowed to enter the appropriate start box.
- > The race shall be started by the firing of a gun and the standard commands for long distance runs shall be used.
- > Approximately 100m in front of the start line, officials should hold a false start rope, which will be used in case there is a false start.

## [ FINISH AREA ]

### Important points to consider in the design of the finish area:

- > The finish area must have enough space for television, press, spectator seating and ancillary services, including rooms for equipment and race management.
- > The finish line should be clearly marked and should be at the least 5m wide; to assist the judges, timekeepers and photo-finish crew, the line should be placed just in front of the finish gantry.
- > The finish gantry should be sufficiently high to allow the official timing clock to be suspended from it.
- > The straight run leading to the finish line should be not less than 80m long.
- > Spectators should be prevented from entering the finish area by barriers.
- > A photographer zone should be provided approx. 20m behind the finish line; and between the final funnels.
- > A platform for television cameras should be placed immediately behind the photographer zone. Additional camera positions to meet the needs of television may also be necessary.
- > Video-recording cameras should be used at the finish (one fixed camera on the side of the finish line and one fixed camera facing the finish straight).
- > The following services should be provided near the finish line:
  - > Mixed Zone
  - > Assembly area
  - > Clothes retrieval area
  - > Refreshment area
  - > Competition management room
  - > Computer/timing room
  - > Medical station
  - > Doping control area
  - > Jury of Appeal room
  - > Awards ceremonies area
  - > Media tribune

**Notes on finish procedure:**

- > In principle, the finish system must allow all athletes to cross the finish line, maintain their finishing position and have speedy access to the recovery area.
- > The finish area must be clearly defined and made known to all officials and others working nearby; the area must be kept clear for television, photographers and the photo timing equipment.
- > A Chief Finish Judge, under whose jurisdiction all officials operate, will control the finish area.
- > A two-funnel/one-rope system is recommended (The rope controller is positioned a few metres before the finish line to one side until the Chief Finish Judge considers it necessary to close funnel 1. At that time, the rope controller moves to the other side of the line to allow the athletes to enter funnel 2. It may be necessary for the rope controller to move across several times to open the opposite funnel.
- > The judges must ensure that all competitors remain in the same order from the finish line to the end of the funnels.
- > If a competitor collapses between the finish line and funnel, an official replaces him/her and another official takes the bib of the collapsed athlete (or notes the athlete's number).
- > It is strongly recommended that the finish procedure is rehearsed and tested several times before the European Cross Country Championship, using the same course, start and finish areas. Officials, results system, etc should also be tested.

## [ MISCELLANEOUS ]

### **Jury of Appeal Facilities**

Facilities, including equipment capable of displaying the television picture and the finish line video camera recordings from each race, must be available for the Jury of Appeal in case of a protest.

### **The Team Manual**

The Team Manual must be sent should be circulated one month in advance to the participating federations and shall be circulated to all team officials/athletes upon arrival. The manual should contain

- > Timetable
- > Map of the course, including gradients, warm up area, distances, etc.
- > Location of toilettes
- > Start and finish procedures
- > Awards Ceremonies (timetable and instructions)
- > Medical services, including doping control procedures
- > Transport arrangements
- > Information on training areas
- > Schedule for inspection and training on the course

### The Technical Meeting

The Technical Meeting shall be organised the day before the race to ensure that all team representatives are familiar with the race procedure. The agenda for the meeting should include the following points:

- > Welcome by the President of the Local Organising Committee
- > Welcome by the EAA President or a representative
- > Presentation of the Competition Officials
- > Timetable
- > Competition venue
- > Presentation of the competition and warm-up areas
- > Call Room procedures and schedule
- > Distribution of transponders (timing chips) - procedure
- > Start procedures
- > Scoring and ties
- > Distribution of number bibs
- > Mixed Zone
- > Protests
- > Opening and Closing Ceremonies
- > Presentations
- > Doping control
- > Advertising Rules and Regulations
- > Answering of questions submitted in writing by federations



