

**Running a CARA Cross Country Meet**  
**Apex Park and Recreation District**  
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- **Pick a host date**
  - CARA Cross Country meets are typically held on a Saturday or Sunday. They all begin at 9am, and usually get done between 12-2pm.
- **Recruit Volunteers**
  - The amount depends on the location and size of your meet  
**Positions:**
    - Help set up the night before or the morning of (the more the merrier)
    - Finish Line:
      - 10- 4 timers (2 boys, 2 girls), 4 recorders (2 boys, 2 girls), 2 ribbons (1 boys, 1 girls)
    - Start Line:
      - 2- 1 starter, 1 to help line kids up
    - Course Leader
      - 1
    - Corner Posts
      - Depends on location- 2-8, one at each big turn where direction can be confusing
    - Parking lot guards (2-4)
      - This is only if your race goes through a portion of the street or the parking lot, to block traffic
  - Set up a “Signup Genius” and send out to your cross country parents. I tell them it is required to volunteer at the meet we host. I also reach out to local NHS/NJHS groups who need community service hours, and offer it as extra hours to paid employees.
- **Materials Needed**
  - Sidewalk chalk or tape to mark directions of the course
  - Cones/signs/arrows to direct the course
  - Pennant flags & t-posts for finish line
  - Tent for the finish line
  - Stop watches that hold SEVERAL split times
  - Master Copy of Bib #'s for all agencies in case they forget their bibs
  - Finish Line sheets: Excel document with 3 columns (see below)

AGE: 8 & UNDER		RACE: 2K	GENDER: BOYS
PLACE	BIB	TIME	
1			
2			
3			
4			
ETC.			

- Gator, Golf Cart or Bicycle for the course leader to ride
- Mega phone or sound system for announcements
- 1 Table for finish line (depending on location)
- Ribbons from CARA
- Clip Boards for finish line
- Pencils
- Traffic Vests
- Volunteer shirts
- Copies of course maps for all agencies
- Caution tape (optional for meet- if need to block areas off)
- Starter Gun or Whistle
- Black permanent marker

## Map Out Course

- Go to Map My Run
- Choose location
- Map out a 2K, 3K and 4K course
- Things to keep in mind:
  - Nice to have different terrain
  - Start and finish lines in the same/close to the same spot
  - Welcome to repeat laps to increase distance
  - Make it a safe run that is doable and challenging in areas
  - Have a wide start line that narrows eventually (give enough space to sort out runners by pace)
  - Finish line should go from wide to narrow
- Copy and paste map into paint
- Draw arrows to clarify how to run the course (different colors for different laps help clarify)
- Print and make copies of course maps for all agencies
- Email chair a copy of the map to post online and distribute to teams- inform if there are any changes from original
- Email map to location of meet, include address and directions from different areas- to CARA Chair

## Set Up:

- Set up finish line
  - Go from wide opening to single file shoot
  - Make a really long shoot so you have time to hold kids there while you record times
  - Pound the t-posts into the ground and tie the pennant flags along to create shoot
- Mark course
  - Use cones for large grass areas, corners
  - Draw chalk on sidewalks (or tape arrows) to clarify direction
  - Post signs on any major turns of direction
- Set up tent at Finish Line
- Block off any areas that cannot be used (parking lot, streets, areas of the location, etc.)

## Meet Day Procedures/Guidelines

- Arrive early to make sure everything is set up and ready to go
- Sort the ribbons at the finish line
- Hold a coaches meeting:
  - Explain the courses
  - Check everyone in
  - Make sure they all have their bibs, if they do not, get the master bib list and have them create bibs. If they don't have materials, write their assigned bib number on their arm with the black permanent marker.
  - Make sure everyone knows where/how announcements will be made, if you are running genders together or not, and how soon the next races will start
- Assign job duties:
  - Start line: Be over at start line prior to beginning of race
    - Line kids up (should be a wide start line)
    - Starter explains to the kids how going to start: Raise one arm- ready- raise second arm- set- shoot gun/blow whistle- go
    - Timers should be at the start line to hit start on the watch as the gun goes off, go over to the finish line right after
  - Course leader drives the course in front of the kids, stay close enough so they don't lose you, stay far enough so they aren't inhaling fumes
  - Corner Posts: Cheer everyone on, direct kids where to go
  - Finish line:

- Timers: 2 per gender, 4 total (1 boys, 1 girls at a time)
  - If you are not timing, you are shuffling kids into the shoot
  - As your gender crosses the finish line, you hit the button for the split
  - Keep the kids in the order they came across the finish line, but divide them into boys and girls on each side of the shoot
- Recorders: 1 per gender per race
  - As the kids are being shuffled down the shoot, record their bib numbers in the order they crossed the finish line (by gender)
- Alternate: 4 timers and 4 recorders total, after you time/record a race, move to the side and have the alternate timers/recorders do the next race. Record the split times to the order of the bibs, keeping with the same gender.
- Start the next race as soon as the first race finishes.
- Run the genders together if there are not a lot of kids. If there are too many, run them separate.

#### **After-Meet Procedures**

- Take everything down/clean up- make sure to assign duties to volunteers at the beginning of the day, so they stick around
- Email the meet results to the CARA Chair to post online

