



Tackett, Julian <jtackett@khsaa.org>

Re: Considering a new State Meet Location for Cross Country

1 message

Tackett, Julian <jtackett@khsaa.org>

Tue, Nov 9, 2021 at 10:47 AM

To: "Holman, Tim E" <tim.holman@jefferson.kyschools.us>

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Thanks Coach. While we have a four-year commitment to the current facility (two years done), we are always on the lookout for other feasible sites for our events. This will certainly help as things move forward. Appreciate so much the information.

Good luck!

On Tue, Nov 9, 2021 at 8:57 AM Holman, Tim E <tim.holman@jefferson.kyschools.us> wrote:

KHSAA Board of Control Members,

I am writing on behalf of a number of coaches who were dissatisfied with this year's state cross country meet so we have been working together to try and develop an alternate site. I am also including a separate message sent by Mike Horan, who has more direct experience hosting a massive meet at the Sawyer Course.

As I am sure you've already heard, this year's State Meet in Bourbon County was problematic to say the least. But rather than complain, I would rather propose a solution that is far more practical going forward. In Anchorage, KY, EP Tom Sawyer Park has hosted numerous NCAA Championships including this year's D3 Championships. This Friday it is the location of the D1 Southeast Regional hosted by the University of Kentucky. The women race at 11 am and the men race at noon. I've heard that securing the area to ensure paid admissions is one of the key issues with the location for the KHSAA so attending and seeing how the NCAA secures the course might change minds in that regard. I can assure you that there are ways to ensure

paid admissions either through collection upon entering parking lots and/or creating two central gates and employing a local high school to have monitors around the course. The course is smaller now, so there is a smaller perimeter to secure, and I am sure that more easily accessible course for spectators will result in a significant gate increase overall.

Our primary concern deals with the health and safety of runners and spectators at a site with just a single, gravel road in and out. If a serious medical emergency occurred this year, it could have resulted in a tragic circumstance for the victim and the event. EP Tom Sawyer has a number of amenities not currently available at Bourbon County.

1. Ample paved parking for buses, spectators with mobility issues, and equipment
2. Emergency medical equipment and immediate ambulance access throughout the event.
3. A wide enough course to support the expanded number of runners allowed at the State Meet
4. A course with permanent grass that can withstand multiple events with minimal ground stability issues.
5. An area with numerous hotels for teams who wish to stay over the night before.
6. Multiple access points for arrival and departure of vehicles, ensuring minimal delays, especially in any case of medical emergency.

7. A spectator friendly course allowing coaches, parents, and fans the opportunity to see the race from multiple vantage points.

The State Meet should be a showcase of Kentucky athletes that draws the attention of spectators, fans, media, and college coaches. EP Sawyer has hosted the largest meets in Kentucky history and as a State Park, could continue also be a permanent, sustainable, cost effective, revenue expanding venture for the KHSAA. I hope you will consider attending this Friday's meet to see how this could improve cross country in the state.

Mike Horan's earlier email -

If another venue is ever considered, I would nominate Tom Sawyer Park. It is not without its own challenges, but it has played host to NCAA D1, D2, and D3 national championships, as well as two of the state's best invitational meets. If you are interested in seeing the venue in full action the NCAA D3 National Meet will be at Tom Sawyer Park on Saturday November 20th of this year. My team is helping with parking and operations and I would be happy to connect you with the meet director to see behind the scenes of a meet at Tom Sawyer. We also host the Louisville Classic every fall, usually with 5000-6000 athletes over 2 days. At full size we have 4-6 races on Friday and 12 races on Saturday. Teams and spectators are coming and going all the time during the day.

At Tom Sawyer Park there are two massive asphalt parking lots as well as two massive grass lots. We typically reserve one asphalt lot exclusively for buses. It is directly next

to our team camp area. Each of the parking areas has a separate entrance from Frey's Hill Road and two of the lots have an exit that is separate from the entrance.

The starting line is wide and flat. The course is wide enough to meet the NCAA expectations (10 meters wide) and does not include any sharp turns. The new 5k course was designed to be both spectator-friendly and broadcast-friendly. The Louisville Sports Commission is a great partner in both the Louisville Classic and the NCAA Events and I expect they would love to see the state meet come to Louisville.

Let me know if you are interested in coming in for the NCAA Division 3 nationals on 11/20. They are also hosting the NCAA regional meet on 11/12, but that meet is much smaller and may not be large enough to demonstrate all the benefits of the facility. However, if it works better for you that might be another chance to see the venue in action.

Not sure if another venue would be considered, but it seems that the change from the Horse Park to Bourbon County was made in some part because of the Covid situation last fall. If Bourbon County is not the long-term solution that KHSAA is looking for, no course and facility is more prepared than Tom Sawyer.

Best,

Tim Holman
DuPont Manual High School

Mike Horan
Eastern High School

Andy Ames
Male High School

Dave Jagers
Brown School

Stephanie Barnes
Butler High School

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Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

"If I were to try to read, much less answer, all the attacks made on me, this shop might as well be closed for any other business. I do the very best I know how - the very best I can; and I mean to keep doing so until the end. If the end brings me out all right, what's said against me won't amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference." -Abraham Lincoln

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