



National Intercollegiate Running  
Club Association

## Constitution

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Effective June 1, 2009

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CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE 1

# Name and Purposes

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## 1.1 NAME

The name of this organization shall be “The National Intercollegiate Running Club Association.”

## 1.2 PURPOSE

The purposes of this Association are:

- (a) To initiate, and promote the sport of competitive running for student-athletes pursuing higher education and not participating at a varsity or professional level.
- (b) To organize and initiate intercollegiate competition including one National Championship each year to be held in the fall.
- (c) To recognize outstanding athletic accomplishment and preserve athletic records for the sake of posterity.
- (d) To facilitate intercollegiate communication and socialization of running clubs across the nation.
- (e) To support individual club’s development; promoting growth, strengthening leadership, and increasing the quality of program offered to individual members

CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE 2

# Principles for Conduct of Intercollegiate Athletics

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## 2.1 THE PRINCIPLE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The Association shall, to the best of its ability, promote an atmosphere of respect and sensitivity towards all persons. Individuals will not be discriminated against due to reasons of race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, sex, age, or handicap. It is the responsibility of member organizations to uphold and comply with this principle.

## 2.2 ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

The Association recognizes the establishment of varsity programs in place at member organization's institutions and forbids current varsity athletes in the sports of track and field or cross country, along with professional athletes, to compete in NIRCA sanctioned events. Organization's members must also be current full-time students at their respective institutions.

**2.2.1 Current Students.** A current student is recognized by enrollment within their representative institution and active course work qualifying them for recognition from their institution as a full-time student at the undergraduate or graduate level during the grading period in which the National Championship falls. The exception to this rule is a graduating senior who is completing their final remaining credit for their major, within the current semester, with approval from their school's registrar.

**2.2.2 Professional Athletes.** Any athlete currently receiving individual sponsorships for athletic competition, or obtaining compensation (in the form of funds, equipment, travel reimbursements, etc) for the sport of running will be recognized as a professional athlete by the Association and banned from participation in all sanctioned races.

**2.2.3 Varsity Athlete.** A varsity athlete is recognized by NIRCA as any athlete currently participating as a rostered runner in a varsity program or training with a varsity team. NIRCA recognizes and supports those runners attempting to compete at a varsity level; however, it is not the intent of the Association to be a competition venue for those athletes training in a varsity program. NIRCA is a separate entity from the NCAA, NAIA, and like bodies promoting amateur athletes and desires those individuals competing within the Association to be members actively training and involved with their representative club. Eligibility of runners in question may be brought to the attention of the NIRCA Council.

**2.2.4 University Approval.** In accordance with the eligibility restrictions stated above and to help ensure and preserve the quality of competition, all member clubs must submit team rosters to the Council prior to competition in a NIRCA sanctioned event. This roster will suffice for the duration of the academic school year and can be amended at any time.

## CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE 3

# NIRCA Membership

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### 3.01 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

**3.01.1 Equality of Membership.** The NIRCA guarantees all member organizations the full rights and privileges offered with no regard to club or institution affiliation.

**3.01.2 Assignment to Geographic Areas.** Member organizations shall be assigned to regions based upon their host institution's geographic location.

### 3.1 ELIGIBILITY FOR MEMBERSHIP

**3.1.1 General.** Member organizations must agree to the principles and rules set forth in the constitution of the Association.

**3.1.2 Types of Institutions.** Membership is available only to running-directed clubs at four-year colleges and universities and two-year collegiate institutions.

**3.1.2.1 Running Directed Club.** A running-directed club is any organization focusing meetings on the betterment of club members' physical condition through the sport of running. (this may include, but is not limited to "running clubs" "running associations" "cross country clubs" etc.)

**3.1.3 Institution Recognition.** Member organizations must be affiliated with their respective institution as a student organization, club sport, or other appropriate classification following procedures set by their institution.

**3.1.4 Solitary Membership.** Institutions shall have only one Association member. In the case of dual organizations from a similar campus wishing membership, priority will be given to the organization with standing or previous membership in the Association. In the event that two clubs from a common institution wish membership in the Association simultaneously, priority will be given to the organization whose purpose is most in line with that of the Association's. This decision will be made by a two-thirds majority vote of the executive council.

**3.1.4.1 Institution.** An institution is denoted by one name, and geographic location. Universities and Colleges with multiple campus locations shall be recognized independently.

**3.1.4.2 Simultaneous Application.** Upon application for membership, the executive council will allow one week to process the application. If during this period or before payment of annual dues, another application from the same institution is received, this will constitute as a simultaneous application.

### 3.2 DUES OF MEMBERS

**3.2.1 Application and Initiation.** Prospective clubs should fill out an application to be submitted to the executive board for review. All prospective clubs fulfilling eligibility requirements as outlined in Article III Section I shall be granted membership. After being reviewed by the executive board, the

prospective school shall pay an initial instatement fee set at the time of application to the Association. Membership status is pending until the receipt of annual dues upon which official affiliation will commence immediately.

**3.2.2 Annual Dues.** The annual dues for member institutions shall be set annually by the executive council immediately following the Winter Conference. Dues are non-refundable.

**3.2.3 Payment Deadline.** Dues are payable until September 31<sup>st</sup> for the upcoming or current year. Dues must be paid to compete in NIRCA sanctioned races and be eligible for competition in the National Championship Meet. Membership is terminated if a member organization fails to pay dues and will be required to pay a reinstatement fee equal to that of the instatement fee (Article III Section 2.1).

### **3.3 OBLIGATIONS**

**3.3.1 General.** NIRCA affiliated organizations agree to comply with the conditions outlined in this constitution.

**3.3.2 Regional Competition.** Member organizations are required to attend one NIRCA sanctioned invitational in order to be eligible to compete in the national competition. Member organizations must make a concerted effort to participate in regional competition as available.**3.3.2.1 Exemptions.** Teams may appeal to the Council for exceptions to Section 3.3.2. Reasons may include but are not limited to only one pre-Nationals meet in the region, registration late in the season, or unrealistic distances required to attend the nearest invitational. These exceptions should be examples of extreme circumstances with disregard to the number of club individuals participating, football schedules, etc.

### **3.4 TERMINATION AND SUSPENSION**

Membership in the Association may be terminated or suspended due to unsportsmanlike conduct or any action detrimental to, or in contradiction with, NIRCA's Constitution. Termination and suspension will be at the discretion of the executive council on a case by case basis. Upon termination or suspension of membership, all rights and privileges of membership shall cease immediately.

### **3.5 REINSTATEMENT**

Organizations seeking membership after having their membership terminated for reasons outlined in Section III Article IV shall reapply using the standard application found online. Reapplication shall occur no sooner than six months after an organization's termination of membership. The organizations shall also be responsible for a reinstatement fee equal to that of the instatement fee outlined in Article III Section II.

## CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE 4

# Organization

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### 4.01 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Association's administrative structure shall include an Executive Council which oversees Association-wide issues and ensures members operate in a manner consistent with the basic purpose and general principles of the Association. The administrative structure shall also empower a body to set forth rules and policies for the improvement in the operation of the Association.

### 4.1 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

**4.1.1 Composition.** The Executive Council shall consist of no more than 10 members with one member holding the position of Executive Chair.

**4.1.2 Duties and Responsibilities.** The Executive Council shall:

- (a) Provide final approval and oversight of the Association's budget
- (b) Provide thoughtful planning for the future of the Association
- (c) Identify and take action upon issues affecting the Association
- (d) Convene at two meetings per year
- (e) Review actions of any member organization that may be in contradiction to the goals and purposes of the Association
- (f) Provide organizational support for a national championship meet and regional competitions

#### 4.1.3 Election/Term of Office

**4.1.3.1 Election.** Applicants for the Executive Council must have had at least one year of affiliation with the Association or a member institution. New appointments shall be made at the next council meeting (Article 5 Section 1) by a two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Council. (for anyone actually reading this, do we want to write something about how we are always willing to accept and review "applications" ie. Letter of intent + resume? We would probably do a lot of turning down, but it wouldn't hurt to have people on file for the future. Just a thought)

**4.1.3.2 Terms.** There is no limit to the number of terms of service for the members of the Executive Council aside from impeachment or resignation from the Council.

**4.1.3.3 Council Chair.** The Executive Council shall elect one of its members to serve for two years as the council chair. This election shall take place at the winter conference (Article 5 Section 1). The purpose of the Council Chair is to reside over meetings, facilitating discussion and encouraging equal participation of Council members. The Chair is also withheld from all votes except in the event of a tie in which case his/her decision will decide the outcome.

**4.1.3.4 Impeachment.** Requires unanimous vote of the Executive Council, excluding the member in question.

## **4.2 COMMITTEES/CABINETS**

Such governing bodies shall be established as seen necessary by the Executive Council. The Constitution shall provide for the number of members and tenure of such committees should they be created.

CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE 5

# Legislative Authority and Process

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## 5.1 CONVENTIONS/MEETINGS

**5.1.1 General.** All meetings are open to all Executive Council members and shall be announced no later than two months in advance.

**5.1.2 Annual Convention.** There shall be an annual convention of this Association during the second weekend in May or at such other time as may be prescribed by the Executive Council. The location shall be determined as that site which is most conducive to the attendance of all Executive Council Members. This will be a closed event for the purpose of conducting annual legislative and operation business of the Association by the Executive Council.**5.1.3 Winter Conference.** There shall be an annual conference for organizations' members' during the first month of each calendar year.. This will serve the purpose of club development and host an open forum of the participants for the involvement and betterment of the Association. If possible, the site for the incurring National Championships should be determined at this time. The site of these conferences should be moved annually to best serve various geographic regions.

**5.1.4 Nationals Briefing.** The Council will convene during the weekend of the National Championship. The length and topic of this meeting shall be at the discretion of the Council Chair person.

**5.1.5 Special Meetings.** A special meeting of the Council may be called by a simple majority vote of the Executive Council. A unanimous vote must be reached in order to enact any legislative decisions made during this meeting.

### 5.1.6 Operational Procedures

**5.1.4.1 Quorum.** Six (6) members of the Executive Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the Association's business.

**5.1.4.2 Parliamentary Rules.** The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall be the parliamentary authority for the conduct of all meetings of the Association.

**5.1.4.3 Voting Methods.** The methods of voting at an NIRCA Meeting shall be by voice, roll call and/or secret ballot at the discretion of the Executive Chair.

## 5.2 AMENDMENT PROCESS

**5.2.1 General.** The Constitution shall only be amended at the Winter Conference Winter Conference. The Constitution may only be amended through a two-thirds vote of the Executive Council members present at the meeting.

**5.2.2 Effective Date.** Amendments made to the Constitution become effective June 1<sup>st</sup>, of each year.

CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE 6

# Race Operations and Sanctioning

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## 6.1 SANCTIONING

**6.1.1 Sanctioned events.** Those events approved by the Association’s Executive Council after having met the quality standards and guidelines set forth in the Constitution.

**6.1.2 Approval process.** Member clubs wishing to obtain sanctioning for an event must submit and Application for Sanctioning to the Association event chair for processing and approval from the Executive Council. Sanctioning is on a first come first serve basis following the National meet for the upcoming season. Those schools having previously hosted a race shall be given priority for the same weekend the following year up until March 1<sup>st</sup> in which all remaining available dates will be released.

## 6.2 RACE GUIDELINES

**6.2.1 Race Distance.** Cross country races for male runners shall be 5 K, 8 K, or 10 K. Cross country races for female runners shall be 4 K, 5 K, or 6 K.

**6.2.2 Participation.** All sanctioned events are open to all Association members, with the exception of Regional Championships in which clubs are only allowed to participate in the Regional Championship assigned to their respective regions.

**6.2.3 Member Exclusive.** Only Association member clubs may participate in a NIRCA sanctioned event. Those host schools wishing to invite non-member clubs or open runners are permitted to do so, but must run an additional race(s) for these teams separate from the NIRCA sanctioned race.

**6.2.4 Insurance.** Host Institutions are required to provide race event insurance coverage for all participants of a NIRCA sanctioned event.

**6.2.5 Cost.** Schools may charge any reasonable entry fee to participants. Host clubs should keep in mind the distance of travel for participating teams and that high entry fees may discourage clubs from attending. NIRCA treats incurred losses or gained profit as the responsibility or property of the host club.

## 6.3 QUALITY STANDARDS

**6.3.1 Course Marking.** All race courses must be accurately marked with a method appropriate to the terrain and conditions of the course. Intersections and exchanges on the course should control runners through the use of movable barriers or individuals to eliminate potential confusion.

**6.3.2 Timing.** Tick sheets, pull-tags, printing stopwatches, chip timing, or another approved form for accurate timing must be used in all sanctioned races.

**6.3.2.1 Chip Timing.** All National Championship races must use electronic chip timing and scoring provided by a professional timing service.

**6.2.3 Scoring.** The places of the top five (5) runners from each school should be recorded for team scoring. Sixth (6) and seventh (7) place runners should be used as displacing individuals, or “bumpers,” and all other runners from a team should be removed from team scoring results.

**6.3.4 Facilities.** It is the responsibility of the host institution to make available adequate race-day facilities including restrooms, accessible parking, and team camp areas.