

Masters Eligibility – General FAQ

There have been many questions arising concerning eligibility for various master's events. Here is a list of the most frequent:

1. Should my license say, “elite” or “master”?

The rest of the world is much stricter about maintaining the difference between Elite and Master. If you have any desire to ride UCI Master's races, including World Championships, your best bet is to select “master” on your license application. It never hurts and will not keep you out of Elite races in the United States since our rules always allow Masters to ride younger age groups.

2. What is a UCI team?

A UCI team means a team registered with the UCI as such. On the road this means a UCI Pro team, such as Columbia-High Road; a Professional Continental Team, such as BMC; or a Continental Team like Jelly Belly, Bissell, etc. It also includes UCI registered Mountain Bike teams, such as Subaru – Gary Fisher or Cannondale, and women's UCI teams, although we don't have any UCI women's teams at present.

3. What is a UCI Elite event?

A UCI Elite event is any race on the UCI international calendar for Elite riders, as defined by the UCI. Elite is generally an age group (23-29), not a statement of ability level that we normally define as a rider's category. In the USA, examples of Elite road events on the UCI international calendar include the Tour of California, Uninvest, Tour of Missouri, and a few others. These events can bear designations on the calendar as ME 2.1. While these designations may appear similar to NRC events, you will find the elite events in question listed on the UCI international calendar. Note that masters who ride in UCI elite events often lose their eligibility as masters under UCI rules and are then classified as elite riders regardless of their age. This is specific to certain disciplines as explained below.

4. What are Continental Championships?

The continental championships are a one day Championship held in a different country in the continent every year. They are listed on the UCI international calendar and have a separate designation as a Continental Championship. In the last few years they have occurred in Brazil, Venezuela, and Colombia. They were scheduled in Mexico in 2009 but were cancelled due to swine flu. Our National Championships **are not** the Continental Championships.

Eligibility for Masters World Championships

The UCI is very strict on who can ride the Masters World Championships. Unfortunately, the rules differ slightly by discipline. Below you will find what the eligibility requirements are for each discipline. Note that in general, you are eligible if you are 30 and over and do not lose your master's status via one of the specific rules.

Masters Road and Track World Championships

You can ride the Masters World Road or Track Championships unless you:

- Have been on a UCI team of any type (any discipline) in the current year
- Have ridden any elite event on the UCI calendar in the current year
(Remember those south of the border stage races and select UCI track events in the USA all count!)

Masters Cyclocross World Championships

You can ride the Master World Cyclocross Championships unless you:

- Have been on a UCI team of any type (any discipline) in the current season*
- Have competed in the Elite World Championships, Continental Championships, or World Cups in the current season.
- Are ranked in the top 200 for men or top 100 for women of the UCI CX classification anytime after the first publication after the National Championships weekend in Europe.

* Note that the season is not the same as the calendar year. The 2009 CX season begins September 1st, 2008 and ends in mid February 2009 at the World Championships.

Masters Mountain Bike World Championships

You can ride the Masters World MTB Championships unless you:

- Have been on a UCI team of any type (any discipline) in the current year
- Have ridden any elite event on the UCI calendar in the current year, with the exception of World Cups in Marathon and the World Championships in Marathon. In other words, riding any elite UCI event other than marathon races disqualifies you from riding Masters MTB World Championships.

Eligibility for Masters National Championships

Masters Road, Track, and Cyclocross National Championships

To be eligible you must be 30 years old or older, hold an annual USA Cycling license, and be a US Citizen or Permanent Resident. You must ride in your correct age class and may not ride down in age. In addition, there are a few massed-start events that require a specific numerical category. Please see the 2009 rulebook for specific details.

You must be classified as a master and not elite. Some riders who are over 30 are classified as elite per USA Cycling Road and Track rule 1A7, because they:

- Are or have been a member of any type of UCI team in 2009
- Have ridden an elite UCI World Cup, Olympic Games, World Championship or Continental Championship in the same discipline in 2009.

Any rider who has lost their master's status via the above is not eligible to compete in the Masters National Championships (nor any other masters event for that matter).

Masters MTB Championships

The USA Cycling National MTB Championships have classes for masters category 1 in roughly 5 year age brackets. To be eligible a rider must:

- Have an annual USA Cycling MTB license
- Be a US Citizen

Note that Pros have their own class at the event and riders with pro licenses, even if over 30, are not eligible for the masters categories.