

4. Observed Trials

Observed Trials events are conducted over an obstacle course, consisting of any number of sections that include such natural or man-made obstacles as mud, rocks, water, logs, walls, pallets, spools, etc. The riders attempt to negotiate each section without putting down a foot or hand (dab).

Each dab (foot or hand) adds a point to the rider's score. The rider with the lowest total score wins the event.

The regulations for Observed Trials can be found on the USA Cycling Website

4A. Observed Trials Definitions

4A1. Clean Section: No errors or dabs.

4A2. Course: The observed trials area within, and including the boundary markers, ribbons or flags. The course is made up of several sections.

4A3. Dab: Any contact, which provides support for the rider (other than pedal or skid plate).

4A4. Gate Foul: Not riding the sections in the proper order, not following the proper course markings, or entering or exiting the wrong gate.

4A5. Outside the Section: Either tire or axle passing outside the ribbon and flags, dabbing outside is one point.

4A6. Section: A single segment of the observed trials competition. There can be any number of sections at an observed trials competition, but the typical number is between five and ten. Sections should be of a natural and artificial mix, varying in length, difficulty and type of obstacles. A rider is in the section when the front axle of the bicycle passes through the start gate and is finished with the section when the front axle passes through the finish gate. Each section will test the skills of a rider in balance, strength, agility and endurance. The section should have a minimum width of 1 meter. Course boundary markers or ribbons should be between 4" and 18" from the ground. The ribbons marking section limits on the right should be red and on the left should be blue. Sections are marked according to class and category. A rider may begin at any section (unless specified otherwise) but once started must complete the course in order.

4A7. Stock Bike: A traditional unmodified mountain bike with a minimum 40" wheelbase, functional rear derailleur with five or more gears, without skid plate, chainring clearance of 10 ½" or less, chainrings on one side of the bottom bracket only, and wheels that are a minimum of 26" front and 24" rear.

4A8. Trials Bike: Modified bikes, minimum 20" wheels, brakes on each wheel, propelled by a pedal crank system.

4B. Observed Trials Scoring

4B1. The "checker or observer," designated by the Race Director, will be the maximum authority in a section. If there is more than one checker in a section, one of them will be considered the decision-maker, with assistance from the others.

4B2. Observed trials will be scored as shown below:

Performing the section with no dabs (clean section)	0 points
Over the prescribed time limit	5 points
1st dab	1 point
2nd dab	2 points
3rd dab	3 points
4th dab	4 points
5 or more dabs	5 points
2 dabs at the same time (foot and foot, foot and hand, foot and shoulder, knee and hand, hand and hand, etc.) Note: touching will be allowed, leaning not.	5 points
Leaning handlebar on the ground, tree or wall, etc.	1 point
Touching the hand to any object (other than oneself or bicycle)	5 points
<u>Other Penalties</u>	
Any help from end toes and heels	1 point
Outside the limits of section with either tire	5 points
Dabbing outside the section limits	1 point
Breaking the ribbon, knocking down marker	5 points
Two dabs on same side of bicycle	5 points
One foot crossing the longitudinal line of the bike while one foot is on the ground	5 points
Sliding one foot on the ground	3 points
Resting with pedal/skidplate (not toe clip) okay for 3 seconds, after that	5 points
Rider modifies the section	10 points
Losing score card	DQ
Gate foul	5 points
Pre-riding the course	100 points

4B3. An event time limit should be established. All sections will close at the end of the time limit and all score cards will be turned in by the end of the time limit. Additionally, there will be a section time limit that is set by the Race Director. The recommended section time limit of 180 seconds will remain constant for each section. The time will start when the rider's front axle passes through the start gate and ends when the rider's front axle passes through the exit gate. Each checker or checker assistant should be equipped with a stopwatch. The checker or checker assistant should advise the rider when there

is one minute left, 30 seconds left and 15 seconds left. Note: National events will have a maximum time limit of 180 seconds per section.

4B4. Ties. In the event of a tie in the top positions, the following tiebreakers will be used (in descending order):

- The rider with the most cleans;
- The rider with the most ones, twos, etc.;
- The rider winning the run-off or winning an unused section rerun.

4C. Trials Classes

4C1. The following classes are used for observed trials in the USA Cycling National Championships. There will be a men's competition and a women's competition for each class:

Stock Bike Class: This is for all riders on traditional unmodified mountain bikes with a minimum 40" wheelbase, functional rear derailleur with five or more gears, no skid plate, no more than 10 1/2" chainring clearance and chainrings on one side of bottom bracket only and a minimum of 26" front wheel and 24" rear wheel. A typical stock bike section might require the rider to negotiate tight turns on level ground, logs under 8", hills with questionable traction and drop-offs of less than two feet. Stock bike sections designed for riders with Beginner to Sport skill serve as an orientation to the flagging system and bike handling skills used in observed trials.

Trials (Modified) Bike Class: This is for competitors with modified bikes, minimum 20" wheels, brakes on each wheel, propelled by a pedal crank system. Trials bike sections can have turns that are tighter than the turning radius of most bikes, unlimited logs or rocks, with vertical faces, drop-offs, double logs plus all combinations of any type of surface traction.

4C2. During competition, a rider may repair or replace the bicycle between sections. If a rider replaces the bicycle, it must be of the same type and must be approved by the Event Director.

4C3. If a rider is competing in both stock and modified classes in the same competition, the rider must choose to complete one class or the other first. The rider must then do the entire competition for that class before starting the next class.