

Chapter 6

Mountain Bike Racing

6. Mountain Bike Racing

MOUNTAIN BIKE RULES OF THE TRAIL

All riders are expected to follow the industry-supported MTB code:

1. I will yield the right of way to other non-motorized recreationists.
2. I will use caution when overtaking another and will make my presence known well in advance.
3. I will maintain control of my speed at all times.
4. I will stay on designated trails.
5. I will not disturb wildlife or livestock.
6. I will not litter.
7. I will respect public and private Property.
8. I will be self-sufficient.
9. I will not travel solo when bike-packing remote areas.
10. I will observe the practice of minimum impact bicycling.
11. I will always wear a helmet whenever I ride.

6A. Definitions

6A1. Category 1: A mountain bike category where racing skills, strength and stamina have reached an exceptional level; racing is very competitive. Riders must have a racing age of at least 15 to race as a category 1 in an endurance discipline.

6A2. Category 2: A mountain bike racing category that reflects improved skills and developed strength and stamina. A Category 2 rider must advance to Category 1 as described in the upgrade section.

6A3. Category 3: A mountain bike category designed for the entry-level rider. Category 3 races help the rider understand the subtleties of the sport allowing one to experience the thrill of mountain biking. A Category 3 racer must advance to category 2 as described in the upgrade section.

6A4. Cannibalizing: Taking any part or component from one bicycle to repair another, or to improve the result of another.

6A5. Cross Country: A massed-start competition that is held on a circuit course comprising forest roads, forest or field trails, and unpaved dirt or gravel roads.

6A6. Downhill: A gravity time trial competition consisting of riders racing one at a time, against the clock, down a trail, jeep road, or fire road, or a combination of all three. Downhill races are generally technically challenging with courses often featuring a combination of high speeds, jumps, drop-offs, and other technical trail features.

6A7. Dual Slalom: A gated gravity competition where two competitors race head-to-head down two similar but separate courses. Following a qualification round, riders race against each other in an elimination format (heats) to determine a winner. Dual slalom courses often will feature bermed corners, jumps, and other technical trail features.

6A8. Endurance Events: A term used to describe the following types of events: Cross Country, point to point, hill climb, marathon, stage races, time trial, team time trial.

6A9. Gravity Events: Events that are gravity assisted, such as Downhill, Dual Slalom, Mountain Cross (4X), and Super D. The start line of Gravity Events is at a higher altitude than the finish line.

6A10. Marathon: Any mountain bike event between 37 and 62 miles (60-100 km).

6A11. Mountain Cross (also called Four Cross or 4X): A gated gravity competition where four competitors race together on a course which will often feature bermed corners, jumps, and other technical trail features. Following a qualification round, riders race against each other in an elimination format (heats) to determine a winner.

6A12. Observed trials: Mountain bike events conducted over an obstacle course including such natural hazards as mud, rocks, water, etc. composed of any number of sections. The riders attempt to negotiate each section without putting down a foot or hand.

6A13. Open class: All participants, regardless of license category, can compete in an open class.

6A14. Point to point: a cross-country event that is not contested on a circuit course but is either one long loop or the start and finish are in different places.

6A15. Pro: the highest ability category for both men and women in mountain bike racing. All MTB PRO racers must purchase an International License.

6A16. Short Track Cross Country (STXC): A shortened cross-country style race, designed to be spectator-friendly and easily televised.

6A17. Super D: A hybrid event combining aspects of the disciplines of Cross Country and Downhill racing. A competition which riders race on a course that has significantly more downhill than uphill sections. These courses are typically devoid of jumps and not as technical in nature as Downhill races; testing both a rider's endurance and bike handling skills.

6A18. 24 hour racing: a solo or team competition raced over a set period of time with the winner determined by the number of total laps completed. Formats include 6 hour, 12 hour, 18 hour, 24 hour etc.

6A19. Ultra-Endurance Events: A term used to describe the following types of events lasting more than 4 hours: Marathon, ultra-marathon, 6/ 12/ 24 (etc) hour racing.

6A20. Ultra-marathon: Any mountain bike event over 62 miles (100 km)

6B. Procedures common to all Mountain Bike Disciplines

6B1. Races for Junior, U23, or Elite riders that are National Championships or used to select riders for national teams or international competition shall use UCI rules. In all other events, these USA Cycling rules apply.

6B2. All riders must attend the pre-race briefing (riders' meeting) normally held at the staging area prior to the start.

6B3. Racers shall complete the entire event (or individual stage) on the same bicycle upon which the event was begun, with the exception of 24-Hour races as explained in section 6E.

6B4. Except as noted in section 6D, all repairs during an event will be performed by the individual racer. No outside support is permitted. Riders whose bicycles are not functional will be allowed to continue to the finish line, where they may be asked to withdraw from the race by the Chief Referee.

6B5. Except as noted in section 6D, all spare parts and tools shall be carried by the individual racer, to be used only by that racer; cannibalizing other bikes is not permitted. A racer can only use spare parts or tools that he/she started with at the beginning of the race.

6B6. The responsibility of keeping on the prescribed course rests with the rider. A rider may not leave the prescribed course unless ordered to do so by public authorities or a race official [disqualification]

6B7. Short-cutting and/or cutting trail switchbacks or course is not permitted and may result in disqualification. A rider is required to stay on the designated trail that is marked and or specified as the race course. It is the rider's responsibility to know the designated race course. Lack of tape or barriers on the course, or misplaced signs will not constitute an excuse for cutting the course.

6B8. Laws and ordinances of appropriate jurisdictions shall be observed during participation in any event.

6B9. A rider may be suspended for damaging or destroying public or private property. A rider may be held liable for all cost associated with the damage or destruction.

6B10. Only riders officially entered in the event may practice or compete on the designated race course, and they must wear their number plates and numbers while practicing. No rider previewing the course may interfere with a race in progress.

6B11. Riders should be given the opportunity to walk the course and participate in practice runs whenever practical.

6B12. Intentionally removing obstacles deemed by Officials to be part of the character of the race course is prohibited.

6C. Course Markings

In the interest of consistency in mountain biking, the following course markings are used universally by USA Cycling, UCI, and other International governing bodies.

6C1. Arrows mark the entire length of the official course. The arrows will be of a contrasting color on a white background, on signs measuring a minimum of 1' x 2' (30 cm by 60 cm). The signs indicate the course to follow, curves, intersections and warn of situations which are challenging for the competitors. Signs are posted along the course at regular intervals to indicate to competitors that they are on course.

6C2. An arrow placed 30 meters before the intersection should mark each intersection. Another arrow is placed at the

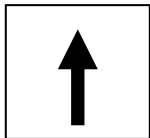
intersection. The direction of travel is then confirmed by another arrow located 30 meters further in the new direction.

6C3. In all hazardous situations, two or three arrows placed upside down must be located 30 meters before any obstacle on a circuit. A hazard on the circuit may be an obstacle, quality of the surface, or angle of the track, or any other condition not specifically addressed.

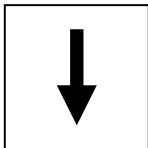
6C4. Directional arrows should always be placed on the right and at racing eye level, about three feet from the ground.

6C5. The course should also be marked every half-mile or 1 kilometer with signs indicating kilometers yet to be raced. There may be a sign indicating 1 kilometer to go.

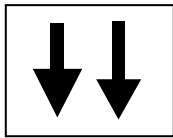
6C6. The signs that are to be used on a mountain bike circuit are shown below:



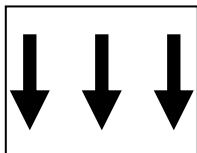
Straight ahead



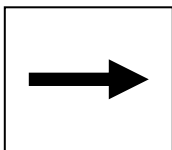
Slow, danger



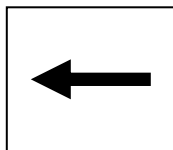
Slower, danger



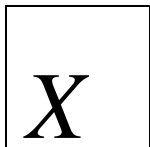
Slower, very Dangerous



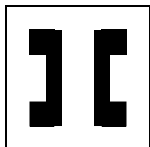
Course turns Right



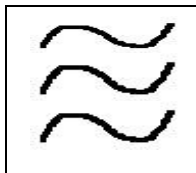
Course turns Left



Wrong way



Bridge ahead



Water crossing

6D. Feeding and Technical Assistance

6D1. Feed/Technical Assistance Zones are permitted in the following events:

- Ultra-Endurance Events (Marathon, 6-hour, 12-hour, 24-hour events)
- UCI Cross Country (XCO) events (UCI classes only)
- Cross Country National Championships for the UCI classes (Pro men, Pro women, Junior 17-18 men, and Junior 17-18 women). Note that when the category 1 junior 15-16 year old juniors are on the course at the same time as the category 1 junior 17-18 riders, they will also have access to Technical Assistance Zones.

6D2. Authorized technical assistance during a race consists of repairs to or the replacement of any part of the bicycle other than the frame and fork. Bike changes are not permitted and the rider must cross the finishing line with the same handlebar number plate that he had at the start.

6D3. Technical assistance and feeding shall normally only be given in the feed/technical assistance zones. Physical contact between the feeders/mechanics may only take place in these zones. However, technical assistance may be given between teammates outside of the technical assistance zones subject to the limitations of 6D2 above.

6D4. Each feed/technical assistance zone must be located on flat or uphill sections which are slow and wide enough for the purpose. The zones must be long enough and reasonably

evenly spaced around the course. Double feed/technical assistance zones are recommended.

6D5. For Olympic format cross-country events (XCO) 2 zones will be set up. For marathon format cross country events (XCM) at least 3 zones or opportunities for feeding/service will be set up.

6D6. Team staff working in the feed/technical assistance zones must wear team clothing identifiably similar to the clothing of the riders.

6D7. No rider may ride backwards on the course to reach a feeding/technical assistance zone. **Any rider doing so will be disqualified.**

6E. Endurance Events

6E1. Cross Country (XC)

A massed-start competition that is held on a circuit course comprising forest roads, forest or field trails, and unpaved dirt or gravel roads

(a) Water shall be available only in designated feed zone(s) as outlined by the Race Director. The Race Director will provide a neutral water zone with water for any race exceeding 90 minutes in length. Official water zones must be accessible and publicized before each race. Feeding (food handouts) may only be done in a designated feed zone. A handup to one rider must not cause other riders to slow down or veer off course.

(b) Racers riding bicycles have the right of way over racers pushing bicycles. When practical, racers pushing should stay on the least rideable portion of the path when being passed. A racer pushing or carrying his bicycle can overtake a racer riding his bicycle provided he does not interfere with the rider's progress. Lapped riders may be asked to withdraw at the Finish Line.

(c) Lapped riders must yield to overtaking riders from the same class and category. Riders should voice the command

"Track" when overtaking another. Lapped riders must yield to the passing rider on the first command.

(d) It is the responsibility of the passing rider from a different class and category to overtake safely. Riders should voice the command "Track" when overtaking another rider. Riders being passed must move over as quickly and efficiently as safely as possible.

(e) In the event two riders are vying for position, the leading rider does not have to yield his position to the challenging rider. However, a rider may not bodily interfere with the intent to impede another rider's progress. Traditional rules of racing apply: the leading rider owns the track.

6E2. Short Track Cross Country (STXC)

A shortened cross-country style race, designed to be spectator-friendly and easily televised. The course is 100 percent rideable regardless of terrain and weather conditions. It is a multiple lap race with lap times not less than 2 minutes for the fastest riders. Race duration is 25-30 minutes at the pro level. Spectator viewing and access are key.

6E3. Time Trial (TT)

A time trial competition involves individuals or teams who race against the clock.

(a) A start list shall be published no less than one hour before the start of the race. The order of start may be determined in various ways:

(i) Bib number sequence

(ii) Random start determined by the Race Director and/or Chief Referee

(iii) Seeding

(b) The Technical Guide shall specify the number of riders for a team time trial and the rider upon which the timing is determined.

(c) The Adult/Junior Time Trial is a two-person time trial where one rider must be a Junior (18 and under) and one must be an adult (19 and over). The timing shall be taken on the second rider to finish.

6E4. Stage Races (SR)

A mountain bike stage race is a series of races for which there are normally individual and team competitions. Individuals must complete each stage according to the specific procedures for the event to be eligible to start the next stage. A minimum number of riders on a team must complete each stage according to the specific procedures for the event to be eligible for overall team competition placings. A mountain bike stage race is held under the General Rules and Regulations of USA Cycling with the exception of these specific rules and regulations that apply to mountain bike stage racing.

(a) The Race Director, under the supervision of the Chief Referee or USA Cycling, shall prepare a complete set of race regulations (the Technical Guide) that specify how each stage will be conducted.

(b) Race Directors wanting to place a stage race on the UCI International Calendar must conform to the UCI Mountain Bike Stage Race Regulations available at www.uci.ch.

6E5. Marathon and Ultramarathon Cross Country (MT)

(a) Any event between 37 and 62 miles (60-100 km) is classified as a Marathon. A Race over 62 miles (100 km) is an ultramarathon.

(b) All USA Cycling Cross Country rules will apply.

(c) For National Championships, a Marathon course must be either a point to point, or a circuit disputed over one or two laps.

(d) The Race Director, under the supervision of USA Cycling or the Chief Referee, shall prepare a complete set of race regulations (the technical guide) that specify how each marathon or ultramarathon competition will be conducted.

6E6. Other Events

(a) Snow biking

(i) Snow biking is a USA Cycling permitted event that is held on snow. These competitions follow all USA Cycling rules and regulations. Any variation of the rules must be

communicated through race flier, communiqués, or rider meetings.

(ii) The following types of snow biking competitions are recognized:

Alpine Events

Downhill Cross Country
Super Giant Slalom
Giant Slalom
Dual Slalom
Biker Cross

Nordic Events

Point-to-Point
Criterium or Circuit

(b) Hill Climb

A Hill Climb is a competition of sustained climbing for which the finish line is located at a higher altitude than the start line. A Hill Climb may be a massed-start or an individual start event.

6E7. 24 Hour Racing

(a) A 24-hour mountain bike race is held under the General Rules and Regulations of USA Cycling.

(b) The Race Director, under the supervision of a USA Cycling Representative and/or the Chief Referee, shall prepare a complete set of race regulations (the race bible) that specify how each 24-hour competition will be conducted.

(c) Definitions for 24 Hour Racing

(i) Le Mans start -- a start where racers run to their bicycles. The run should not be more than 200 meters. It is not recommended for the run to go downhill.

(ii) Log Tent- Tent where racers log in and log out, hand the baton to the registrar, and cancel laps.

(iii) Transition area- area where riders completing a lap are exiting the course and riders starting a lap are entering the course. The Log Tent is located adjacent the transition area.

(iv) Team- a racing entity comprising of one or more racers

- (d)** Each team will designate a team captain and co-captain. Team captains will represent the team in all official correspondence and communications before, during and after the event. The co-captain may represent the team during the event when the captain is unavailable. Only team captains and co-captains may file protests. The team captain and/or co-captain must attend the pre-race meeting.
- (e)** 24 hour races will designate an area for pits. This area may be the expo area, the camping grounds, the hotel area or any area that is large enough to accommodate all teams equally. Each team is permitted to have only one pit area. This pit area must be set up in the designated area for pits. In the team's pit area, a racer may accept support from anyone. Only team members and race workers are allowed in the Log Tent / Transition areas while the race is being conducted.
- (f)** On the course racers may only receive mechanical assistance from another registered racer. A rider providing assistance to another rider must have entered the course under their own power, either on foot or on a bicycle. Short-cutting the course is not allowed. Any rider who has entered the course in support of another may bring equipment and tools and may even swap bikes with the rider in need of support. The cannibalizing of bikes is permitted in 24 hour racing.
- (g)** Water and food (hand ups) may be supplied to a racer, by anyone, anywhere on the course. Both the racer and persons providing a hand up must stay well clear of the course during the hand up, so as not to impede another racer.
- (h)** Only officially registered racers, credentialed media and event staff may ride on the designated race course during the event.
- (i)** Any racer found intentionally littering the course will be disqualified.
- (j)** All solo competitors and the first racer for each team must log-in at the Log Tent at least 5 minutes prior to the start of the race. Batons will be handed out upon log-in. Starting

racers must have their bikes pre-positioned in the Start/Finish area. The event will use a Le-Mans style start.

Racers must display their official bike handlebar number plate whenever on course. In the case of a bike swap, racers must swap the bike number to the new bike prior to continuing the race

(k) Batons: The 24 hour National Championships will utilize a baton hand off between laps. Racers must log-in and log-out on each lap at the Log Tent. The team baton must be passed from the racer logging out to the Registrar, who records the log-out time. The log-out time of the first racer automatically becomes the log-in time of the next racer logging-in regardless of whether or not there is a racer ready to log-in.

(l) A racer may ride consecutive laps. To ride a consecutive lap, the racer must log-out from the first lap by passing the baton to the Registrar. After the Registrar has recorded the log-out time for the first lap, and the log-in time for the consecutive lap the racer will receive the baton back from the Registrar. If this procedure is not followed, only one lap will be counted. Solo racers must comply with this procedure to record each and every lap.

(m) Loss of the baton will result in a 5-minute time penalty which will be applied to the team's finish time on its last lap and will accrue to the racer finishing that final lap. The Registrar will issue a new baton.

(n) It is the team's responsibility to verify that each racer is logged-in and logged-out correctly.

(o) Drafting other vehicles or a non-registered rider is grounds for disqualification.

(p) Lighting: Racers entering the course two hours before sunset and up to one-half hour before sunrise must have both primary and secondary light sources installed and in good working order. The primary light source must have a minimum rated power of 10 watts. The secondary or backup light source may be in the form of a penlight, flashlight or other lighting system.

(q) Quiet hours will be imposed from midnight until 8 a.m. During this time, noise must be kept to a minimum.

(r) Once on course, a racer is expected to complete the lap. However, the team has the option of canceling a racer's lap and restarting the lap from the Log Tent with a substitute, should the first racer be unable to complete the lap for any reason, including injury. Any team member can cancel a racer's lap by notifying the team's Registrar at the Log Tent and initializing the log sheet next to the canceled lap. If a team cancels a racer's lap and is restarting with a new racer, a new baton will be issued without penalty. However, the team's original baton must be returned to the registrar. The new racer inherits the log-in time of the canceled racer's lap. Once a cancellation has been made, it cannot be rescinded. The canceled lap does not count as a completed lap.

(s) Every team member must complete one lap except in the case of a report of occurrence (confirmation of an injury)

(t) Each team's final placing will be determined by the number of laps the team has completed and the sequential order of finish within the team's last lap. The last racer for each team must be logged in before the end of the 24th hour in order for the lap to be counted. Teams electing to stop racing before the end of the 24th hour must inform the registrar of that decision. Once the registrar has been informed of a team's decision to retire from the race, no more laps will be recorded.

(u) In the case of catastrophic failure due to weather or another extenuating circumstance that prevents the ongoing scoring of the event or creates a racing environment that is deemed too dangerous for the participants, the race may be called as of a certain time. Final results will be calculated based on each team's placement at the call time as determined by that team's last completed lap. This rule is intended to be exercised as a last resort, only in the most dire of situations, when no other means is available to continue scoring the event or when the potential for serious harm or loss of life becomes imminent.

(v) In the event that a racer stops to assist in the care of a seriously injured fellow racer which requires an EMS response, Ghost Rider procedures will be implemented. The EMS personnel will radio to the Log Tent the name and number of the assisting racer. Race staff will then inform the team of the assisting racer to prepare the next rider on their team. That rider will be allowed to start his lap based on the assisting racer's "ghost rider" lap time which will be based on the fastest of either the assisting riders average lap time or the team's average lap time.

6E8. Team Relay (TR)

(a) The Team Relay is a race among teams of a number of riders determined by the Race Director and/or the Chief Referee. It is held on a circuit, with each team member riding one lap of the course. The riders on the course will pass an item (generally a baton or wristband) to the next rider to take the course. The first team to have all of its members complete the course is the winner.

(b) General Cross-Country regulations apply to this event.

(c) The Race Director, under the supervision of a USA Cycling Representative or the Chief Referee, shall prepare a complete set of race regulations (the technical guide) that specify how each Team Relay event will be conducted.

6F. Gravity Events

6F1. Downhill

A downhill competition consists of riders racing one at a time, against the clock. The rider with the fastest time wins or advances to the next round. Racers will start at regular, predetermined start times and compete against others in their class and category. Please note that there are other variations of downhill competitions.

(a) There shall be practice on courses for competitors.

(b) A start list shall be published no less than one hour before start of race. Order of start may be determined in various ways:

- (i) Fastest time from seeding run.
- (ii) Bib number sequence.
- (iii) Random start determined by the Race Director and/or Chief Referee.
- (c)** Regular start intervals of 1 minute or 30 seconds are recommended.
- (d)** A rider causing a false start shall receive a penalty, as determined by the Chief Referee. The rider's bicycle must be stationary at the moment of the start.
- (e)** A passing rider has the obligation to pass safely.
- (f)** If a rider leaves the course, the rider must re-enter the course at the same spot where the rider exited the course. If a rider is unable to re-enter at the point of exit, and gains no advantage, the Chief Referee will determine if the rider is assessed a penalty.
- (g)** In the event that a rider experiences an unavoidable delay, the rider must report immediately to the Chief Referee or designated official to request a re-run. The chief Referee will make the determination if a re-run is granted.
- (h)** A rider missing a start time may or may not be given a new start time at the discretion of the Chief Referee or an official designee. At the pre-race meeting, the chief Referee will give the re-start procedure if any is applicable.
- (i)** If a course hold is issued, any rider that was stopped or who missed the scheduled start time must report immediately to the Chief Referee or official designee. The Chief Referee will then determine a re-run order and new start times if applicable. Riders must request the new start time within 15 minutes of the announcement of the course hold.
- (j)** The course must be marked with directional arrows or course tape to notify rider of course direction or hazards. The course must be appropriately marked before the first training session.

6F2. Dual Slalom

These are dual slalom guidelines; there are other options for conducting a dual slalom. Consult the race entry form and attend the mandatory riders meeting for more information.

- (a) Everyone will have at least one run for qualifying.
- (b) The fastest qualifier will be seeded against the slowest, the next fastest with the next slowest, etc.
- (c) Racers will race head-to-head on each course. The rider with the faster combined time will advance to the next heat.
- (d) A rider causing a false start shall receive a penalty, as determined by the Chief Referee. The rider's bicycle must be stationary at the moment of the start.
- (e) Alternating left and right, racers must ride around (not over) each gate, with both tire tracks passing on the outside of the gate. Gate judges located along the course, whose decision is final, determine this. A missed gate will be cause for a 1.5-second penalty in the final rounds; disqualification in the qualifying rounds.
- (f) After the qualification runs, in the final heats, a rider may lose by no more than 1.5 seconds. This maximum differential applies to slow runs or penalties resulting from jump-starts, missed gates or other infractions. A rider who does not finish the run will be eliminated.
- (g) Ties in split times can be broken in the following ways: If overall times are recorded, the tie is broken by comparing the overall times on the course that both riders completed. If only split times are recorded the winner of the last run is the overall winner.

(h) Dual Slalom Penalties and Disqualifications:

Different events will handle these penalties differently. They will be assessed at the discretion of the Chief Referee.

False start: +1.5 seconds in Final rounds; DQ in Qualification rounds

Changing from one course to another: +1.5 seconds in Final rounds; DQ in Qualification round

Interfering with the other racer: +1.5 or DQ in Final rounds; DQ in Qualification round

Not passing both wheels around a gate: +1.5 seconds in Final rounds; DQ in Qualification round

Missing a gate and going beyond the next gate:

+1.5 seconds in Final rounds; DQ in Qualification round

Not finishing in possession of the bike: +1.5 seconds in Final rounds; DQ in Qualification round

Missing start time by more than two minutes after the final call: Disqualification

6F3. Super D

The rules for Super D are largely the same as the rules for the Downhill, with the following addition:

(a) If there is an uphill start, a massed-start or LeMans start is acceptable.

(b) a **LeMans start** is a start where standing, forward facing riders run to their bicycles. The start signal may be given anytime after the 5 second warning

6F4. 4X

These are 4X guidelines; there are other options for conducting a 4X competition.

(a) Riders will have one qualifying run to advance to the final bracket. Ties on time will require a second run among the tied riders.

(b) Start Procedure

(i) All riders will be required to start at the same point, as designated by the Starter. A rider causing a false start shall receive a penalty, as determined by the Chief Referee. The rider's bicycle must be stationary at the moment of the start.

(ii) The riders in each group may choose their starting position in order of their qualifying times. The fastest rider gets the first choice of lane.

(iii) Once the Starter begins the cadence, the race is considered underway and the cadence may not be discontinued.

(iv) If two riders fall before the apex of the first obstacle, the heat will be restarted.

(c) The lead rider can take any line available on the track. This relates to any rider ahead of any other rider. Strategy plays a big part in 4X and taking the line of another rider is a

strategic and legal move. However, if the lead rider intentionally moves over so as to initiate malicious contact with another rider, or to force a rider off the track, then a disqualification may result.

(d) During the course of a race, should a rider leave the track as a direct result of contact with another rider, that rider must re-enter the track at the closest place to the exit point that is safe to all riders. The exited riders shall not advance position or miss any gates. A rider re-entering the track in an improved position may delay him/herself to the last position and then continue racing from there and pass through any missed gates.

(e) Should a rider leave the track purely on his/her own accord that rider must make sure no obstacles or gates have been missed before returning to the track safely. (Hay bales, cones, chalk lines or other markers signifying the inside turn are also considered obstacles. These markers on a straightaway including the finish area are not obstacles but only guidelines.)

(f) The riders are required to pass through each gate without straddling it, the wheels of the bicycle must follow a path within the course.

(g) Competition protests must be initiated immediately after the run to the designated official. The decision of the Referee is final. No post-race action is available.

(h) The fastest qualifier will be seeded against the slowest and bracketed accordingly.

(i) For championship events the riders will be seeded as follows:

If starting with the round of 64:

1,32,33,64; 16,17,48,49; 9,24,41,56; 8,25,40,57;
5,28,37,60; 12,21,44,53; 13,20,45,52; 4,29,36,61;
3,30,35,62; 14,19,46,51; 11,22,43,54; 6,27,38,59;
7,26,39,58; 10,23,42,55; 15,18,47,50; 2,31,34,63

If starting with the round of 32:

1,16,17,32; 8,9,24,25; 5,12,21,28; 4,13,20,29;
3,14,19,30; 6,11,22,27; 7,10,23,26; 2,15,18,31

If starting with the round of 16:

1,8,9,16; 4,5,12,13; 3,6,11,14; 2,7,10,15

If starting with the round of 8:

1,4,5,8; 2,3,6,7

If there are more than 5 riders but less than 12, start with the round of 8

If there are more than 11 riders but less than 24, start with the round of 16

If there are more than 23 riders but less than 48, start with the round of 32

If there are more than 47 riders start with the round of 64

For Championship events, Pro Men will start no higher than the round of 64, and Pro Women will start no higher than the round of 32

(j) For non-championship events the riders will be seeded as follows:

If the number of qualifiers is greater than 32 but less than 48, the riders can be seeded as:

1,32,36; 16,17,33; 9,24,40; 8,25,41;
5,28,44; 12,21,37; 13,20,26; 4,29,45;
3,30,46; 14,19,35; 11,22,38; 6,27,43;
7,26,42; 10,23,39; 15,18,34; 2,31,47

If the number of qualifiers is greater than 16 but less than 24, the riders can be seeded as:

1,16; 8,9,17; 5,12,20; 4,13,21;
3,14,22; 6,11,19; 7,10,18; 2,15,23

If the number of qualifiers is greater than 8 but less than 12, the riders can be seeded as:

1,8; 4,5,9; 3,6,10; 2,7,11

(k) The Chief Referee may alter the starting grids when necessary to arrive at heats with approximately equal numbers of participants in each one.

(l) Riders will race head to head with the first two riders from each heat advancing to the next round.

6G. 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). The regulations for Observed Trials can be found on the USA Cycling Website

6H. High School Racing

6H1. Introduction

(a) High school & middle school mountain bike racing is an individual sport with a team aspect. Riders will compete for individual championships while earning points for their teams, based on their finish places. Teams are divided into four categories:

High school male
Middle school male

High school female
Middle school female

(b) USA Cycling rules and regulations apply for high school/middle school mountain bike racing, unless otherwise specified in the race information.

6H2. Course Length and Difficulty

The ideal high school team XC course should be short enough to require multiple loops and composed of terrain that can be completed by Beginner riders. The length should be based on the ability of riders to complete the course within specific time frames. For High School riders, the time should be between 45 and 75 minutes. For Middle School riders, the time should be between 30 and 45 minutes.

6H3. Categories, Age Limit, Eligibility

High school categories are grades 9-12, and can be subdivided if there are enough competitors: Varsity, (grades 11-12), and Junior varsity, (grades 9-10). Middle school categories are grades 5-8. Riders competing in high school team racing shall not exceed 19 years of age at the time of competition. Graduating Seniors are eligible to compete for their team until July 31st of their graduating year. All other state and local rules regarding eligibility shall apply.

6H4. Team Definition and Scoring

A boy's team shall consist of five or more males from the same school. A girl's team shall consist of three or more females from the same school. Scoring is based on individual results that combine to produce team results. If a team does not have enough riders to satisfy these requirements, scoring defaults to the next highest number of team members. Home or alternative schooled riders should default to local and state rules regarding joining a team outside of their schools.