



2019

Rules & Guidelines

BUILDING STRONG  
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THROUGH INTERSCHOLASTIC CYCLING

NATIONAL INTERSCHOLASTIC CYCLING ASSOCIATION



## 2019 Rules & Guidelines

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## EFFECTIVE DATE

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This edition of the Minnesota High School Cycling League Rules and Guidelines is made effective July 1, 2019 (the “Effective Date”), for the 2019 Fall Season. All prior rules and regulations are superseded as of the Effective Date.

### RULE 1. CONSEQUENCE LEVELS

Some rule violations will result in consequences at one of the three following levels: Yellow, Orange, Red. However, the consequences can also be applied in other situations at a league official's discretion. Not all rules have consequences that fall within these three levels. Chief Referees and the League's Rules Committee are responsible for enforcing consequences and may also sanction other penalties that are not specified in the rulebook, but are deemed appropriate. Further, some of the rules addressing specific behavior and circumstances provides for consequences in addition to those contemplated by this rule, and shall apply as described therein.

See Rule 12 for more information.

#### YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

**First offense:** Warning.

**Subsequent offenses:** 5-minute penalty.

#### ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

**First Offense:** 5-minute penalty.

**Second offense:** 10-minute penalty.

**Third offense:** Disqualification from a race.

#### RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

**First offense:** Disqualification from the race of infraction, or the next race if the infraction occurs between races.

### RULE 2. APPLICABILITY

Throughout these rules, students registered with the League are referred to alternatively as students, student-athletes, racers, riders, or registrants.

As student-athletes, these rules apply to you during all practices, races, individual training rides, and at all other times while riding your bike during the fall and spring season, (see Appendix B for the dates defining the fall and spring seasons). While the penalties described in Rule 1, imposed for rule violations, are primarily tied to League events, coaches and parents are encouraged to enforce similar policies of safety, etiquette, and trail use during any off-season rides.

The League has discretion to suspend family members of a student-athlete based on red-level violations of the rulebook by that student or that student's family members, occurring at any time. Such discretion must be exercised by the League Rules Committee and its decision provided in writing, providing the basis for a period of such suspension. The period of suspension may extend up to the point where the student is no longer eligible to participate as provided under Chapter 6. Decisions by the League Rules Committee may be subject to review by the President of NICA and the National Rules Committee.

### RULE 2.1. WEARING HELMETS STRICTLY ENFORCED

Student-athletes must wear approved helmets at all times. Under no circumstances may a student be on a bicycle without a properly worn and securely fastened helmet, even when riding a very short distance. Helmets must also be worn when walking or running on the course with a bike due to a mechanical problem. See Rule 4 for additional requirements and details regarding helmets and for a list of approved helmet standards.

#### ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

### RULE 2.2. CONCUSSION RETURN-TO-PLAY POLICY

NICA has approved the return-to-play policies and procedures for student-athletes who have suffered concussions advocated by the US Department of Health and Human Services Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Minnesota Statute 121A.38 is the governs return-to-play concussion procedures in high school sports. A youth athlete shall be removed from participation if they exhibit signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or is suspected of sustaining a concussion or has sustained a concussion. The athlete may only return to the activity when they no longer exhibit signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion and have been evaluated by a provider trained and experienced in evaluating and managing concussions who has given written permission to again participate in the activity.

Each league must comply with its applicable state laws and its applicable state interscholastic federation or association return-to-play management protocols and procedures for a student-athlete who has sustained a concussion or head injury.

In the event there are no such applicable laws or procedures, the League must comply with the following rules and protocols:

An athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a league activity shall be immediately removed from the activity for the remainder of the day, and shall not be permitted to return to the activity until he or she is evaluated by a licensed health care provider. The athlete shall not be permitted to return to the activity until he or she receives written clearance to return to the activity from a licensed health care provider. If the licensed health care provider determines that the athlete sustained a concussion or a head injury, the athlete shall also complete the 7-day minimum graduated return-to-play protocol provided by the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) under the supervision of a licensed health care provider. See the CIF website or download the form here:

[http://static.psb.in.com/e/4/ec33zjmqdi511/CIF\\_Concussion\\_Return\\_to\\_Play\\_Protocol.pdf](http://static.psb.in.com/e/4/ec33zjmqdi511/CIF_Concussion_Return_to_Play_Protocol.pdf)

Following a review of the state protocols for current NICA leagues, it was determined that the 7-day minimum waiting period adopted by the CIF was the longest mandatory period applied to a graduated return-to-play protocol. While NICA recognizes that every student who has suffered a concussion must follow an individualized course of recovery overseen by a licensed medical professional and that time alone is not a determining factor in every recovery, studies have shown that although a majority of athletes will become asymptomatic within a week, longer periods of recovery of 7-10 days have demonstrated benefits in recovery of full cognitive function in younger athletes (see citations 104–108 in the *Clinical Report — Sports-Related Concussion in Children and Adolescents* in “Pediatrics” [Volume 126, #3, September 2010] published by the American Academy of Pediatrics).



### RULE 2.3. PRACTICE CONTROLLED RIDING

Student-athletes must practice safe riding techniques and be in control of their bicycles at all times. Riding out of control or with excessive speed is not tolerated. Having a reckless attitude or taking dangerous risks is not tolerated. A dangerous risk is defined as willingly attempting anything that is beyond one's ability to control the bike or puts someone else in danger (see Rule 6.10).

#### YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

### RULE 2.4. AVOID RIDING ALONE

Student-athletes are encouraged ride with at least one other person whenever possible. If a student plans to ride alone, that student should alert someone to the general location of the ride, the planned route, and the approximate length of the ride and anticipated time of return.

### RULE 2.5. LEGAL MOUNTAIN BIKING TRAILS ONLY

As representatives of NICA, the League, and our sport, student-athletes must ride only on authorized trails. Students found riding on illegal trails at ANY time, whether on team rides or on their own, will face consequences. It is the student's responsibility to know which trails are legal for bikes. Building unauthorized trails or adding unauthorized features, such as berms or jumps, is also unacceptable and carries the same consequences.

#### RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

### RULE 2.6. OBEY TRAFFIC LAWS

Student-athletes are required to obey all traffic laws. Always ride to the right side of the road and in bike lanes when available; stop at all stop signs and red lights; signal your turns; use required lights and reflectors at dusk/night; and do not ride on sidewalks. Specific laws that pertain to bicyclists in your state can be found at The League of American Bicyclists: <http://www.bikeleague.org>

### RULE 2.7. RESPECT DRIVERS, PEDESTRIANS & OTHER TRAIL USERS

Be respectful and courteous by staying as far to the right as practical and by riding single file while riding on roads and trails. Let your fellow trail users know you're coming. A friendly greeting or bell is considerate and works well; don't startle others. Show your respect when passing by slowing to a walking pace or even stopping. Anticipate other trail users around corners or in blind spots. Yielding means slow down, establish communication, be prepared to stop if necessary and pass safely. You are riding slow enough when you can say 'hello' and the trail user can say 'hello' back.

### RULE 2.8. PASSING HORSEBACK RIDERS

When approaching equestrians, call out or sound a warning and stop whether you are seen or not. Ask for instructions from the equestrian on how to pass safely.

### RULE 2.9. REPRESENT YOUR NICA LEAGUE & MOUNTAIN BIKING

Recognize that, as a NICA student-athlete, you represent NICA, your League, and high school mountain bike racing and cycling in general. This is true at all times, not just at races, and particularly when you are at a bike shop, out on the trail, and regardless of whether you are wearing your team uniform, a NICA or League jersey, or any other cycling gear.

### RULE 2.10. POSITIVE SPORTING ATTITUDE

Student-athletes are expected to display an excellent sporting attitude during all NICA and League events and should treat all other students, coaches, spectators, and officials with respect. Fair play and respectful, kind, supportive behavior is expected of all students, coaches, and parents. Profanity in any situation is not acceptable.

#### ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

### RULE 2.11. LEAVE NO TRACE

Be sensitive to the dirt beneath you. Recognize different types of soils and trail construction; practice low-impact cycling. Wet and muddy trails are more vulnerable to damage. When the trail bed is soft, consider other riding options. Ride it, don't slide or skid. Ride through mud puddles, not around them widening the trail. Stay on existing trails and do not create new ones. Don't cut switchbacks or otherwise modify the existing trail. Be sure to pack out at least as much as you pack in.

Littering is not permitted at any NICA or League event. Student-athletes caught littering, if determined to be intentional, are subject to a discretionary 5-minute time penalty.

## RULE 2.12. PLAN AHEAD

Know your equipment, your ability, and the area in which you are riding, and prepare accordingly. Be self-sufficient at all times, keep your equipment in good repair, and carry necessary gear for changes in the weather, the onset of darkness, or other inclement conditions. A well-executed trip is a satisfaction to you and not a burden to others. Always wear a helmet (see Rule 2.1) and appropriate safety gear.

## RULE 2.13. MUSIC PLAYERS & HEADPHONES

Student-athletes are not allowed to race or ride with headphones or other portable musical devices. Headphones are permitted while riding a stationary trainer.

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

## RULE 2.14. CELL PHONES

Student-athletes may not answer a cell phone or make cell phone calls while riding a bike. Students must safely come to a complete stop, have both feet on the ground, and be clear of traffic flow in order to use their cell phones.

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

## RULE 2.15. RISK ACCEPTANCE

All student-athletes who participate in any of the events associated with NICA and the League including, without limitation, races, training rides, clinics, camps, and practice skill sessions, do so at their own risk. Whether or not riders are registered with the League, no liability shall be attached to NICA, the League or any of its officials, coaches, parents, and participants with respect to any loss or injury sustained or caused by anyone participating in these events.

By participating in a race or camp conducted by NICA or the League, a student-athlete, or a parent or legal guardian who permits a minor to participate, acknowledges understanding and acceptance of the regulations covering the event.

If a student-athlete suffers a concussion, he or she may not participate in team training or league competition before providing written clearance to return to such activities from a licensed health care provider.

## RULE 2.16. RELEASE FORMS

All student-athletes must submit the League's registration forms, which include a General Release Form, Code of Conduct agreement, a Medical Form, and a Media Form. The forms must be signed by a legal guardian, except in the case of students who are at least 18 years old or older. Parents or legal guardians who permit a minor to participate in League races or camps, acknowledge understanding and acceptance of the regulations covering the event and agreement to the terms of the League's Release forms and those terms shall be binding even when no proper entry form for a student has been signed and submitted.

## RULE 2.17. USADA BANNED SUBSTANCES

Student-athletes are subject to all U.S. Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) rules pertaining to anti-doping. The use of performance enhancing substances, as listed by USADA, will result in the immediate disqualification from one full season or the equivalent number of races spanning two seasons. A list of banned substances is available at the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency website — click on the Substances link at [www.usada.org](http://www.usada.org) to find the current Prohibited List.

## RULE 2.18. SUBSTANCE USE

### A. *Deference and Discretion:*

NICA and the Leagues place a high priority on early recognition and treatment of alcohol and drug problems.

- (1) *Deference to Other Parties:* NICA and the Leagues reserve the right, in their sole discretion, to defer to and support the decision of the coach, the school, or the school district in responding to any instance of substance use.
- (2) *NICA Unlimited Discretion:* NICA retains unlimited discretion to modify the penalty/penalties prescribed by these rules, including, but not limited to applying a more or less severe penalty depending on the circumstances.
- (3) *Voluntary Referral:* Any student who requests help, or is referred voluntarily, prior to a violation will not be suspended from participation if he or she successfully completes the appropriate in-school educational program or community treatment program.

### B. *Tobacco Use:*

Students who choose to use tobacco products will remain eligible for participation only if they provide evidence that they have enrolled in a stop-smoking (or chewing) class to begin immediately. They must participate, provide proof to their coach when they have completed the class, and refrain from use in the future. Continued use will result in the consequences laid out below for Alcohol and Drug Use.

C. *Alcohol and Drug Use:*

(1) First violation:

- a. After confirmation of the first violation, the student will lose eligibility for three races.
- b. If the student wishes to continue participation, he or she must continue to attend and participate in regular practice with his/her team.
- c. In addition to the above conditions, the student will be required to attend a minimum of six educational group sessions regarding alcohol and drug abuse.

(2) Second violation:

On the confirmation of the second violation, the student will lose eligibility for an additional three races. Sections 1.b and 1.c above must also be honored if the student chooses to continue participation.

(3) Third and subsequent violations:

- a. On the confirmation of the third or subsequent violations, the student will lose eligibility for participation for an additional six races.
- b. On the third or subsequent violations, if the student becomes a participant in an alcohol and/or drug treatment program on his or her own volition, the student may be eligible for participation after a minimum of six weeks.

## RULE 2.19. LIST OF OTHER BANNED SUBSTANCES (B-LIST)

Caffeine is an addictive substance that enhances performance. The League deems caffeinated products as inappropriate for young student-athletes. Caffeinated sport products such as bars, gels, and sport drinks, are banned from League races, practices, and other activities. The consumption of soda and coffee products containing caffeine by student-athletes at NICA and League races and camps is banned.

Creatine, Guaraná Root, and Taurine are also substances banned from consumption at NICA and League races and camps.

Students need to be very careful as many energy drinks contain these substances. Students are responsible for knowing the ingredients of the products they consume. Pleading ignorance will not constitute a defensible position.

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

## RULE 2.20. ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR NOT TOLERATED

No student-athlete may abuse, assault, or do battery to any other student-athlete, official, spectator, or anyone connected with or attending any NICA or League event. An assault is an unlawful attempt, coupled with the present ability, to commit a violent injury on the person of another. A battery is any willful and unlawful use of force or violence upon the person of another. Unsafe racing practices including swerving, suddenly stopping, willfully crashing into another rider, grabbing another student, or pushing another student may be abusive behavior, or possibly assault and battery.

RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

## RULE 2.21. SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

The League strictly prohibit sexual harassment in any form, including verbal, physical, and visual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual advances, or visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior and includes harassment of a person of the same sex or based on gender. Sexual harassment includes: unwanted sexual advances or visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, displaying of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; verbal conduct such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs and jokes, verbal sexual advances or propositions; and physical conduct such as touching or blocking movements.

Any student who believes he or she has been sexually harassed by an employee, agent, or another student should promptly report the facts of the alleged incident(s) and the name of the individual involved to any adult school staff member or League representative with whom they feel comfortable. That person must report the incident to the school site administrator or, if the administrator is the

alleged harasser, to the Superintendent. The initiation of an allegation of sexual harassment by a student will not adversely affect matters pertaining to his or her status in any League program or activity.

If any student, coach, parent, volunteer, or employee feels they have been sexually harassed at a NICA or League event, they should report the incident immediately to their League director or NICA director. If any student, coach, parent, volunteer, or employee feels they have been a victim of abuse, assault, or battery at a League event, they should report the incident immediately to their League director or NICA director. All reports will be handled in a confidential manner.

#### RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

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## Chapter 3: CATEGORY PLACEMENT

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### RULE 3. CATEGORY PLACEMENT

Category placement and division rules are designed to facilitate and promote fair, safe, and challenging competition. Placement of student-athletes is based primarily on their League race results and end-of-season rankings from the preceding year. Students do not choose their category, but are placed into categories according to the rules below. Students seeking an alternative placement may petition to the League director for an exception (see Rule 3.6).

All references to middle school teams, riders, and grades are applicable only in leagues that include middle schools.

#### RULE 3.1. LEAGUE TIERS

The number of individual categories is based on the number of registered student-athletes in the League. A league that can accommodate all registrants with no more than a single category for each grade level is a Tier 1 league. A league that must run multiple events for a single grade level to fairly accommodate all students is a Tier 2 league. The guidelines for the League's tier are as follows:

Tier 1: Up to 249 registered student-athletes

Tier 2: 250 or more registered student-athletes

The League director shall make the final Tier 1 or Tier 2 status determination.

#### RULE 3.2. TIER CATEGORIES

Under Tier 1, there is a single division with up to ten separate grade level categories:

<u>Boys Categories</u>	<u>Girls Categories</u>
Middle School	Middle School
Freshman	Freshman
JV2	JV2
JV3	JV3
Varsity	Varsity

Under Tier 2, there are multiple divisions with the same grade level categories. At the discretion of the league director, categories may be combined, split or otherwise adjusted as needed:

<u>Boys Categories</u>	<u>Girls Categories</u>
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Freshman, Div. I	Freshman
Freshman, Div. II	JV2
JV2, Div. I	JV3
JV2, Div. II	Varsity
JV3, Div. I	
JV3, Div. II	
Varsity	

#### RULE 3.3. TIER 2 DIVISIONS

Tier 2 teams are assigned to a division based primarily on team size so that smaller teams compete against each other and larger teams compete against other. Other factors, e.g., geographical limitations, may be considered.

If required to comply with race field size limitations, the same categories in different divisions may be run in separate races. The goal is to have riders from teams in the same division competing against each other in the same races. However, at the League director's discretion, the allocation into separate races may be based on other factors to achieve a more balanced and fair competition than could be achieved from an allocation based solely according to team divisions.

Whenever separate races of the same categories are run, separate medals must be awarded.

#### RULE 3.4. TRANSGENDER STUDENT-ATHLETES

NICA recognizes the value of participation in NICA and League events for all student-athletes. NICA and its leagues are committed to providing all students with the opportunity to participate in these events in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

NICA prohibits discrimination based on a student's actual or perceived sex and gender. Gender includes a person's actual or perceived sex as well as his or her gender identity and expression.

A student wishing to compete in a category consistent with his or her gender identity may so notify the League director.

The student's school will be requested to determine the student's eligibility to participate in the category consistent with his or her gender identity.

If the student's school declines to make a determination regarding such eligibility, then the League director shall confirm the gender identity asserted by the student through documentation from the parent, guardian, guidance counselor, or from a doctor, psychologist, or other medical professional.

If a student has been deemed eligible to compete in a category consistent with his or her gender identity, that eligibility is granted for the duration of the student's participation in the League.

All discussions and documentation regarding a student's gender identity shall be kept confidential to the extent permitted by applicable state law, unless the student and his or her family make a specific request in writing.

#### RULE 3.5. CATEGORY PLACEMENT RULES

##### A. *Summary*

- Categories are based on grade level. A student-athlete's prior performance may factor into placement. Individual race results and a student's end-of-season overall standings dictate placement from season to season. Separate rules apply for first-year leagues that do not have a prior season's results. All race results and overall season standings are available at the League website.
- Students should discuss their racing categories with their coaches well in advance of the racing season to determine if submitting a petition might be appropriate.
- Students who did not compete in the prior year and have no results are placed into the category that corresponds to their grade level, except that 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders with no prior results are placed into JV2.
- Petitions for exceptions to the category placement criteria are limited for each grade level to certain categories. See Rule 3.6 for the permissible petition upgrades.

- Middle-schoolers may petition to upgrade into freshman category. B. *Placement Criteria*

*Category*

<b>Middle School</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> graders only.*
<b>Freshman</b>	9th grade student-athletes or middle school athletes who petitions into the category
<b>JV2</b>	Sophomore, Junior and Senior student athletes
<b>JV3</b>	<p>Freshman student-athletes who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Placed in the top 10% in any two races, or</li> <li>○ Placed in the top 15% of the overall season standings, or</li> <li>○ Petitions into the category.</li> </ul> <p>JV 2 student-athletes who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Placed in the top 25% in any two races, or</li> <li>○ Placed in the top 30% of the overall season standings, or</li> <li>○ Raced in JV3 the previous year but did not upgrade to varsity, or</li> <li>○ Petitions into the category.</li> </ul>
<b>Varsity</b>	<p>Freshman student-athletes who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Petitions into the category.</li> </ul> <p>JV 2 student-athletes who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Petitions into the category.</li> </ul> <p>JV 3 student-athletes who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placed in the top 25% in any two races, or</li> <li>• Placed in the top 30% of the overall season standings, or</li> <li>• Petitions into the category.</li> </ul>

**RULE 3.6. PETITIONING FOR A PLACEMENT CRITERIA EXCEPTION**

- A. In general, exceptions to the Placement Criteria are discouraged and should be granted only under extraordinary circumstances. Petition upgrade options are limited to the following:
- (1) Middle school students may only petition to race in the Freshman category.
  - (2) 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders may only petition to race JV3 and Varsity;
- B. It is NICA and League policy that student-athletes compete in appropriate competitive peer groups and to prevent strategic gamesmanship in category placement. Petitions for an upgrade in categories should, therefore, only be granted upon a showing that:
- a. The student-athlete’s performance and experience level clearly exceeds the level of all other riders competing in the category designated under the Rule 3.5 Placement Criteria — i.e., no other rider in the same category has a reasonable chance of being competitive with the student seeking the upgrade; and
  - b. The upgrade will place the student into a more appropriate competitive peer group.
- C. Successful petitions are subject to revocation at any time at the League director’s sole discretion, in which event the student shall be placed in the appropriate category according to the Placement Criteria. Individual and team penalties may be assessed, at the League director’s sole discretion, for any change in categories for a rider that is subsequently revoked on grounds that the change was contrary to NICA and League policies.
- D. Petitions for an exception to the Placement Criteria and request for placement in another category may be submitted to the League director or the League’s Rules Committee or any other individual or committee designated by the League director or the League’s board of directors. To petition for such an exception, students must complete and submit the petition form found at the League’s website according to the instructions provided on the form.
- E. The petition requires a coach’s comments and signature. If there is no coach, the student must contact the League director and a coach advisor will be appointed. A parent may be approved as the advisor. The League director or the League’s Rules Committee shall consider the petition and render a decision in a timely manner.
- F. All petitions for the first race of the season must be submitted at least two weeks prior. Petitions after the first race must be submitted by midnight on Tuesday prior to the next race. No petitions will be considered after the fourth race of the season. Allow a

minimum of five business days from the date of submission for a decision on the petition. Pending the outcome of the petition, the petitioning student must compete in the category determined by the Placement Criteria.

See Rule 8.2 regarding the non-transfer of individual points incident to a student-athlete's mid-season change in categories.

### **RULE 3.7. RACING THE WRONG CATEGORY**

Student-athletes are responsible for knowing, understanding, and following the category placement rules and the Placement Criteria. Any questions should be directed to the League director or the Chief Referee at [referee@minnesotamtb.org](mailto:referee@minnesotamtb.org).

Students who race in the wrong category shall be disqualified from that race and in addition, at the League director's discretion, will be disqualified from participation in the next event.

**RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES**



## Chapter 4: EQUIPMENT RULES

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### RULE 4. WEARING HELMETS STRICTLY ENFORCED

A. Student-athletes must wear an approved helmet at all times. See below for the list of approved helmet standards. Under no circumstances should a student be on their bicycle without a helmet fastened to their head, even when riding a very short distance. Students must also keep their helmet on when walking or running on the course with a mechanical (see Rule 2.1). In addition:

- Helmet straps must be adjusted to the extent that two fingers can be pushed under the strap, whereas three fingers would be difficult.
- Helmets should not have any cracks or dents from previous falls or mishandling.
- Helmets should be the correct size with little to no side-to-side or front-to-back movement.
- Full-face helmets are not allowed without written permission from the student's league.
- The helmet rules are not applicable to riders warming up on bikes that are securely mounted to stationary trainers.

#### ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

B. Approved Helmets meet one of the following standards:

- a. U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) standard for bicycle helmets.
- b. Snell Memorial Foundation Standard "B" or "N" series.
- c. American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standard F-1447.
- d. European Committee for Standardization (CE EN1078) standard for bicycle helmets.

### RULE 4.1. MOUNTAIN BIKES ONLY

Student-athletes and coaches must use mountain bikes that have 26- to 29-inch wheels with tires not narrower than 1.75 inches. In addition:

- Tires must have knobbies – no slick tires are permitted;
- No road bikes or mountain bikes equipped with drop bars;
- No cyclocross bikes.

If a student-athlete is unable to ride a mountain bike with 26- to 29-inch wheels due to his or her height, competing on a mountain bike with smaller wheels is permitted.

### RULE 4.2. NO SINGLE-SPEED BIKES

Pushing big gears has been shown to be detrimental to the joints (specifically the knees) of young student-athletes. Bikes must have multiple gears including at least five cogs in the rear.

### RULE 4.3. FRONT AND REAR BRAKES

Bicycles must have fully operational front and rear brakes. Brakes must be adjusted to provide significant stopping power. Brake pads must not be worn below recommended limits. It is recommended that bicycles be inspected by a mechanic before every race.

### RULE 4.4. HANDS ON BARS; NO BAR ENDS

All riders must race with their hands holding the bars within reach of the brake levers. For safety reasons, no bar ends (forward pointing handle grip extensions) may be used.

### RULE 4.5. HANDLEBAR END PLUGS AND STEM CAPS REQUIRED

For safety reasons, handlebar end plugs and stem caps are required.

### RULE 4.6. PENALTY FOR OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE

Student-athletes must repair their own flat tires and mechanical problems and carry their own tools, tubes, etc. If outside assistance, parts, or tools, are provided, a 5-minute penalty will be assessed. The student must report such an occurrence of outside assistance before the end of the protest period that precedes the award ceremony. The student must report to a Scoring Official, Course Marshal, or Referee. If a student does not self-report the penalty may be doubled.

No penalty will be assessed for any prescription medical item or device (e.g., inhalers, EpiPens, etc.) given to a rider along the course or in the feed zone for safety or medical reasons.

#### **RULE 4.7. REPAIR BIKES OFF THE TRAIL**

In the case of a broken bicycle, or a dropped chain, or other mishap, students must clear the way and not block the trail for other riders.

#### **RULE 4.8. SWITCHING BIKES**

Student-athletes must complete the entire race on the same bicycle upon which the race was begun. A 10-minute penalty applies for switching bicycles in a race.

#### **RULE 4.9. BRING THE BIKE**

Student-athletes must not progress on the race course unaccompanied by a bike. In the case of an inoperable bike, students may progress along the course with their bike to the finish line. However, they must stay on the course, and must not obstruct the progress of other racers.

#### **RULE 4.10. FOOTWEAR**

Student-athletes must wear appropriate footwear. Footwear must be fully enclosed and fastened with either straps, buckles, or laces.

#### **RULE 4.11. EYE PROTECTION**

Eye protection is strongly recommended. Unless wet, foggy, and/or muddy lenses impair vision, students should ride and race with protective eyewear.

#### **RULE 4.12. NUMBER PLATES**

Student-athletes must affix their assigned official League number plate to their bikes at League races. The number plate should be attached with at least three fasteners and must be on the bike at all times before and after competing, including the pre-ride, and should also remain on the bike at any time the student is riding at the event.

### RULE 5. CROSS-COUNTRY (XC) RACE DEFINITION

A cross-country mountain bike race is a mass start competition held on a circuit course comprised of forest roads, forest or field trails, and unpaved dirt or gravel roads.

#### RULE 5.1. COURSE LENGTH AND DIFFICULTY

The ideal NICA cross-country race course has a circuit short enough to require multiple laps for a race and includes terrain that can be completed by beginner riders. The number of laps should be determined according to the riders' ability to complete the race within a specific time. Lap counts or race duration may be adjusted due to course conditions, length, difficulty, or any other factor. The event times should be:

- *Middle school leagues only*: 20 – 45 minutes;
- 45 to 60 minutes, Freshman and JV2;
- 60 to 90 minutes, JV3 ; and
- Under 90 minutes, Varsity.

#### RULE 5.2. SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR COURSES

NICA cross-country courses must be designed for maximal safety. Course guidelines are:

- Uphill starts or some climbing in first half-mile;
- 33-inch wide start lanes;
- Uphill finishes;
- Uphill feed zones;
- Inspection and addressing of:
  - off-camber turns and ruts;
  - large or loose rocks;
  - sharp turns on fast sections;
  - water crossings;
  - areas where excessive speeds can be achieved; and
  - other obvious injury vectors.

#### RULE 5.3. COURSE SIGNAGE AND MARKINGS

Arrows signs, other signs, and ribbons should mark the directions along the entire length of the official race course. The signs and ribbons indicate the course to follow, curves, intersections, and warn of situations that are potentially dangerous for the racers. Signs are posted along the course at least every kilometer to let the riders know that they are on course.

#### RULE 5.4. STANDARD TURN ARROW LOCATIONS

An arrow sign is to be placed 30 meters before each intersection to indicate an upcoming turn and a second arrow sign is placed at the intersection. The direction of travel through the intersection is then confirmed by a third arrow sign located 10 meters farther along the race-course in the new direction. Wrong way signs are used to mark all potential wrong turns.

#### RULE 5.5. CUTTING THE COURSE NOT PERMITTED

In the event a rider goes off course, whether intentionally, inadvertently, or to switch or repair a bike, he or she is not permitted to gain advantage from leaving the course and must make best efforts to re-enter the course at the same location he or she went off-course.

In the event a rider re-enters the course at a different location, if the League director determines that an advantage was gained as a result, without considering the time taken for a bike switch or bike repair, a time penalty shall be assessed against the rider.

#### RULE 5.6. RACE NOTIFICATION SIGNS

In the case of wrong turns that lead away from the course, the back of the wrong way sign shall be used to notify riders and passersby that a race is in progress. If the direction along a wrong way leads to the interior of the course, a notification on the back of the sign so indicating is optional.

## RULE 5.7. HAZARD SIGNS

For all hazardous situations along a race course circuit, caution signs or two or three arrow signs placed upside down must be located 30 meters preceding the hazard. A hazard on the circuit may be due to an obstacle, the quality of the surface, the angle of the track, or any other condition not specifically addressed that presents additional risk to riders.

## RULE 5.8. STANDARD HEIGHT OF SIGNS

Course signage should, whenever possible, be placed on the right side of the course and raised so the bottom of the sign is 1.5 to 3 feet from the ground.

## RULE 5.9. DISTANCE SIGNS

The course may be marked every kilometer with signs indicating distance remaining to the start/finish line.

## RULE 5.10. USE OF RIBBON

Ribbon may also be used to mark turns, wrong ways, and other hazards. Ribbon should always be arranged parallel to the ground.

## RULE 5.11. LIST OF SIGNS

Directional and warning signs for mountain bike circuits are:

- Arrows indicating course direction (Rule 5.3) turns (Rule 5.4) and hazards (Rule 5.7);
- Caution;
- Wrong Way (Rule 5.4 and Rule 5.5);
- EMS Course Access Point;
- Alternate route on course; and
- Dismount required (off bike).



### RULE 6. ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

Each league's race series is open to all students who attend public or private school or who are homeschooled for high school (grades 9–12) and, in some leagues only, middle school (grades 6-8), within the league's region, defined as follows:

**NorCal High School Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2001*)

North of the east-west line across the state of California comprised of the northern boundaries of San Luis Obispo, Kern, and San Bernardino counties (Fresno is in NorCal and San Luis Obispo is in SoCal).

**SoCal High School Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2009*)

South of the east-west line across the state of California comprised of the northern boundaries of San Luis Obispo, Kern, and San Bernardino counties (Fresno is in NorCal and San Luis Obispo is in SoCal).

**Colorado High School Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2010*)

The entire state of Colorado (student-athletes and teams located within the state of Wyoming may participate in the Colorado League's events and races, and the Colorado League may host events within the state of Wyoming).

**Minnesota High School Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2012*)

The entire state of Minnesota.

**Texas Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2012*)

The entire state of Texas.

**Utah High School Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2012*)

The entire state of Utah.

**Arizona Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2013*)

The entire state of Arizona.

**New York Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2013*)

The entire state of New York.

**Tennessee Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2013*)

The entire state of Tennessee.

**Alabama Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2014*)

The entire state of Alabama.

**Georgia Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2014*)

The entire state of Georgia.

**Virginia Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2014*)

The entire state of Virginia.

**Wisconsin Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2014*)

The entire state of Wisconsin.

**Idaho Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2015*)

The entire state of Idaho.

**Nevada Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2016*)

The entire state of Nevada.

**Arkansas Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2016*)

The entire state of Arkansas.

**Pennsylvania Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2016*)

The entire state of Pennsylvania.

**New Jersey Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2016*)

The entire state of New Jersey.

**N. Carolina Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2016*)

The entire state of North Carolina.

**Maryland Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural season 2018*)

The entire state of Maryland.

**Oregon Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural Season 2018*)

The entire state of Oregon.

**W. Virginia Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural Season 2018*)

The entire state of West Virginia.

**Montana Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural Season 2019*)

The entire state of Montana.

**Indiana Interscholastic Cycling League** (*inaugural Season 2019*)

The entire state of Indiana.

**Florida Interscholastic Cycling League** (*Inaugural Season 2020*)

The entire state of Florida.

## **RULE 6.1. INTER-LEAGUE PARTICIPATION AND OUT-OF-REGION STUDENTS**

A. At the League director's discretion, student-athletes and teams located outside of the League's region and in a state where there is no NICA league, may be allowed to participate in League events and races.

B. Student-athletes and teams located in a state that has a NICA league may only participate in another NICA league's events and races upon agreement between the leagues' directors. Such agreements must be reviewed and approved annually by the directors. In reaching such an agreement, the league directors must consider (a) which league's race series is closest to the students and teams seeking to participate in the other league, (b) policies of inclusivity for all students, and (c) policies of league development such that all students and teams can reasonably participate in events and races within the leagues in which they are located. Such an inter-league agreement must include, at a minimum, that the students and teams:

- (1) Declare that they are committed to participating and scoring exclusively in the other league's race series;
- (2) Be scored and registered in the league in which they have declared their participation; and
- (3) Participate in only one season, either spring or fall, per academic year and are subject to the Team Training Limits and race season limitations under Rule 7.16 and as provided in Appendix B, as applicable to the league in which they have declared their participation.

## **RULE 6.2. STUDENT AGE AND GRADE**

To be eligible to compete in either a spring or fall school-year season, a student-athlete must:

- For leagues that include middle schools, be enrolled in middle school (grades 6-8), or the homeschool equivalent, and be no younger than 10 and no older than 15 years of age at any time during the entire school year;
- Be in high school (grades 9-12), or the homeschool equivalent, and be no younger than 13 and no older than 19 years of age at any time during the entire school year; and
- Not have a high school diploma, general education diploma (GED), or otherwise be graduated from high school.

Student-athletes who have skipped or been held back:

- A single grade are placed into categories according to their grade levels as provided under the Category Placement Rules (Rule 3.5); or
- More than one grade must consult with the League director regarding placement into the appropriate categories.

No student athlete may compete more than 7 seasons.

## **RULE 6.3. PLACEMENT FOR HOMESCHOOLED STUDENTS**

Homeschooled student-athletes shall be placed in categories that correspond to the grade level they would otherwise be enrolled in for public middle school or public high school based on their ages for the district in which they reside. The League director must consider such age-based placement in the event homeschooled student-athletes seek alternative placement under the Category Placement Rules (Rule 3.5).

## **RULE 6.4. COLLEGE CLASS ENROLLMENT**

Student-athletes enrolled or otherwise taking classes in a college remain eligible to compete so long as they are enrolled or taking classes at the college as middle or high school students and not as college students.

## **RULE 6.5. REGISTERED NICA STUDENT-ATHLETES ONLY ON RACE COURSES**

Only student-athletes officially registered with the League may practice or compete on the designated race course.

## **RULE 6.6. REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENT-ATHLETE REGISTRATION**

Student-athletes must register with the League. Registration requirements include:

- Online Registration Forms
- Registration Fee
- Signed Release of Liability
- Signed Medical Form
- Signed Media Form
- Signed Code of Conduct Form

Student-athletes must be registered for each race they enter.

## **RULE 6.7. RACE REGISTRATION**

Student-athletes must register and pay for each League race, prior to the race. Pre-registration is available via the League website. On-site registration is available, but students will have to pay a late fee in addition to the race registration fee. Penalties apply if racers compete without registering or payment.

### **ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES**

## **RULE 6.8. LEADER'S JERSEY**

The student-athlete in each category with the highest average point total for conducted races will be awarded the leader's jersey. Each points leader is expected to wear the jersey at all League races, so long as they remain the top points holder. In the case of a tie, both student-athletes wear leader's jerseys. The overall winner of the series wears the leader's jersey during the first race of the next season.

## **RULE 6.9. EASY LEADER RECOGNITION**

Only the current leader may wear the leader's jersey. To avoid confusion, generic and similar looking jerseys may not be worn at a League race by competing student-athletes.

## **RULE 6.10. WALK THE BIKE THROUGH CROWDED AREAS**

All racers must walk their bikes in crowded areas such as the pit zone or spectator areas. Student-athletes who demonstrate reckless behavior or create a risk of harm to other students or spectators will be penalized (see Rule 2.3).

### **YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES**

## **RULE 6.11. STAGING FOR RACE STARTS**

Racers must adhere to the following guidelines when lining up at the start line for the start of a race:

- Racers must not stage or loiter around the start line until 15 minutes before the first start time of the corresponding race wave (e.g., all girl's categories can begin staging at 9:45 if the varsity girls start at 10:00 AM). Racers who line up at or near the staging area too early may be required to return their team's pit area (or a time penalty of 1 minute may be applied).
- Racers must position themselves in designated start lanes without overlapping the wheels of the rider in front of them.
- Racers must enter the staging area at the designated entrance for their category. Racers cutting into the side or front of the group will be required to start in the last row.

### **YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES**

- If a coach assists a racer in cutting into the side or front of the group, a team point penalty of 200 points will be applied. Coaches are expected to support the staging rules. If a rider in clear view of his or her coach is breaking the staging rules without intervention, the 200-point penalty shall be applied to that rider's team.

## RULE 6.12. LISTEN TO PRE-RACE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Student-athletes must be present and attentive during pre-race announcements. Students that miss the pre-race announcements may be required to stay after the start to hear the announcements. Students that are being disruptive and/or talking over the announcements may be relegated to the back of the group.

## RULE 6.13. START LINE CALL-UPS

Start line call-ups for all racers takes place at each race. See Rule 6.14 for first race call-up rule. At all subsequent races, call-ups are based on a current season average of race finish position.

- Only finish placings in the races during the season will be included in the call-up calculation.
- A backstop will be used to limit the negative impact of a single race on a student-athlete starting position.

The student-athlete will have a maximum fall back based on the size of field as follows:

- Field size: 101+, Max drop:15
- Field size of 51-100 riders: Max drop 10
- Field size of 50 or fewer: Max drop 5

Field size is calculated once per season, based on the number of registered riders in the Pit Zone at the close of pre-registration for the first race of the season.

- Student-athletes that miss their call-up will start at the back of their wave.

## RULE 6.14. FIRST RACE CALL-UPS

For 8<sup>th</sup> grade – Varsity classes: Call-ups for the first race of the season only are based on the previous season average race finish. If a rider has a bye -week for the first race, the previous years rank is used for the first race they are scheduled to race.

For riders who advanced a race category or by petition into a new category, call-up position for the first race of the season will be calculated based on previous season average finish rank, less the maximum backstop for the new race category field size as stated in Rule 6.13.

For 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> grade – call-ups for the first race of the season will be calculated in a randomized manner. If a rider has a bye-week, or does not attend the first race, the random number is used for the first race they attend.

New racers in other categories will receive a call-up, at random, behind racers with race history.

## RULE 6.15. PASSING SLOWER STUDENT-ATHLETES

When overtaking a rider on the race course, the passing rider should do so respectfully and must:

- Pass only when safe to do so and without rider contact;
- Call out “On your left” or “On your right” or use other similar language to indicate whether the pass will be on the other rider’s left or right side.

Passing in a manner that compromises the safety of other riders will not be tolerated.

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

## RULE 6.16. BIKE PUSHERS MUST YIELD

Racers riding bicycles have the right of way over racers pushing bicycles. When practical, racers pushing must stay on the *least rideable* portion of the trail when being passed. Racers pushing or carrying bicycles may overtake racers riding their bicycles provided pushing racers do not impede the progress of the riding racers.

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES



## RULE 6.17. LAPPED STUDENT-ATHLETES MUST YIELD

Lapped racers must yield to racers overtaking them. Lapped racers being passed must move over as quickly, efficiently, and as safely as possible.

## RULE 6.18. LEADER OWNS THE TRAIL BUT CANNOT BLOCK

In the event two racers are vying for position, the leading racer does not have to yield to the challenging racer. However, a racer may not bodily interfere with the intent to impede another racer's progress. Traditional rules of racing apply: the leading racer "owns the trail."

## RULE 6.19. STUDENT-ATHLETES MAY BE PULLED

Lapped racers and racers outside the time limit may be pulled from the race at the finish line. At the League director's or a race official's discretion, a racer may be pulled from a race at any location on the course due to circumstances that make it unsafe for the racer to proceed. Racers that are pulled out of the race must not continue and will be placed according to their position at the time they are pulled.

## RULE 6.20. TIME LIMITS MAY BE IMPOSED

Racers may be asked to withdraw at the finish line after time limits have been reached. Race officials reserve the right to determine these time limits at any time. Time limits may be imposed for reasons that include, among others: safety, heat, cold, rain, muddy conditions, clearing the course, and relieving course marshals. Course closures may be announced at any time without advance notice.

Race Officials may also, when appropriate, opt to pull a racer who appears to be overheated, hypothermic, overly exhausted, or in any way injured, overstressed, or at risk of injury.

## RULE 6.21. CUTTING THE COURSE

A. Except in the case of injury, racers are not allowed to cut the course, ride off course, or engage in any other behavior that would indicate an intention of unfair play.

RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

B. Racers must not deviate from the edge of the trails (as defined either by ribbons or an obvious change in surface or foliage characteristics) by more than 3 feet.

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

C. When the trail is clearly on one side of a pole, tree, or other obstacle, the racer must pass that feature on the trail side of the feature.

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

D. A racer may not leave the prescribed course unless ordered or permitted to do so by public authorities or a race official. In the case of mechanical problems, racers shall walk along the course to the finish line. In the case of medical emergencies, racers shall remain still and wait for a course marshal or medical help.

## RULE 6.22. OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE, ETC.

Refer to Rule 4.6 through Rule 4.9 and Rule 5.5 regarding outside assistance, repairing and switching bikes, and finishing with the bike.

## RULE 6.23. FIELD SIZE LIMITS

Registration may be limited at Race Director's discretion.

## RULE 6.24. RACE COURSE BLOCKED BY VEHICLE OR EMERGENCY

In the event a race course is blocked by a vehicle or an emergency situation, all racers should stop in a single file row without changing position. Racers should remain in those positions until instructed to recommence racing.

### RULE 7. LEAGUE DIVISIONS AND SUBREGIONS

#### A. *Inclusiveness and Safety*

To accommodate more student-athletes and teams consistent with NICA's policy to include all students who wish to participate, and in the interest of rider safety and field size limitations, race categories are divided into separate divisions.

#### B. *Tier 2 Divisions*

Tier 2 leagues are divided into Division I, consisting of larger teams, and Division II, consisting of smaller teams. Divisions are scored independently. If a league Division grows too large such that it can no longer reasonably accommodate all the students who wish to compete, the League may, at the League director's discretion, divide either the Division.

- (1) Unless otherwise specified in the Appendix, Tier 2 leagues are divided into Division I and Division II as follows:
  - a. Division I consists of teams with twelve or more registered high school category racing student-athletes.
  - b. Division II consists of teams with eleven or fewer registered high school category racing student-athletes.
- (2) Teams that are short of the minimum required for Division I, with between 10 – 12 student-athletes registered in high school categories may petition for placement in Division I. Teams with 12- 15 student-athletes registered in high school categories may petition for placement into Division II. To be considered, such petitions must be timely submitted no later than August 1st. Untimely petitions will not be considered.

### RULE 7.1. TEAM COMPOSITION

#### A. *Team Types:*

- (1) **Single School-Based Teams:** Must be comprised of full-time students from the same school, public or private. Homeschool athletes must race for the high school in the district in which they reside.
- (2) **Composite Teams:** Composite Teams: Must be comprised of full-time students from more than one school and must include "composite" in the team name. Homeschool students may also join Composite Teams according to the location of the school they would attend if not homeschooled. A Composite Team must be approved by the League director based upon a written proposal timely submitted to the League prior to team registration for the season in which the Composite Team wishes to compete. The proposal may include relevant information the organizers wish the League director to consider, but must include the following:
  - a. The proposed geographical region for its student-athletes;
  - b. The names of the schools the student-athletes attend and whether any of the student-athletes are homeschooled; and
  - c. The names of the team organizer and coach. No two or more Composite Teams may overlap in geographical region nor may they draw student-athletes from the same schools.
- (3)

Independent Study students must petition the League with the facts and circumstances of their situation to determine what type of team they are eligible to compete on. Homeschooled students who would otherwise be in middle school are scored in the same manner as Composite Teams set forth below (see B(2)b and B(3)d).

#### B. *Composite Team Limitations*

Composite Teams are intended to be temporary solutions only, allowing student-athletes to compete as members of a team in the League pending the establishment of Single School-Based Teams that they can join. In furtherance of this policy, the following limitations apply to Composite Teams:

- (1) The League director shall annually review and approve each Composite Team's eligibility. The League shall maintain approval forms on file for each Composite Team to include, at a minimum, the following:
  - a. A description of the team's geographical region;
  - b. A list of the names of all student-athletes indicating the schools they attend or whether they are homeschooled;
  - c. The name of the Composite Team; and
  - d. The signature of the team organizer and the approval signature of the League director.

- (2) Composite Teams must comply, subject to the League’s local state laws, with the following scoring restrictions:
  - a. Teams must compete in Division II but may, at the League director’s discretion and to be determined prior to the beginning of the season, be scored and awarded separately from Division I and II teams.
  - b. In leagues that include middle schools, middle school riders’ scores are excluded from the Composite Teams’ scores — if more than one middle school rider is on the team, they may be scored as a subdivided team in the middle school category according to subsection (3)d below.
  - c. Teams are limited to a maximum of eleven registered riders, excluding middle school riders. In addition to serving the above-stated policy to establish school-based teams, limiting such teams to eleven riders prevents any competitive advantage through the formation of large “super teams,” which NICA has determined constitutes unfair competition. However, in certain regions and rural areas, these policies may not be served and the team-size limitation may contravene policies to expand League ridership and to be inclusive to all riders. In the event the League’s Rules Committee determines that NICA policies are not served and are contravened by the limitation, the League in its discretion may choose not to apply it and must also determine whether it is appropriate to score such larger teams in a separate category.
  - d. A single Composite Team may be comprised of subdivided teams according to subsection (3) below.
  - e. Each subdivided team shall be scored independently.
- (3) Composite Team subdivision rules:
  - a. The League director must approve the subdivided teams that comprise a single Composite Team.
  - b. If five or more student-athletes are from the same school, they must be subdivided into a separate team and scored as representatives of that school. These same-school student-athletes may submit a joint petition, approved by each of them, to the League director for an exception to this rule.
  - c. Teams of twelve or more student-athletes, excluding any middle school riders must be subdivided into separate, independently scoring teams of eleven or fewer riders each. Upon subdivision, student-athletes shall be placed on teams based on the following:
    - i. First — Student-athletes attending the same school must be on the same subdivided team; and
    - ii. Second — Student-athletes shall be placed on subdivided teams according to the proximity of their homes.
  - d. In leagues that include middle schools, if more than one middle school rider is on the team, they may be scored as a separate team in the middle school category.
  - e. Teams may not be subdivided based on the experience and ability of the student-athletes. Doing so frustrates the policies that permit Composite Teams and creates an unfair advantage by avoiding the geographical limitations that apply to other teams.

### C. *Same-Sex School Team Associations*

A school-based team from a school whose attendance is made up of students of the same sex (“all boys” or “all girls”) may petition to be scored with a school-based team from an opposite sex school. A school-based team from a same-sex school may also petition to be scored with a group of independent riders who attend the same opposite sex school. This same-sex school association is for scoring purposes only and does not result in a composite club. The associated teams, regardless of the size or division of the component parts, shall compete in the same division they would compete in were they a single school club. The association exists on a season-by-season basis and permission must be secured from the League Director ahead of the season. Once the season begins, the association shall remain in place until the season ends.

### **RULE 7.2. TEAM RECRUITING AND MID-SEASON TRANSFERS**

Team efforts to recruit riders from other teams are strongly discouraged. Such conduct is contrary to NICA policies, interferes with team integrity for each school within the League, and undermines the competitive camaraderie between teams.

A student-athlete who transfers teams must meet all requirements to compete as a member of the new team.

A student-athlete who transfers teams mid-season shall retain all points earned that season prior to the transfer to be calculated with points earned after the transfer for determining individual standings.

The prior team shall retain all points earned by the student-athlete before the transfer for determining team standings.

The new team shall not be credited with points earned prior to the transfer and may, but only upon the new team's request and at the League director's discretion, accumulate points scored by the student-athlete after the transfer for determining team standings. The League director's discretion shall be exercised such that if the transfer has been determined to be more likely than not the result of team recruiting, the new team shall not accumulate points as a result of the transfer.

### **RULE 7.3. PROOF OF ATTENDANCE**

Proof of school attendance may be requested for a student-athlete at any time. This proof may be in the form of a school ID, a report card, or some other form of proof.

### **RULE 7.4. HOMESCHOOLERS ON SCHOOL-BASED TEAMS**

Homeschoolers must compete for the school covering the district in which they reside and would attend if they were not being homeschooled.

### **RULE 7.5. COMPOSITE TEAM APPROVAL**

Composite teams must state and gain approval of their geographic scope.

Composite teams (12+ riders) may be divided into smaller teams. Composite teams are considered short-term solution for student-athletes without access to school-based teams pending the establishment of teams at their schools. Combining existing school-based teams is not allowed, however, teams can combine resources and training activities — but will be scored separately, wear separate jerseys, etc. Team and club founders must contact the League director for approval before registering.

### **RULE 7.6. INDEPENDENT RACERS**

Student-athletes who do not have a club or team at the school that they attend may compete individually as “independent” racers.

### **RULE 7.7. STUDENT-ATHLETES MUST JOIN SCHOOL TEAMS**

Student-athletes who are enrolled at a school that has a club or team in good standing with the League must join and compete as a member of that club or team. Such student-athletes may not compete as members of another team nor may they compete as independent riders.

### **RULE 7.8. ONE SCHOOL, ONE TEAM**

Only one team may represent a school.

### **RULE 7.9. ACTIVE TEAMS MUST REGISTER**

All teams must register annually with the League. Teams must not conduct any practices without registering and obtaining insurance through the League.

### **RULE 7.10. TEAM REGISTRATION DEADLINE**

No new teams will be added to the series scoring after the second race of the series.

The deadline for online annual Team Registration is two weeks before the opening race. A late fee applies to teams that register after the deadline.

### **RULE 7.11. TEAM REGISTRATION FEE**

The deadline for teams to pay the annual team registration fee is within ten days from the registration deadline. A late fee applies if the fee received after the ten-day deadline.

Change in Divisions:

- If a team changes from Division II to I before the first race, it must pay the difference in fees;
- If a team changes from Division I to II before the first race, it will receive a refund for the difference in fees.

### **RULE 7.12. ALL STUDENT-ATHLETES AND COACHES, MUST REGISTER**

All student-athletes, and all coaches (all levels) must register with the League. Students and coaches (all levels) who are not registered are not insured. Registration must include the following:

- The student-athlete's NICA and league registration fees must be paid..

- The student-athlete must be registered in the NICA Pit-Zone and have their liability waiver signed.
- Coaches (all levels) must register in the NICA Pit-Zone and have their liability waiver signed.
- Coaches (all levels) must complete their annual background check and, at a minimum, their concussion and Risk Management 1 training.
- All registration is conducted online through the NICA Pit Zone.

#### RULE 7.13. OFFICIAL SCHOOL STATUS NOT NEEDED

School-based teams are not required to be officially or otherwise formally affiliated as a sports team with the school in which its members are enrolled.

Teams are responsible for obtaining permission from schools related to the team's use of school names, colors, mascots, logos, and other identifying school-related imagery or graphics.

#### RULE 7.14. MATCHING JERSEYS REQUIRED

Teams must have matching jerseys for their student-athletes and all team members must race wearing their team jerseys. Teams may use custom matching jerseys, but they may also choose some other appropriate jersey — such as a solid color. All teams must follow the [MN League apparel policy](http://www.minnesotamtb.org/apparel-policy), see <http://www.minnesotamtb.org/apparel-policy>.

#### YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

#### RULE 7.15. INDEPENDENT JERSEYS

Independent student-athletes must choose a distinct individual jersey and race wearing the same jersey design throughout a season.

#### RULE 7.16. TEAM TRAINING LIMITS

League teams are limited to the number of weeks they can have practice. Teams are not insured for activities outside of these limits. Details and specific dates can be found in Appendix B.

- Teams can commence limited activities during the pre-season. Allowable pre-season activities are bike checks, mechanical workshops, “fun rides,” or skills clinics.
- During the pre-season, teams are allowed to have up to 6 scheduled pre-season activities (bike checks, mechanical work shops, “fun rides,” or skills clinics).
- During the regular season, teams may conduct up to 4 practices per week.
- Teams may not conduct any organizational activity aimed towards competing at races during their off-season.
- Any coach working with student-athletes during their off-season that is not sanctioned/insured under another non-scholastic organization may risk the eligibility of the coach, rider, and team to compete in NICA races.

#### RULE 7.17. NICA COACH LICENSES AND BACKGROUND CHECKS

All adults participating in team rides must have a NICA coach's license and undergone an annual background check. Adults who switch leagues will need to repeat the background check before participation in the new league.

#### RULE 7.18. TEAM DIRECTOR OR HEAD COACH REQUIREMENTS (LEVEL 3 LICENSING)

All teams must have a Team Director or Head Coach that complies with the “Team Director or Head Coach Requirements.” *License Level Requirements are detailed in Appendix C of this rulebook.* Team registration discounts may apply for coaches with a higher license level. Teams that do not have a team director or head coach that meets the minimal requirements are ineligible and may not register or compete as a team. Team Directors and Head Coaches are encouraged to discuss their professional development plan with the League director.

#### RULE 7.19. LEVEL 3 LICENSING

Requirements for Level 3 Licensing are detailed in Appendix C of this rulebook. All adults riding with a high school team must at least have a Level 1 License.

## RULE 7.20. LEVEL 2 LICENSING

Requirements for Level 2 Licensing are detailed in Appendix C of this rulebook. All adults riding with a high school team must at least have a Level 1 License.

## RULE 7.21. LEVEL 1 LICENSE

All adults riding with a high school team must at least have a Level 1 License.

## Chapter 8: TEAM AND INDIVIDUAL SCORING RULES

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### RULE 8. INDIVIDUAL SERIES SCORING

Student-athletes compete against other racers in the same category. Individual scoring is not divided into Divisions I and II, unless they are racing in separate categories, e.g., Freshman Boys Division I and Freshman Boys Division II are scored separately. See categories under Rule 3.

#### RULE 8.1. OVERALL INDIVIDUAL SERIES SCORING

Overall Series scoring for individuals is based on the best 4 of 5 in a five-race series or the best 3 of 4 in a four-race series. In other words, the lowest score is dropped.

A missed race would be the lowest score dropped. In the case of a race cancellation in a five-race series, the lowest score is still dropped (best 3 of 4). If there are fewer than four races in the series, no score will be dropped.

#### RULE 8.2. POINT SYSTEM

Points are awarded to all finishers. There is a 40-point bonus for JV3 racers and a 75-point bonus for Varsity racers. Racers that do not finish a race (DNF) will not be awarded any points for that race.

See Appendix A for the Individual Point Scale.

In the event of a successful petition to change categories under Rule 3.6, individual points earned in one category do not transfer to another category. All points earned in the lower category are forfeited and the upgraded rider loses standing in the lower category. A student-athlete's points scored toward team standings prior to the change in categories remain unaffected. Students who successfully petition to be placed in a lower category are, by default, ineligible to score team points in that lower category for the duration of the season. A student who petitions to change to a lower category may state extenuating circumstances in the petition to be allowed to score points in the lower category.

#### RULE 8.3. POINT BONUS AT STATE CHAMPS

At the League director's discretion, the League may opt into a bonus points schedule for its State Championship event by submitting a timely petition. The petition must be timely due to the administrative scoring adjustments NICA staff must make to accommodate the alternative scoring.

In the event the opt-in petition is granted, all finishers at the State Championship are awarded Race Bonus Points as follows: 50 points for 1<sup>st</sup> place and sequentially for each place thereafter, one less point than is awarded the immediately preceding place, through 50<sup>th</sup> place, and one point for each finishing place thereafter (e.g., 49 points for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 48 points for 3<sup>rd</sup>, . . . 3 points for 48<sup>th</sup>, 2 points for 49<sup>th</sup>, 1 point for 50<sup>th</sup>, and 1 point for each finisher thereafter.)

#### RULE 8.4. POINT BONUS FOR COMPLETING ALL RACES

All student-athletes who complete each and every race in a season shall be awarded an additional 25 Season Bonus Points.

If a race is cancelled, it will not count as a season race and Season Bonus Points shall still be awarded if all other season races are completed. In the event a student does not complete a race due to a mechanical, crash, illness, or other similar circumstances out of his or her control, that is considered an incomplete and no Season Bonus Points will be awarded.

Season Bonus Points are awarded to individuals following the calculation of overall series points after the final race. Season Bonus Points are not added to points scored in the final race nor are they added into the team score.

Notwithstanding the forgoing, including rules 8.2 through this rule 8.4, leagues may at their discretion apply alternate point bonus systems, as long as the system is consistently applied to all league participants.

#### RULE 8.5. TIER 1 LEAGUE SCORING MATRIX

For Tier 1 leagues, all teams are considered Division II where scoring is based on the top four point-earners, with a maximum of three of those point-earners scoring in either the boys or girls category.

League directors, with approval of their Rules Committee, may make modifications to these scoring rules. Visit the TEAMS webpage to confirm the team scoring rules of the League.

The team's score is the highest score possible out the following boy-girl combinations:

BBBG  
BBGG  
BGGG

#### RULE 8.6. TIER 2 LEAGUE SCORING MATRIX

For Tier 2 leagues, Division I scoring is based on the top eight point-earners, with a maximum of six of those point-earners scoring in either the boys' or girls' categories.

For Tier 2 leagues, Division II scoring is based on the top four point-earners, with a maximum of three of those point-earners scoring in either the boys' or girls' categories.

League directors, with approval of their Rules Committee, may make modifications to these scoring rules. Visit the TEAMS webpage to confirm the team scoring rules of the League.

The team's score is the highest score possible out the following boy-girl combinations:

<u>Division I Teams</u>	<u>Division II Teams</u>
BBBBBBGG	BBBG
BBBBBGGG	BBGG
BBBBGGGG	BGGG
BBBGGGGG	
BBGGGGGG	

*See Appendix: Rule 8.6 for scoring applicable to the Arizona League.*

#### RULE 8.7. OVERALL TEAM SCORING

A team's overall placement is based on team point totals for an entire point series — the lowest score is *not* dropped.

#### RULE 8.8. AWARDS AT EACH RACE

Individual medals are awarded at five places deep for each category if the field size is less than 50 riders. Fields over 50 riders will have 10% of the field, capped at 10 medals maximum

Team trophies are awarded at least three places deep in each division at each race, including the State Championships.

*See Appendix: Rule 8.8 for rules applicable to the Arizona League.*

#### RULE 8.9. AWARDS FOR OVERALL SERIES

Individual overall series medals are awarded to finishers in the top 10% of the total number of scoring riders for the series (rounded up) plus two places deep. Team overall series trophies are awarded to at least three places deep in each division.

*See Appendix: Rule 8.9 for rules applicable to the Arizona League.*

#### RULE 8.10. PROLOGUE RULES

Leagues may choose to begin their season with two Prologue Races. These races may occur on the same day in different venues, in which event the teams will be split into two groups based on each team's proximity to the venue. Independent student-athletes shall attend the Prologue Race closest to their homes.

Student-athlete will each receive a 50-point bonus for participating in the Prologue Race. As bonus points, they will be included in the overall individual scores for the season. Students that must DNF or are pulled due to time constraints in the Prologue, will still be awarded their 50-point bonuses.

There will be no team awards at the Prologue; however, there will be individual awards given.

The Prologue is not a qualifier for the state championships, nor does it count towards category placement the following year.



## Chapter 9: PRE-RIDE RULES

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### RULE 9. PRE-RIDE PROVIDED WHEN POSSIBLE

Student-athletes will be given the opportunity to walk the course and participate in a practice ride whenever possible.

A Pre-Ride is a regularly scheduled practice ride on the race course that takes place on the same weekend as the race. For practice rides on race courses at other times, the Pre-Ride Rules do not apply.

### RULE 9.1. RACERS AND COACHES ONLY ON THE COURSE

Only student-athletes entered for competition in the event and their team coaches may ride the designated race course at times when no race is currently taking place. An event is taking place at all times after the start of a race until the time the last rider in that race finishes. No coach is permitted to ride the course during an event.

### RULE 9.2. NUMBER PLATES ARE MANDATORY

Once number plates are distributed, students must have them properly affixed to their bicycles at all times they are at the venue.

### RULE 9.3. PRE-RIDE DURING DESIGNATED TIMES ONLY

Pre-rides on race day must be confined to the time designated by the League. Pre-rides that are conducted prior to race day must comply with the rules and regulations regarding trail use, at the race venue. Student-athletes who are caught in the act of pre-riding outside of the designated time will be penalized. Students must begin their pre-ride of the course at least 30-minutes prior to the first race-start of the day. After the 30-minute cutoff, no more pre-riding is allowed that day.

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

### RULE 9.4. DO NOT MODIFY THE COURSE

Intentionally adding obstacles or removing obstacles deemed by Officials to be part of the race course is prohibited. Report hazards to a Course Marshal or other race official.

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

### RULE 9.5. DO NOT RIDE THE COURSE BACKWARDS

Pre-riders must ride in the designated direction of the race during the pre-ride — no backtracking is allowed. If student-athletes must backtrack, they must walk with their bikes.

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

### RULE 9.6. PRE-RIDE WITH A COURSE MAP & PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION

Student-athletes must pre-ride with at least one other rider and with a course map, if available. There is no guarantee that a course will be fully marked or that course signage will be fully set up for the pre-ride. Students understand that courses may not be fully marked and that if they pre-ride the course, they do so at their own risk.

## Chapter 10: PIT ZONE AND FEED ZONE RULES

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### RULE 10. DESIGNATED PIT ZONE AREAS

Teams are randomly assigned predetermined areas in the race pit zone. Division I pit areas are larger than Division II pit areas to accommodate the larger teams. Large teams (30+) may request extra space ahead of time. All team equipment, including cars and trailers, must be set up within the assigned areas. Teams may not erect tents, tables, bike stands, or mechanical stations outside of their areas in the pit zone.

#### RULE 10.1. BIKE PARKING

Coaches and student-athletes must park their bikes out of the through ways to avoid obstructing cars, pedestrians, and other riders.

#### RULE 10.2. AUTOS IN THE PIT ZONE

Autos, trucks, RV's or trailers are not allowed in the Pit Zone unless prior authorization is received from the league director. Gas powered generators (built in or external) are also not permitted in the pit zone.

#### RULE 10.3. FEED ZONE REQUIRED

A designated feed zone must be present and easily accessible at races. The feed zone shall have a well-marked start and end.

#### RULE 10.4. FEEDERS MUST USE THE ZONE

Coaches, parents, or other volunteers may only hand riders food and drinks in the feed zone. Riders will be penalized for accepting food or drink outside of the feed zone boundaries.

#### YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

#### RULE 10.5. NO INTERFERENCE WITH OTHER STUDENT-ATHLETES

Feeding one student-athlete must not cause other riders to slow down or veer off course.

#### RULE 10.6. FOOD AND DRINK ONLY

Student-athletes may not accept items (such as tools, gear, or parts) within the feed zone boundaries during races, or the outside assistance penalty will apply (Rule 4.6).

#### RULE 10.7. CLOTHING EXCEPTION

In the event of cold or inclement weather, clothing may be handed to racers in the feed zone only. Clothing may not be handed over anywhere else on the race course.

#### RULE 10.8. NO PHYSICAL CONTACT

All hand-offs must be conducted hand-to-hand only — from the hand of the feeder to the hand of the rider. No other physical contact between riders and feeders is allowed. Such other contact will be considered outside assistance (Rule 4.6) and a penalty will apply.

It is not permitted for a feeder to place water bottles onto the bike or hydration packs onto riders nor may items be put into the rider's mouth or the pockets on the rider's jersey.

#### RULE 10.9. NO RUNNING IN THE FEED ZONE

Running in the feed zone is not permitted under any circumstances. Running increases the risk of collisions and interference with riders and other feeders.

#### RULE 10.10. FEED ON RIGHT HAND SIDE

Feeding racers traditionally happens on the right side of the course. This allows those student-athletes not wanting a stop to pass through the feed zone unimpeded. After feeding a rider, the feeder must move clear of the feeding zone to allow plenty of room for other feeders.

#### RULE 10.11. VISIBLE TEAM IDENTITY IN THE FEED ZONE

Feeders must wear a shirt, jacket, hat, vest, jersey, or adhesive nametag that identifies the team of the riders they are feeding.

**RULE 10.12. LIMITED FEEDERS PER TEAM**

Each team is allowed a limited number of feeders in the feed zone as indicated below. The number is based on the number of racers that are competing in the current wave.

<u># Racers</u>	<u># Feeders</u>
5 or less.....	2
6-10.....	3
11-20.....	4
21 or more.....	5

**RULE 10.13. NEUTRAL FEED ZONE**

If conditions such as high temperatures exist, a neutral feed zone may be provided near the halfway point of the course. The neutral feed zone will be for all student-athletes and handouts will be provided by designated race staff and/or volunteers only.

**RULE 10.14. FEED ZONE IS CAFFEINE FREE**

As caffeine is a banned substance (Rule 2.19), feeders must not hand off any caffeinated products to riders. Riders will be penalized for accepting caffeinated products. Race officials may request to inspect feed zone supplies at any time.

**RULE 10.15. NO THROWING WATER ON RIDERS IN FEED ZONE**

Throwing water on riders in the feed zone or the area immediately preceding the feed zone is not permitted.

**RULE 10.16. DRONES**

Drones are not permitted to be flown at any Minnesota High School Cycling League event without the prior written permission of the league director. This includes the infield, race course, PitZone or any surrounding area used to host the event.

## Chapter 11: RACE OFFICIALS

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### RULE 11. APPROVED NICA OFFICIALS

The duties of the chief officials shall be performed by NICA-approved officials.

#### RULE 11.1. IMPARTIALITY

All officials shall endeavor to uphold and enforce the NICA Rules and Guidelines and shall do so in an impartial manner.

#### RULE 11.2. RACE OFFICIAL POSITIONS

The general conduct, safety, scoring and enforcement of rules is managed at races by the following officials:

- Chief Referee
- Start/Finish Line Official
- Chief Scoring Official
- Number Plate Spotters
- Number Plate Recorder
- Chief Course Marshal
- Course Marshals
- Course Sweeper
- Rules and Appeals Committee Members

#### RULE 11.3. OFFICIALS UNIFORMS

Race Officials must wear provided uniforms.

#### RULE 11.4. CHIEF REFEREE

Chief Referees supervise the general conduct of each race and ensure that the event is run under the NICA Rules and Guidelines. Chief Referees have the authority to interpret and enforce these rules and the discretion to make rulings on any point that is not specifically covered herein. A decision by the Chief Referee can be appealed to the League's Rule Committee.

#### RULE 11.5. ADDITIONAL POWERS OF CHIEF REFEREE

Chief Referees may neutralize, shorten, suspend, or cancel any race if dangerous conditions exist or hazardous weather arises.

Chief Referees have the authority to penalize or recommend suspension of any student-athlete, parent, coach, co-coach, or volunteer who refuses to follow instructions of officials or who commits other offenses. The Chief Referee shall consider the observations of course marshals, taking into account their vantage points relative to the incident and experience levels.

#### RULE 11.6. DUTIES AND POWERS OF OTHER OFFICIALS

Chief Referees may assign duties and delegate authority to the other officials for each event.

#### RULE 11.7. START/FINISH LINE REFEREE

Start/Finish Line referees are responsible for managing the start and finish of each race. Start line duties include setting up and managing start waves, drawing start lines, keeping track of time, ensuring proper seeding, and assisting or managing pre-race announcements. Finish line duties include assisting the scoring crews by resolving close finish disputes, creating an independent backup document of finish order, sampling lap times, estimating the time of last finisher, managing finish shoots, and enforcing cutoff times.

Penalties, cutoff times, and last finisher time estimates must be communicated to the Chief Referee. In the event of close finishes, Spotters shall focus on the numbers whereas the Start/Finish Line Referee shall focus on the order of finish as determined by the front wheels. All penalties assessed shall be reported to the Chief Referee.

#### RULE 11.8. CHIEF SCORING OFFICIAL

Chief Scoring Officials supervise the scoring crew comprised of Number Plate Spotters and Number Plate Recorders. Chief Scoring Officials are responsible for running the scoring program, investigating and troubleshooting discrepancies, posting preliminary results, fielding protests regarding preliminary results and scoring, and providing final results for the award ceremony. They also

have the authority to interpret and enforce the rules pertaining to scoring. All penalties assessed shall be reported to the Chief Referee.

#### **RULE 11.9. NUMBER PLATE SPOTTER**

Number Plate Spotters report, in a loud clear voice, race plate numbers in order as they cross the line. Only one Number Plate Spotter will call numbers at a time. They shall rotate every hour to ensure quality reporting. In the event of close finishes, Spotters shall focus on the numbers whereas the Start/Finish Line Referee shall focus on the order of finish as determined by the front wheels.

#### **RULE 11.10. NUMBER PLATE RECORDER**

Number Plate Recorders enter the numbers called out by the Number Plate Spotter. Number Plate Recorders shall rotate every two hours to ensure quality reporting.

#### **RULE 11.11. CHIEF COURSE MARSHAL**

Chief Course Marshals manage the operations of Course Marshals, which includes providing radios, vests, maps, whistles and flags, conducting Course Marshal meetings, assigning locations, and taking reports. Chief Course Marshals have the authority to interpret and enforce these rules pertaining to infractions that occur on the race course. All penalties assessed shall be reported to the Chief Referee.

#### **RULE 11.12. COURSE MARSHALS**

Course Marshals are deputized race officials whose duties are primarily to increase safety on the course and increase communications, and secondarily to report incidents of student-athletes breaking these rules.

Course Marshals must:

- Carry a radio, a notepad and pen, and a course map;
- Wear a designated Course Marshal Vest;
- Carry a flag and whistle; the flag can be used to direct or slow down student-athletes; the whistle can be used to warn students who are riding in the wrong direction; and
- Report incidents by radio to the Chief Course Marshal at the time of the infraction. Course marshals must also report all incidents in writing when they return from duty.

#### **RULE 11.13. COURSE SWEEPER**

Course Sweepers communicate with the Chief Course Marshal and the Start/Finish Line Referee. The Sweeper's responsibilities are to be aware of and ride behind the last rider on the race course at a distance, and report to the Chief Course Marshal and Start/Finish Line Referee the last rider's location, when the last rider finishes, and when the race course is clear. The Chief Course Marshal may also deputize the Sweeper to relieve Course Marshals from duty, carry first aid, or act as a rolling Course Marshal.

#### **RULE 11.14. LEAGUE RULES COMMITTEE**

The League Rules Committee (LRC) is responsible for the interpretation of the rulebook and the resolution of any disputes regarding the application and enforcement of the rules. Student-athletes may appeal any rule decision or penalty assessed by an official to the LRC.

A decision by the LRC may be appealed to the NICA Rules Committee (NRC). Such appeals to the NRC are submitted either by the League Director or the chairperson of the LRC.

The League must form its own LRC. Pending the formation of the LRC, the League Director assumes all LRC responsibilities under these rules. LRC members are selected by the League's board of directors or, if a board is not yet formed, by the League Director. The LRC shall designate a member to participate as a member of the NRC.

#### **RULE 11.15. PETITION FORMS & INCIDENT REPORTS**

Petition forms are to be presented to the Chief Referee to raise rule violations and scoring issues. After each race and before the final results are posted, the Chief Referee must rule on and then submit all petition forms to the League Director.

The Designated Reporter for each team, or the parent/guardian for an athlete, is responsible for submitting all injury and incident reports online to the Safety Study.

## **RULE 11.16. ON-SITE PROTESTS**

The Chief Referee will handle any protests arising at the event. The Chief Referee may call a meeting of all available LRC members at an event to rule on any protests. If no members are available, the Chief Referee may defer a protest ruling until after the event and such a meeting under Rule 12.2 can be convened. Such a deferred meeting must occur within five days after the race. If a meeting cannot be convened within five days, the Chief Referee shall act in its place to render a timely decision.

### RULE 12. PRELIMINARY AND OFFICIAL RESULTS (MANDATORY)

*Preliminary results.* Preliminary race results and penalty assessments are posted at the race venue, at or near the scoring tent, as soon as possible after each event. The posting time shall be stated on the results and penalties sheets.

*Protest period deadline on race day.* Protests to the preliminary results and opposition to penalties must be submitted, by a coach of the student athlete objecting using the forms provided, to the Chief Referee at the scoring tent within 15 minutes of the posting time.

*Official results.* After the timely protests and opposition to penalties are considered, ruled upon, and approved by the League Director or the Chief Referee, the results on race day shall be official and posted at the scoring tent. Unless otherwise stated in a decision or ruling, such decisions and rulings made on race day regarding protests and penalties are conclusive. Medals will be awarded based on the official results on race day.

*Deferred rulings.* At the discretion of the League Director or Chief Referee, the decision and ruling on a protest or opposition to a penalty may be deferred until after race day (Rule 11.16). If such a deferred decision affects the podium results for an event, medals may be awarded at a later date following resolution of the dispute.

### RULE 12.1. EXTENDED PROTEST PERIOD (DISCRETIONARY)

*Extended protest period announcement.* Such an extended protest period must be announced along with the official results on race day, or must be announced simultaneously with the posting of the official results on the League's website. The online posting date of the results and the protest submission deadline shall be indicated on the website.

*Extended protest period deadline.* In the event the announcement does not indicate the deadline by which protests are to be submitted, they must be submitted by no later than 5:00 pm on the second day after the results are posted on the website. Protests must be submitted by a coach to the League director, Chief Referee, or other League official designated by the League director to receive such protests.

### RULE 12.2. PROTEST DECISIONS AFTER RACE DAY

*League officials.* Protests made on race day but deferred for later decision and protests submitted during an extended protest period shall be heard by the League Director, or Chief Referee, or members of the League Rules Committee, or any one or combination thereof.

*Additional information.* League officials shall provide their best efforts to make reasonable inquiries and provide a timely decision and ruling. Student-athletes and coaches who are involved on either side of the dispute may submit statements within the applicable protest period under Rule 12 or Rule 12.1. Submitting such statements after the protest period is permissible only if done at the request of League officials.

*Hearing and vote.* In the event the protest or opposition is deemed significant by a League official, the student-athlete or coach shall be notified and three or more League officials shall be designated to rule on the matter by majority vote. The designated officials may, by majority vote, choose to conduct a telephonic hearing to occur within two weeks of the incident. League officials shall provide notice of the date and the specific procedures relative to the hearing to the affected student-athletes and other individuals, as they deem appropriate.

### RULE 12.3. JUDGMENT CALLS

League officials must decide and rule upon protests despite often having little direct, firsthand information available regarding the underlying incident. This is inherent to the sport of mountain biking due to the fact that most of the racing takes place on the race course out of the sight of race officials. Nevertheless, every effort is made to reach the fairest and most informed decisions possible under the circumstances for each and every protest that is submitted.

Student-athletes and their families and coaches are expected to understand these limitations and the challenges inherent to resolving disputes of this nature, and the difficult decisions League officials are required to make. It is further expected of students, family members, and coaches that they be willing to accept what they may consider to be an unfair result. Unfair results are part of every sport no matter the efforts to avoid them, and accepting them when they go the other way is considered a sign of good sportsmanship and a strong character trait.

Accordingly, threatening or bullying officials, other riders, spectators, or anyone involved with the League or an event regarding protests may result in restrictions imposed on a student-athlete's participation in the League.

### RULE 13. COACHES' HELMETS

All coaches and team assistants must comply with all helmet rules at all team practices, team events, and League races. In the event a coach is seen riding without a helmet, a 25-point penalty will be applied to his or her team's score.

#### RULE 13.1. DUTY OF CARE

Coaches have a duty of care to their student-athletes at every event. This duty of care begins at the time designated by the team for the students to arrive and it ends at the conclusion of the event. The Head Coach, or someone acting as interim head coach, must remain at the venue until the last student-athlete from his or her team has departed, except in the case that any remaining student is in the care of a parent or legal guardian.

#### RULE 13.2. RACE ATTENDANCE

A Head Coach must attend each race. If the Head Coach cannot attend a race, an interim Head Coach shall be appointed and the League Director must be notified as to who is serving as interim Head Coach.

#### RULE 13.3. POSITIVE SPORTING BEHAVIOR; LEAGUE DIRECTOR COMPLETE DISCRETION

League officials have complete and total discretion for the implementation of the rules regarding appropriate sporting behavior. It is required that all coaches will demonstrate respect for and deference to the person and the decisions of the League officials as it relates to sporting behavior of student-athletes, parents, other coaches, and other League officials, and a failure to do so may result in restrictions imposed on a coach's or a student's participation in the League. Coaches will also display mature and positive behavior during every event and in all interactions at all times with student-athletes, parents, other coaches, and League officials. Coaches must serve as role models to student-athletes, thereby demonstrating fair and calm response in the event of protests, complaints, conflicts, or emergencies. Coaches are expected to be focused not just on winning, but on helping student-athletes develop positive character traits, learn life lessons, and grow into healthy young adults.



### RULE 14. PARENTS' HELMETS

Parents shall comply with all helmet rules at all races. Parents riding bicycles without helmets will receive two warnings. After a third infraction, the parent's student-athlete will be penalized 25 points at the race where the infraction occurred. Parents must wear helmets for the following reasons:

- To set an example for the student-athletes;
- As a part of risk management due to limited emergency resources on site;
- It is often difficult for race officials to visually differentiate between parents and coaches; and
- NICA is concerned about the safety of all our participants and spectators.

#### RULE 14.1. HANDLING PROTESTS

Parents must handle protests, complaints, and/or conflicts with a positive and respectful attitude (see Rule 12.3). Parents should keep in mind that League officials have complete and total discretion for the implementation of these rules. It is required that parents will demonstrate respect for and deference to the person of and the decisions of the League officials and failure to do so may result in restrictions imposed on a student's participation in the League.

#### RULE 14.2. PARENTS RIDING AND PROVIDING SUPPORT ON THE COURSE

##### ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

For purposes of safety and fairness to the participants, the following rules must be observed by all parents, coaches and all other persons in attendance, other than racers during their race:

- No riding on the course.
- No running or riding alongside the course or alongside a student while they are racing.
- No providing food, water, or support outside of the feed zones.

A violation of this rule will result in an orange level penalty against the team that the League Director determines to be the intended beneficiary of such action.

**First Offense:** 25 point penalty deducted from team score on race day

**Second offense:** 50 point penalty deducted from team score on race day

**Third offense:** 100 point penalty deducted from team score on race day

#### RULE 14.3. POSITIVE SPORTING BEHAVIOR

It is expected that all parents will conduct themselves with a mature and positive sporting attitude during every event.

What parents can do to encourage positive sporting behavior:

- Keep your comments positive. Don't bad-mouth coaches, student-athletes, or officials. If you have a concern you need to express, discuss it privately with your child's coach or a League official.
- Commend good effort and performance, no matter whom it comes from. This is especially when it concerns student-athletes from a "rival" team.
- Remember that you are the parent. Shout encouragement, not directions, from the sidelines.
- Be courteous towards other parents, coaches, and student-athletes from other teams. Understand that your behavior sets an example not just for your family, but for everyone else at the event.
- Look for examples of good sporting behavior in professional student-athletes and point them out to your child. Talk about the bad examples too, and explain why they upset you.
- Emphasize values like teamwork, responsibility, and discipline. Winning comes and goes, but these values persist and are foundational to the physical and educational benefits of youth sports.



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Appendix A — Individual Point Scale

PLACE	FRESHMAN/JV2 MIDDLE SCHOOL	JV3	VARSITY
1	500	540	575
2	490	530	565
3	481	521	556
4	472	512	547
5	464	504	539
6	456	496	531
7	448	488	523
8	441	481	516
9	434	474	509
10	427	467	502
11	420	460	495
12	414	454	489
13	408	448	483
14	402	442	477
15	396	436	471
16	390	430	465
17	385	425	460
18	380	420	455
19	375	415	450
20	370	410	445
21	365	405	440
22	360	400	435
23	356	396	431
24	352	392	427
25	348	388	423
26	344	384	419
27	340	380	415
28	336	376	411

Appendix A — Individual Point Scale

PLACE	RESHMAN/JV2 MIDDLESCHOOL	JV	VARSITY
29	332	372	407
30	329	369	404
31	326	366	401
32	323	363	398
33	320	360	395
34	317	357	392
35	314	354	389
36	311	351	386
37	308	348	383
38	306	346	381
39	304	344	379
40	302	342	377
41	300	340	375
42	298	338	373
43	296	336	371
44	294	334	369
45	292	332	367
46	290	330	365
47	289	329	364
48	288	328	363
49	287	327	362
50	286	326	361
51	285	325	360
52	284	324	359
53	283	323	358
54	282	322	357
55	281	321	356
56	280	320	355

**TEAM TRAINING LIMITS**

NICA has strict training limits for NICA League Teams and NICA Indie Clubs. These limits protect student-athletes and create a supportive environment, as well as reduce exposure to physical risk and burnout. While NICA is 100% committed to supporting its students and coaches who suffer injuries, insurance coverage applies only to the allowable activities described below.

League teams and clubs are limited to the number of weeks during which they can participate in, and conduct the allowable activities described below. Insurance coverage is not provided for any activities outside of these time limits.

Each year is divided into a pre-season, a regular season, and an off-season. Unless otherwise specified for a particular league, Fall Leagues are leagues with races in the fall, and Spring Leagues have races in the spring.

**PRESEASON**

- **Start Date.** Teams and clubs can commence limited preseason team activities on the following dates:
 

Fall Leagues.....	April 1
Spring Leagues.....	October 15
  
- **Allowable Activities.** The team, club, and coaches must be registered with NICA to participate in, and conduct activities. Only the following pre-season activities are permitted and must be pre-approved by the league director (approval form attached below):
  1. Bike checks, equipment inspections, and bike fit;
  2. Mechanical workshops;
  3. All-inclusive fun rides; and
  4. Skills clinics
  
- **Activities Limit.** The maximum number of pre-season activities is:

Fall Leagues.....	6
Spring Leagues.....	6
Idaho*.....	8

*\*Due to unpredictable inclement weather conditions in mountain and high desert regions.*

**REGULAR SEASON**

- **Start Date.** Regular training, to include up to four practices per week, may commence on the following dates:

Fall Leagues ..... July 1  
Spring Leagues ..... December 1  
Tennessee ..... Monday of the  
Week after the  
Week of July 4\*

- **Racing Limits.** Teams and clubs may participate in races only during the regular season.
- **End of Season.** No team or club rides, or any other training activities, may take place following the 14th consecutive day after the final League race of the season. Special post-season activities and rides after this two-week period may be approved and allowed by the league director (use the approval form below).

*\*The two-week period including the week prior to the week of July 4 and the week of July 4 is defined as the Summer Dead Period under the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association Handbook, during which no regular season or pre-season or activities may take place, and is part of the Tennessee League's off-season.*

**OFF-SEASON**

The off-season is defined as periods not within the applicable pre-season and regular season periods. Organized team rides and races are strictly prohibited during the off-season. The following activities during the off-season will jeopardize a team or club's eligibility:

1. A league team racing under the school name;
2. Using the school jersey at races as a team;
3. Having practices that meet on school grounds;
4. Having regular meetings at school that organize activity for off-season training and racing;
5. Using any league team property without a letter of permission from school administration; and
6. Using the same league team website as an outlet for organizing off-season practices or racing.

NICA respects off-season non-league related racing activities. However, all off-season coaching activity must be done under a separately organized, insured, and named team. Teams found to be racing as a high school team during the off-season will be ineligible to compete in League races the following season.



**PRE-SEASON ACTIVITY APPROVAL FORM**

During the pre-season period teams are allowed to have up to six (6) scheduled activities (bike checks and/or fits, mechanical workshops, fun rides, or skills clinics). These activities must be pre-approved by the League Director. Please send the following information to the League Director at least five (5) days in advance of the first activity. Thank you.

1. Team Director Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone/email: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Dates of each activity:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Description of each activity (what, where, how far, etc.) (attach more sheets if necessary):
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Number of adults expected at each activity: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Number of students expected at each activity: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you have current NICA waivers for all student and adults? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Are all adult riders joining club/team rides licensed by NICA? All adults regularly participating in sanctioned rides are required to hold NICA licenses (Level 1, 2, or 3). Adults without licenses are not insured.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please complete this form and mail or fax to your league director. Please check your league website for the fax number or address. Please contact your league director if you have any questions about these requirements or the insurance coverage.**

**TEAM DIRECTOR OR HEAD COACH REQUIREMENTS**

To be eligible, all *NICA Teams* (that are members of a NICA league) must have a Team Director or Head Coach who satisfies the requirements in the schedule below. NICA takes risk management very seriously and our license requirements also reflect our commitment to supporting student-athletes. A NICA League is a community where the action of one team may affect the entire league. It's essential that all Team Directors or Head Coaches progress along a path to learning the best practices of coaching youth, managing rides, and building a sustainable program. The minimal license requirement increases over the team's first four years and there are discount incentives for surpassing those minimums. We strongly urge all Team Directors or Head Coach to obtain a Level 3 License by their team's second season. Grace periods and other exception may be applied based on your league director's discretion. The requirements for each license level are detailed at the NICA website:

(<http://www.nationalmtb.org/?s=coach+license+program>).

	Minimum Requirement	Requirement for Discount
First-Year Team	<b>Level 1 License</b> is required for the team to register as a NICA team	<b>Level 2 License</b> or above qualifies for team registration discount
Second-Year Team	<b>Level 2 License</b> is required for the team to register as a NICA team	<b>Level 3 License</b> or above qualifies for team registration discount
Third-Year Team	<b>Level 3 License</b> is required for the team to register as a NICA team	Discount applies to third year team and beyond if Team Director or Head Coach maintains Level 3 License

**INDIE CLUB DIRECTOR REQUIREMENTS**

All *NICA Indie Clubs* (these are clubs that do not participate in a NICA league) must have a Team Director that satisfies the requirements in the schedule below. NICA sets the bar high for starting a NICA Indie Club. Founding and managing a high school mountain bike club is a great responsibility and NICA Indie Clubs do not have the benefit of oversight from a local League Director. In order to start and register a NICA Indie club founding Team Directors must acquire a Level 2 License which can only be obtained by attending a NICA Leaders’ Summit in addition to satisfying other requirements. See:

[\(http://www.nationalmtb.org/?s=coach+license+program/\)](http://www.nationalmtb.org/?s=coach+license+program/).

NICA is working hard to bring leaders summits to more regions. Check the event schedule at the NICA Website for upcoming conference locations and dates.

	Minimum Requirement	Requirement for Discount
First-Year Club	<b>Level 2 License</b> is required for the team to register as a NICA Indie Club	<b>Level 3 License</b> qualifies for team registration discount
Second-Year Club	<b>Level 3 License</b> is required for the team to register as a NICA Indie Club	Discount applies to Second year team and beyond if Team Director maintains Level 3 License