NICA Pit Zone Manual
Navigating Team, Coach & Student-Athlete Registration
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What is the Online Pit Zone?

NICAs online Pit Zone was developed to create a seamless database and registration system that can be used at the team level (roster management), league level (event management) and NICA level (insurance and risk management level). The Pit Zone uses a state of the art database system to ensure that information is safe, secure, and synchronized across these levels at all times. As mountain biking is a high-risk sport it is critical that coaches, league directors and staff, and NICA has up-to-date information for all participants. The Pit Zone stores critical health information, emergency contact and other information centrally on a cloud-based system. Sensitive personal information is accessible to appropriate users and credit card information is not stored. Your team, your league and NICA all require a lot of information to operate – the Pit Zone system enables families and coaches to register once in a single system. Because of our generous sponsors, the online Pit Zone is being developed over time and new features and improvements are deployed about every six months.

A few details:

- The online Pit Zone accepts credit cards and checks.
- As with banking websites, the Pit Zone may operate slower than the typical website.
- We thank all Team Directors for taking the time to attend to the critical administrative tasks associated with team management!

We encourage coaches to use the Pit Zone as their roster management tool.
NICA Registration Services

Most leagues do not have the staff and resources to easily delegate or train part-time registration workers. Managing registration is time consuming and detail-oriented work where mistakes can lead to risk management issues, race scoring errors or other frustrations. NICA Registration Services provide leagues the support they need to operate efficient and sustainable organizations. NICA works closely with your league director to provide these services. NICA Registration Services are located at the NICA headquarters in Berkeley, California. In general, all waivers and payments for team/club, coach and student-athlete registration are sent to the Berkeley office (please do not send these to your league director unless specifically asked to do so).

Contacting NICA Registration Services:

**E-mail:** registration@nationalmtb.org

**Mailing:**
NICA
Attn: Registration
805 Camelia St.
Berkeley, CA 94710
Why the Invite System?

Each team has its own timeline at the beginning of each season and the invite system gives team directors the needed control over their membership. In addition, the invite system helps NICA/leagues keep a single and reliable set of data for scoring purposes. The invite system may seem like extra work up front, but the overall reduction in errors is worth the extra time. Non-invite systems generally lead to loose ends that take extra work from team directors and league directors to address and can lead to errors in scoring or other headaches. Returning student-athletes and coaches can bypass the invite system by simply logging in.

Lose an invite e-mail? Team Directors can find the “invite token” (a link) for any coach or student-athlete by clicking on their name in the Pit Zone.
NICA Team / Club Program

The registration process begins with a conversation or email exchange – your league director wants to know about your program! The league director may have questions about the mission of your program, the leadership and support in place, your connection to a school, and/or the scope of a composite team. This conversation will help your program get off to a good start. Once the name/contact of the Team Director and official club/team name is established, the league director can invite you to register your team/club as an official NICA Club/Team. Established or returning teams may expect their invitation, but check with your league director if you have any questions or if team leadership changes. After your club/team is registered and paid for, you will receive an insurance certificate indicating you are now a sanctioned NICA Club/Team. NICA Club/Team’s and their registered members are protected by NICA's insurance program (http://www.nationalmtb.org/wp-content/uploads/NICAInsuranceOverview.pdf) and are eligible for other NICA member benefits.

The NICA Coaches License Program was established to support NICA Club/Teams to ensure quality coaching and also protect our student-athletes. A background check is required for all adult volunteers that work with NICA youth. Only licensed coaches have the full protection of the club/team insurance (http://www.nationalmtb.org/wp-content/uploads/NICAInsuranceOverview.pdf). Using the online Pit Zone, Team Directors invite their adult volunteers to register in the online Pit Zone as a member of their team, where they complete their registration and a background check to obtain a General Volunteer License. Additional training and higher coaching levels encourage professional development, first aid training and additional commitment to the work. Team Directors can ensure their coaches have background checks as well as track their license level using the Pit Zone.

The cost for a NICA General Volunteer is the $25 annual license fee plus a one-time background check.

For more information about the NICA Coaches License Program follow this link: http://www.nationalmtb.org/coaches-license-program.
NICA Membership for Student-Athletes

Whether they plan to race or not, all student-athletes must register on the online Pit Zone before they can ride with your club/team. As registered NICA members your student/athletes are protected by NICA’s insurance program (http://www.nationalmtb.org/wp-content/uploads/NICAInsuranceOverview.pdf) and are eligible for other NICA member benefits. We encourage Team Directors to invite their student-athletes well in advance of the first team practice to enable families to complete the registration process and mail in the required forms. Again, it’s required that all student-athletes complete the registration process before they participate in any club/team practices.

The cost for a student-athlete to purchase their annual NICA membership will be included in your online registration.

Did you know that NICA insurance covers the deductibles for student-athlete members and licensed coaches in the case of medical costs incurred from an accident during sanctioned activities?
The Timeline and Important Information

Registering Your Team for Pre-Season Activities

Each new season begins with pre-season activity – which may include several fun rides, bike checks, and skill clinics. Aside from classroom informational meetings, all activities must be insured by NICA. The following items must be conducted to hold these activities:

- NICA Team/Coach registration must be complete (insurance certificate received);
- All participating adult volunteers licensed; and
- All participating student-athletes registered (NICA members).

This ensures that any incidents, such as an accident on the bike, or a finger caught in a disk brake (during bike checks), or any other unforeseen incident is covered. Check NICAs Team Training Limits document (http://www.nationalmtb.org/wp-content/uploads/Training-Limits.pdf) for the opening date of pre-season in your league and pre-season limitations. Regular practices cannot be held during pre-season.

Team Directors should download the Emergency Contact and Health Info from the Pit Zone and share this info with all coaches and rider leaders who partake in team activities.

Regular Season Practices and Gearing Up for The Race Season

On the official date of regular season, regular practices can commence. As with pre-season activity, the requirements are:

- NICA Team/Coach registration must be complete (insurance certificate received);
- All participating adult volunteers licensed; and
- All participating student-athletes registered (NICA members).

Early in regular season, Team Directors should assess their team size. Team Directors should discuss the league racing series with each rider to assess their level of commitment and confirm that commitment with parents.

Checking Student-Athlete Categories

NICA has strict category rules that must be adhered to. While the Pit Zone system does allow riders to choose their category, the rules do not allow student-athletes to freely choose their category. NICA has checks in place but places the ultimate responsibility on student-athletes to know the rules. Team Directors should assist student athletes in learning and understanding these rules. The following references are important tools for coaches and student-athletes:

NICA recommends each coach audit all their racer’s categories two weeks prior to the opening race.

2. Category Placement Table (CPT) for returning NICA riders (http://www.nationalmtb.org/category-placements/)

3. Category Petition form (http://www.nationalmtb.org/wp-content/uploads/petition.pdf) (see also the petition guidelines below, Appendix 3)

**Race Series and Race Registration**

Watch for announcements from your league director about registering your student-athletes for the league race series. The Pit Zone enables both families and coaches to register their riders for the race series. Riders that are already registered members of your club/team only require payment to register for the race series. There are two costs associated with race series registration:

1. Series Registration Fee (one time only)
2. Per-Race Fee

The one-time fee helps cover the year-round costs and overhead associated with operating the league and planning the race season and also helps ensure a sustainable program. The per-race fee covers the fixed costs associated with putting on consistent and quality races.

Encourage your families to register for the Race Series and Opening Race in advance to avoid late fees. Pre-registering also helps ensure reduce stress for families on the morning of the race, and successful scoring at the end of the day.

Check with your league director about full or partial race scholarships for student-athletes.

A note for composition teams: Team Directors need to pay close attention to the Composite Team Rules (see Chapter 7 of the NICA Rules and Guidelines http://www.nationalmtb.org/wp-content/uploads/NICA-Rulebook.pdf). For example, if five or more riders attend the same school, they will be scored separately. Please work closely with your league director to ensure the team is scored according to the rules.

**Post Race Follow-Up**

For those riders who had not started registration in the Pit Zone prior to the race, make sure they follow up and complete online registration. The information is needed by League Directors and also ensures Team Directors have access to key information and can manage future registration.

**Managing Race Registration Through the Race Series**

We encourage Team Directors to manage their student-athlete registration throughout the season. The Pit Zone also enables Team Directors to register multiple student-athletes using team funds when available.

**Rolling over to a New Season**

The online Pit Zone was designed to make things easy for returning members. The Pit Zone keeps key personal information about student-athletes and coaches. Returning members will find that all fields self-populate making the registration process go faster, but allowing members to update any changes. Team Directors can “re-invite” coaches and student-athletes at the beginning of a new season, but please note that returning members can also register by logging back into their account.
Other Resources

- **Online Pit Zone FAQ**
  http://www.nationalmtb.org/pit-zone-faqs/

- **Insurance Information and FAQ**

- **NICA Team Training Limits**

- **Licensing Requirements for Team Directors**

- **Coaches Benefits**
  http://www.nationalmtb.org/benefits/
# Appendix

## Pit Zone Tips:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coaches</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coach Name</td>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abominable Snowman</td>
<td>General Volunteer</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sasquatch@esdsfgw.com">sasquatch@esdsfgw.com</a></td>
<td>687-412-8666</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Dweller</td>
<td>General Volunteer</td>
<td><a href="mailto:yeli@esdsasd.com">yeli@esdsasd.com</a></td>
<td>687-215-6644</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve McBaker</td>
<td>(D)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mibcoach@yahoo.com">mibcoach@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>687-267-9854</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Review detailed team information
- Mouse over blue check-mark for more information
- Mouse over red exclamation for more information
- Export coaches info
- Invite or re-invite coaches
- Export all rider data
- Export emergency contact and health info
- Be sure to audit all categories before the opening race
- Invite or re-invite student-athletes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Riders and Races</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rider Name</td>
<td>Race Plate #</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Race Ready</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair El</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Varsity</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goo Gnome</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trow El Puente</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>JV</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Invite New Riders

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**Bentoville High School 2011/2012 Season**

This club/team is fully sanctioned by NICA for the 2011/2012 season.

**Coaches**

- **Abominable Snowman**
  - General Volunteer
  - Email: sasquatch@esdsfgw.com
  - Phone: 687-412-8666
- **Forest Dweller**
  - General Volunteer
  - Email: yeli@esdsasd.com
  - Phone: 687-215-6644
- **Steve McBaker**
  - (D)
  - Email: mibcoach@yahoo.com
  - Phone: 687-267-9854

**Riders and Races**

- **Fair El**
  - Race Plate #: 11
  - Grade: Varsity
  - Category: Yes
  - Race Ready: Yes
  - Races: 1, 2
- **Goo Gnome**
  - Race Plate #: 10
  - Grade: Sophomore
  - Category: Yes
  - Race Ready: Yes
  - Races: 1, 2
- **Trow El Puente**
  - Race Plate #: 12
  - Grade: JV
  - Category: No
  - Race Ready: Yes
  - Races: 1, 2
Team Name Guidelines

1. **Short Name**

   The team’s “Short Name” will be used in student-athlete results for the racing season. For this reason, it should be succinct and easily identify the team as either school-based or composite. Space is limited on results pages, so this name is limited to 20 characters (including spaces).

   For school teams, use “HS” and do not use any periods. Composite teams should use the regional name plus “Comp” without a period. For example: “Grand Valley Comp.”

   Do not use “Team” or “Club,” simply use the best version of the official school name or composite name that is 20 characters or less.

2. **Long Name**

   The team’s “Long Name” will be used in team results pages, where more space is available.

   Use your official school name completely written out (do not abbreviate), for example write out “New Vista High School.” Do not use words such as “Club, Team, MTB, or Racing” and don’t include your school mascot.

   Composite teams should use their local name plus the word “Composite,” for example “Grand Valley Composite.”

Petition Guidelines

The general guidelines for petition rulings are as follow:

- A borderline case student-athlete (previous season results are close to qualifying the rider) with a coaches recommendation may be placed in the next highest category;

- A new or returning student-athlete with strong results in outside races (not NICA) and a coaches recommendation may be placed in the next highest category;

- A league rider may be moved down to the next lowest category based on a verifiable medical or health condition. Student-athletes are not moved down for competition reasons.

For detailed Category Placement Rules, please see NICA Rules & Guidelines.