



ARIZONA
CYCLING ASSOCIATION



OFFICIAL AFFILIATE
NATIONAL
INTERSCHOLASTIC
CYCLING ASSOCIATION

Handbook

2021 Rules & Guidelines

ARIZONA CYCLING ASSOCIATION

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EFFECTIVE DATE

The following Arizona Cycling Association (“ACA”) standards and guidance materials are derived from terms that previously appeared in the NICA Rulebook, 2020 Rules & Guidelines, Arizona League Edition. This edition of the Arizona Cycling Association Handbook, 2021 Rules & Guidelines (“Handbook”) is made effective May 17, 2021 (the “Effective Date”). All prior rules and regulations are superseded as of the Effective Date.

CHAPTER 1: APPLICABILITY, DISCRETION & GRIEVANCE PROCESS

SECTION 1.1 — APPLICABILITY OF RULES

1.1.A This Chapter 1 sets out the applicability for the Chapters presenting the rules that apply to participants in the ACA, including Chapter 2: Student-Athlete Participation Requirements, Chapter 4: Student-Athlete Rules & Consequences and Chapter 5: Coach, Parent and Guardian Participation Requirements. Throughout the Handbook, students registered with the ACA are referred to alternatively as students, athletes, student-athletes, racers, riders or registrants.

1.1.B Chapter 4: Student-Athlete Rules & Consequences should be observed by students at all times when cycling and will be enforced on students participating in all manner of ACA events, including races, trainings, camps, or any other occasion where coaches or students appear wearing ACA apparel.

1.1.C Chapter 5: Coaches, Parents & Guardians Participation Requirements will be applied to all non-riders assisting or associated with a rider, and their failure to comply with the rules will cause their rider to be penalized as set out herein or at the ACA's discretion.

1.1.D The ACA will also adopt and provide to riders, coaches and family members, other guidance materials including Chapter 3: Safety Standards & Regulations, governing the ACA and ACA events. Violations will be considered on a case by case basis and may result in a student's prohibition from participating in the ACA.

1.1.E The interpretation and application of the rules will be made at the ACA's discretion by representatives of the ACA as provided for in the ACA's Handbook. This discretion may not be abused or applied unfairly, however the facts of individual cases may differ and the ACA acknowledges that the specific facts of individual cases are likely to require the use of discretion. Appeals must first be exhausted within the ACA through the appeal process provided, if any, and only then will the National Rules Committee consider the appeal of an ACA's final application of the rules.

SECTION 1.2 — ACA DISCRETION & RULES COMMITTEE

1.2.A The ACA has discretion to suspend family members of a student-athlete based on red-level violations of the Handbook by that student-athlete or that student-athlete's family members, occurring at any time. Such discretion must be exercised by the ACA Rules Committee and its decision provided in writing, providing the basis for and length of such suspension. The length of suspension may extend up to the point where the student-athlete is no longer eligible to participate.

1.2.B The ACA Rules Committee is responsible for the interpretation of the Handbook 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 ACA Rules Committee.

1.2.C A decision by the ACA Rules Committee may be appealed to the NICA National Rules Committee. Such appeals to the National Rules Committee are submitted either by the ACA Executive Director or the chairperson of the ACA Rules Committee.

1.2.D The ACA must form its own Rules Committee. Pending the formation of the ACA Rules Committee, the ACA Executive Director assumes all ACA Rules Committee responsibilities under these rules. ACA Rules Committee members are selected by the ACA's board of directors or the ACA Executive Director. The ACA Rules Committee shall designate a member to participate as a member of the National Rules Committee.

SECTION 1.3 — NON-DISCRIMINATION STANDARDS

The ACA recognizes the value of participation in ACA events for all student-athletes, parents, coaches and volunteers. The ACA prohibits all forms of discrimination, including discrimination based on race, religion, and actual or perceived sex and gender.

SECTION 1.4 — GUIDANCE FOR SHARING GRIEVANCES

1.4.A The ACA recognizes that student-athletes, parents, coaches and volunteers have the right to raise grievances about any matter related to their volunteering with the organization. A grievance could be related to another community member, a member of the paid staff, or the manner in which they are being treated by the team/ACA. The grievance

procedure is in place to ensure that all community members are treated in a fair and equitable manner.

1.4.B If a community member has a complaint against a member of staff, another volunteer, or the organization in general they should first discuss the issue with their Head Coach or Team Director. The volunteer may be accompanied by a colleague at this meeting.

1.4.C If the complaint is against the Head Coach, Team Director or other leadership position, the matter should be taken to and discussed with the ACA Executive Director. Every attempt will be made to have the issue resolved within fourteen days. This and all complaints will be treated in a confidential manner.

SECTION 1.5 — NO RETALIATION POLICY

No individual who reports a suspected violation of any ACA policy, rule, standard, code of conduct, regulation pursuant to law, or is in violation of a clear mandate or public policy concerning the health, safety, welfare, or protection of the environment to a superior, whether or not the allegation turns out to be true, shall be subject to any form of retaliation, including, but not necessarily limited to, harassment, suspension, expulsion, demotion, or firing.

CHAPTER 2: STUDENT-ATHLETE PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

SECTION 2.1 — ELIGIBLE STUDENT-ATHLETES

The ACA is open to all students who attend public or private school, or who are homeschooled for high school (grades 9–12) and middle school (grades 6-8), within the ACA’s region. Refer to Section 2.8 for out-of-region students and inter-league participation.

SECTION 2.2 — PROOF OF ATTENDENCE

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.

SECTION 2.3 — STUDENT AGE AND GRADE

2.3.A To be eligible to compete in the ACA, a student-athlete must:

1. 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;
2. 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
3. Not have a high school diploma, general education diploma (GED), or otherwise be graduated from high school.

2.3.B Student-athletes who have skipped a grade or been held back:

1. A single grade are placed into categories according to their grade levels; or
2. More than one grade must consult with the ACA Executive Director regarding placement into the appropriate categories.

SECTION 2.4 — 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 (where applicable) or public high school based on their ages. The ACA Executive Director must consider such age-based placement in the event homeschooled student-athletes seek alternative placement under the Category Placement Standards adopted by the ACA.

SECTION 2.5 — 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.

SECTION 2.6 — STUDENT-ATHLETE REGISTRATION

2.6.A Student-athletes must register with the ACA. The ACA will communicate the registration process and requirements to participants in advance of the start of the season. Student-athletes must sign and submit the following registration forms and complete the following requirements:

1. Student registration is conducted online through the NICA Pit Zone in order to ensure the student is covered by the ACA's insurance.
2. Registration fees (except for scholarship-eligible students)
3. Signed Agreement to Participate/Release of Liability
4. Signed Medical Form
5. Signed Media Form
6. Signed Code of Conduct Form

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

2.6.C Student-athletes must register and pay for each race they enter.

2.6.D The Code of Conduct form must be agreed to and signed by the student-athletes regardless of their age, along with their guardian if the student is a minor. All other forms must be signed by a legal guardian unless the student-athlete is at least eighteen (18) years old or older. The forms will contain language indicating that parents or legal guardians who permit a minor to participate in ACA races or camps, acknowledge,

understand and accept the rules and regulations covering the event and agree to the terms of the ACA's Release form which shall be binding even when no proper entry form for a student has been signed and submitted.

1. The Code of Conduct applies at all times, including outside of race events, and sets out safety and other standards for respectful conduct with which student-athlete should comply. Violations of these standards could, at the discretion of the ACA, result in disqualification from participation or other consequences

SECTION 2.7— STUDENT-ATHLETE MUST BE IN GOOD STANDING WITH TEAM

Student-athletes must be in good standing with their team in order to participate in ACA events. Team Directors/Head Coaches have the discretion to define the attributes of good standing for their teams. Factors that affect standing may include, but are not limited to, team dues, practice attendance and student grade point average.

SECTION 2.8 — OUT-OF-REGION STUDENTS & INTER-LEAGUE PARTICIPATION

2.8.A Out-of-Region Students: Student-athletes and teams located outside of the ACA's region and in a state where there is no NICA-sanctioned league, may be allowed to participate in ACA events and races.

2.8.B Inter-League Participation: Student-athletes and teams located in a state that has a NICA-sanctioned league may only participate in another NICA-sanctioned league's events and races upon agreement between the leagues' Executive Directors. Such agreements must be reviewed and approved annually by the directors. In reaching such an agreement, the league Executive 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 as applicable to the league in which they have declared their participation.

SECTION 2.9 — STUDENT-ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT

As a representative of the ACA community, student-athletes agree to follow this Code of Conduct to maintain a culture of safety, responsibility and respect. Parents and guardians are asked to review and agree to the code of conduct with their children during the registration process.

Be Safe

- Always wear a helmet.
- Be prepared with additional safety gear: gloves, glasses, and extra clothes to match the weather.
- Be prepared with a working bike and perform an ABCDE bike check (Air, Brakes, Chain, Derailleur, Everything Else).
- Ride within your limits.
- Ride with someone else in isolated areas.
- Never use any performance enhancing drug described in the ACA Handbook.
- Plan ahead and let your family or caregivers know where you are going and when you plan to return.
- Avoid contact with wildlife.
- Understand the dangers of the native plants and avoid poisonous plants, stay on the trail.

Be Responsible

- Be prepared with the water, food, and clothing that you need to complete the ride.
- Come to practice with a clean and well- maintained bike.
- Be accountable for your actions and choices.
- Never consume alcohol or use any illegal drugs.
- Ride only on designated and legal trails and routes.
- Follow additional rules that may be associated with team's school or ACA affiliations.

Be Respectful

- Respect coaches, teammates, competitors, trail users and other community members.
 - Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
 - Avoid language and actions that may be perceived as bullying or harassment.
 - Be inclusive and welcoming to new athletes, coaches, competitors, and other trail users.
 - Use appropriate language.
- Move aside to allow others to pass you safely.
- Announce your passing, intention, and specify the passing side.
- Do your best when racing or riding your bike.
- Ride with courtesy at races, at practice, and in the community.
- Seek consent before touching, hugging and otherwise embracing teammates and coaches.
- Slow down when approaching other trail users.
- Provide right of way to pedestrians and equestrians and stop and ask for passing instructions from equestrians.
- Leave no trace or trash on the trail.

- Ride on trails when the weather and surface conditions will not cause damage.
- Perform trail maintenance on trails only with full permission and permits from the land owner/manager.

Failure to follow this Code of Conduct and ACA rules and guidelines as additionally described in the ACA Handbook may lead to suspension or expulsion from ACA activities.

CHAPTER 3: SAFETY STANDARDS & REGULATIONS

SECTION 3.1 — BIKE REQUIREMENTS

3.1.A Mountain Bikes Only: Student-athletes must compete using mountain bikes that have 26- to 29-inch wheels with tires not narrower than 1.75 inches. In addition:

1. Tires must have knobbies – no slick tires are permitted;
2. No road bikes or mountain bikes equipped with drop bars;
3. No cyclocross bikes.
4. If a student-athlete is unable to ride a mountain bike with 26- to 29-inch wheels due to his or her height or other limitations, competing on a mountain bike with smaller wheels is permitted with ACA approval.

3.1.B 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.

3.1.C 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.

3.1.D No Bar Ends: For safety reasons, bar ends (forward pointing handle grip extensions) may not be used.

3.1.E Handlebar End Plugs and Stem Caps Required: For safety reasons, handlebar end plugs and stem caps are required.

SECTION 3.2 — FOOTWEAR

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

SECTION 3.3 — EYE PROTECTION

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

SECTION 3.4 — AVOID RIDING ALONE

Riders are encouraged to ride with at least one (1) other person whenever possible. If riding alone, student-athletes 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.

SECTION 3.5 — REPAIR BIKES OFF THE TRAIL

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

SECTION 3.6 — OBEY TRAFFIC LAWS

Student-athletes are required to obey all traffic laws. You should 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 on The ACA of American Bicyclists website at <http://www.bikeleague.org>.

SECTION 3.7 — 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 loud and 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. Yield to uphill traffic. 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.

SECTION 3.8 — 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.

SECTION 3.9 — REPRESENT THE ACA & MOUNTAIN BIKING

Recognize that, as an ACA student-athlete, you represent the ACA, NICA, your 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, an ACA jersey, or any other cycling gear.

SECTION 3.10 — 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 Section 4.5) and appropriate safety gear.

SECTION 3.11 — RISK ACCEPTANCE

3.11.A All student-athletes who participate in any of the events associated with the ACA including, without limitation, races, training rides, clinics, camps, and practice skill sessions, do so at their own risk. Whether or not you are registered with the ACA, no liability shall be attached to the ACA, NICA 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.

3.11.B By participating in a race or camp conducted the ACA, 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.

3.11.C If you suffer a concussion, you may not participate in team training or ACA competition before providing written clearance to return to such activities from a licensed healthcare provider.

SECTION 3.12 — CONCUSSION & RETURN-TO-PLAY

3.12.A The ACA requires adherence to, at a minimum, 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.

3.12.B The ACA must also 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.

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

1. Immediate Removal from Activity: An athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in an ACA activity, or who is suffering the effects of a concussion sustained outside of ACA activity, shall be immediately removed from the activity for the remainder of the day.
2. Medical Evaluation Required: After being removed from the activity, the athlete shall not be permitted to return to the activity until he or she is evaluated by a licensed healthcare provider.
3. Clearance Required: 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 healthcare provider.

3.12.D 7-Day Minimum Graduated Observation Period: If the licensed healthcare 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 at 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-sanctioned 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 the ACA 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).

CHAPTER 4: STUDENT-ATHLETE RULES & CONSEQUENCES

SECTION 4.1 — RULE VIOLATION CONSEQUENCES

4.1.A Standard Student-Athlete Consequences: Unless otherwise specified, rule violations will result in consequences at one of the three following levels: Yellow, Orange, Red. The ACA has the discretion to impose additional penalties on a team wide basis as needed.

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.

4.1.B Other Student-Athlete Consequences and Applications: The standard consequences can be applied in other situations at an ACA official's discretion. Where standard consequences may not adequately address a specific rule violation, other consequences specific to the rule have been included in the language of the rule itself. The ACA is responsible for enforcing consequences and may sanction other penalties that are not specified in the rules, but are deemed appropriate.

4.1.C Coach, Parent or Guardian Level Consequences: The ACA may apply consequences to a student-athlete based on violations of the rules by a coach or family member, and the ACA may suspend the coach or family member(s) of a student-athlete based on violations of the rules by the student-athlete, the coach or the family member(s), occurring at any time.

4.1.D While the nature of the consequences for breaking these rules are tied to ACA events, coaches and parents are encouraged to enforce similar policies of safety, etiquette, and trail use during off-season rides.

SECTION 4.2 — POSITIVE SPORTING ATTITUDE

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

Student-athletes are expected to display an excellent sporting attitude during all ACA 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.

SECTION 4.3 — ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR NOT TOLERATED

RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

No student-athlete may inappropriately or unwelcomingly touch another person, or cause physical harm to, or engage in any behavior that may be considered abuse, assault, or do battery to any other student-athlete, official, spectator, or anyone connected with or attending any ACA 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.

SECTION 4.4 — SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

4.4.A The ACA 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.

4.4.B Any student-athlete 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 ACA representative or other party 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-athlete will not adversely affect matters pertaining to his or her status in any ACA program or activity.

4.4.C If any student, coach, parent, volunteer, or employee feels they have been sexually harassed at a ACA event, they should report the incident immediately to the ACA Executive Director or NICA President. If any student, coach, parent, volunteer, or employee feels they have been a victim of abuse, assault, or battery at an ACA event, they should report the incident immediately to the ACA Executive Director or NICA President. All reports will be handled in a confidential manner.

SECTION 4.5 — HELMETS

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

4.5.A Wearing Helmets Strictly Enforced: Student-athletes must wear approved helmets at all times, with the exception that helmet rules are not applicable to riders warming up on bikes that are securely mounted to stationary trainers. Under no other circumstances may a student-athlete 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. Additionally:

1. Helmet straps must be adjusted to the extent that two fingers can be pushed under the strap, whereas three fingers would be difficult.
2. Helmets should not have any cracks or dents from previous falls or mishandling.
3. Helmets should be the correct size with little to no side-to-side or front-to-back movement.

4.5.B Approved Helmets: Helmets must meet one of the following standards:

1. U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) standard for bicycle helmets.

2. Snell Memorial Foundation Standard "B" or "N" series.
3. American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standard F-1447.
4. European Committee for Standardization (CE EN1078) standard for bicycle helmets.

SECTION 4.6 — SAFE & CONTROLLED RIDING

YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

4.6.A 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.

4.6.B Walk the Bike Through Crowded Areas: All racers must walk their bikes in crowded areas such as the pit zone, spectator areas, or any other area designated as a "walk area." Student-athletes who demonstrate reckless behavior or create a risk of harm to other students or spectators will be penalized.

4.6.C Hands on Bars: All riders must race with their hands holding the bars within reach of the brake levers.

4.6.D Wheelies and Stoppies Prohibited on Race Course: Wheelies (a maneuver in which the front wheel comes off the ground due to sufficient torque being applied to the rear wheel and rider motion relative to the bike) and stoppies (a maneuver in which the back wheel is lifted and the bike is ridden on the front wheel by carefully applying brake pressure) for show on the race course are strictly forbidden. Any rider observed exhibiting either maneuver gratuitously on the race course during a race will be **relegated to last place**. Repeat offenders may be subject to additional sanctions, up to and including expulsion from the ACA.

SECTION 4.7 — LEGAL MOUNTAIN BIKING TRAILS ONLY

RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

As representatives of the ACA, NICA and our sport, student-athletes must ride only on authorized trails. This rule applies at all times. It is the

student-athlete’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.

SECTION 4.8 — LEAVE NO TRACE

YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

4.8.A Low Impact Cycling Required: Student-athletes are required to practice low-impact cycling, recognizing that there are different types of soils and trail construction. Wet and muddy trails are more vulnerable to damage. When the trail bed is soft, student-athletes should 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.

4.8.B Littering Prohibited: Littering is not permitted at any ACA event. Student-athletes caught littering, if determined to be intentional, are subject to a penalty.

SECTION 4.9 — MUSIC PLAYERS & HEADPHONES

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

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

SECTION 4.10 — CELL PHONES

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

Student-athletes may not answer a cell phone or make cell phone calls while riding a bike. Student-athletes 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.

SECTION 4.11 — PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES: A-LIST

RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

Student-athletes are prohibited from using performance enhancing or otherwise illegal substances as detailed below:

4.11.A USADA Rules: 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 (1) full season or the equivalent number of races spanning two (2) 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 to find the current Prohibited List. Although it is already included in the banned substances identified by the USADA, for the sake of clarity, the ACA emphasizes here that any product containing THC regardless of the means of consumption, is strictly prohibited.

4.11.B Tobacco: Tobacco use by any means, including vaping or e-cigs, is not permitted. Only those students who provide evidence that they have enrolled in a stop-smoking (or chewing) class may continue to use tobacco during participation. Such student-athletes must provide proof to their coach of participation and when they have completed the class, and refrain from use in the future to avoid consequences for violating this rule.

4.11.C Alcohol and Drug Use: Alcohol and drug use by any means are prohibited. At the ACA's discretion, the following structure of consequences to violation of this rule.

1. **First Violation:** The student-athlete will lose eligibility for one (1) race. The student-athlete must continue to attend and participate in regular practice with his/her team in order to remain eligible for future participation and must to attend a minimum of six (6) educational group sessions regarding alcohol and drug abuse.
2. **Second Violation:** The student-athlete will lose eligibility for an additional three (3) races. The student-athlete must continue to attend and participate in regular practice with his/her team in order to remain eligible for future participation and must to attend an additional minimum of six (6) educational group sessions regarding alcohol and drug abuse.

3. Third and Subsequent Violation: The student-athlete will lose eligibility for participation for an additional six (6) races for each subsequent violation. If the student becomes a participant in an alcohol and/or drug treatment program on his or her own volition, the student-athlete may be eligible for participation after a minimum of six (6) weeks.

SECTION 4.12 — PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES: B-LIST

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

In addition to the A-List substances, the following substances are also prohibited.

4.12.A Caffeine: Caffeine is an addictive substance that enhances performance. The ACA deems caffeinated products as inappropriate for young student-athletes. Caffeinated sport products such as bars, gels, and sport drinks, are banned before or during ACA races, practices, and other activities. The consumption of products containing caffeine by student-athletes at ACA races and camps is banned.

4.12.B Creatine, Guaraná Root, and Taurine: Creatine, guaraná root, and taurine are also substances banned from consumption at ACA races and camps.

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

SECTION 4.13 — RACE REGISTRATION

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

Student-athletes must register and pay for each ACA race prior to the race. Pre-registration is available on the ACA website.

SECTION 4.14 — RACING THE WRONG CATEGORY

RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

4.14.A Student-athletes are responsible for knowing, understanding, and following the category placement rules and the placement criteria as

applied by the ACA. Any questions should be directed to the ACA Executive Director.

4.14.B Student-athletes who race in the wrong category shall be disqualified from that race and in addition, at the ACA Executive Director’s discretion, will be disqualified from participation in the next event.

SECTION 4.15 — NUMBER PLATES

YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

4.15.A Student-athletes must affix an official ACA number plate to their bikes at ACA 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.

4.15.B Number plates may not be altered in any way including, without limitation, bending, cutting, trimming, or by adding stickers or markings.

SECTION 4.16 — PRE-RIDE

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

Pre-ride is a regularly scheduled practice ride on the race course that takes place on the same weekend as the race. Student-athletes will be given the opportunity to walk the course and participate in a practice ride whenever possible. For practice rides on race courses at other times, the Pre-Ride Rules do not apply.

4.16.A Pre-Ride During Designated Times Only: Pre-rides on race day must be confined to the time designated by the ACA. 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.

4.16.B 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.

4.16.C 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 during designated pre-ride times. No coach is permitted to ride the course during an event. A violation of this rule will result in a penalty against the team with whom the offender is associated.

1. First Offense: **25-point penalty** deducted from team score on race day.
2. Second offense: **50-point penalty** deducted from team score on race day.
3. Third offense: **100-point penalty** deducted from team score on race day.

SECTION 4.17 — MODIFICATION OF THE COURSE PROHIBITED

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

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.

SECTION 4.18 — RACING APPAREL

YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

4.18.A 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 jersey).

4.18.B Independent Riders' Jerseys: Independent student-athletes must choose a distinct individual jersey and race wearing the same jersey design throughout a season.

4.18.C No Advertisements or Endorsements: Only the team name, logo and mascot, the ACA and NICA logos, and a small apparel manufacturer logo may be featured on racing apparel (jerseys and shorts) worn in ACA races. Advertisements and endorsements of any kind, e.g., team sponsors and bicycle equipment brands, are not allowed on racing apparel. Riders who race in apparel that violates this policy will be subject to disqualification.

4.18.D Leader's Jersey: The student-athlete in each high school category with the most individual points for the season will be awarded the leader's jersey. Each points leader is expected to wear the jersey at all ACA races, so long as they remain the top points holder. In the case of a tie, both student-athletes wear leader's jerseys.

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

SECTION 4.19 — STAGING FOR RACE STARTS

YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

4.19.A 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.

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

4.19.B Racers must not stage or loiter around the start line until 15 minutes before the first start time of the corresponding race wave. Racers who line up at or near the staging area too early may be required to return their team's pit area (or a **1-minute time penalty** may be applied).

SECTION 4.20 — LISTEN TO PRE-RACE ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

SECTION 4.21 — START WITH ONE FOOT ON THE GROUND

YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

Riders must start races from a standstill position with one foot on the ground.

SECTION 4.22 — PASSING SLOWER STUDENT-ATHLETES

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

4.22.A Pass with Respect: Passing in a manner that compromises the safety of other riders will not be tolerated. When overtaking a rider on the race course, the passing rider should do so respectfully and must:

1. Pass only when safe to do so and without rider contact;
2. 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.

4.22.B 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.

4.22.C 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.

SECTION 4.23 — BIKE PUSHERS MUST YIELD

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

4.23.A Student-athletes must not progress on the race course unaccompanied by a bike. In the case of an inoperable bike, student-athletes 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.

4.23.B 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.

SECTION 4.24 — CUTTING THE COURSE

RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

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

4.24.B Notwithstanding Section 4.24.A, 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 ACA Executive 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.

SECTION 4.25 — DEVIATION FROM THE COURSE

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

4.25.A 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 three (3) feet.

4.25.B 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.

4.25.C 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 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. In the case of medical emergencies, racers shall remain still and wait for a course marshal or medical help.

SECTION 4.26 — FEED ZONE

YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

4.26.A Accept Food and Drinks in Feed Zone Only: Feeders 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.

4.26.B No Physical Contact: All Feed Zone 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. As set out in Section 4.27, such other contact will be considered outside assistance and a **5-minute penalty** will apply.

SECTION 4.27 — OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE

4.27.A Riders Must Be Self-Supporting: 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-athlete must report such an occurrence of outside assistance before the end of the protest period that precedes the award ceremony. The student-athlete must report to a Scoring Official, Course Marshal, or other race official.

4.27.B Safety and Medical Exceptions: 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.

SECTION 4.28 — SWITCHING BIKES AND WHEELS

4.28.A 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.

4.28.B Student-athletes must complete the entire race on the same set of wheels upon which the race was begun. A **10-minute penalty** applies for switching a wheel (defined as a preassembled wheel with a hub, rim, and spokes) in a race.

CHAPTER 5: COACH, PARENT & GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

SECTION 5.1 — COACH REGISTRATION

5.1.A All coaches must register with the ACA in order to be covered by ACA insurance. This registration for coaches at all levels carries a membership fee. Coaches are not fully insured until they are registered (Level 1 license at minimum). Registration is conducted online through the NICA Pit Zone.

5.1.B All adults participating in team rides must be at least 18 years of age, have a NICA Coach License and undergone an annual background check. Adults who switch leagues will need to repeat the background check before participation in the new league.

SECTION 5.2 — 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.

SECTION 5.3 — 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 ACA Executive Director must be notified as to who is serving as interim Head Coach.

SECTION 5.4 — POSITIVE SPORTING BEHAVIOR

5.4.A It is required that all coaches, parents, and guardians demonstrate respect for and deference to the person and the decisions of ACA officials as it relates to sporting behavior of student-athletes, themselves, and other ACA officials. A failure to exhibit respectful behavior may result in restrictions imposed on the coach, the parent, or a student-athlete's participation in the ACA. ACA officials have complete and

total discretion for the implementation of the rules, especially in regard to sporting behavior.

5.4.B Coaches, parents, and guardians will also display mature and positive behavior during every event and in all interactions at all times with student-athletes, other parents, other coaches, and ACA officials. Coaches, parents, and guardians are role models to student-athletes, and must demonstrate a fair and calm response in the face of protests, complaints, conflicts, or emergencies. Coaches, parents, and guardians are expected to be focused on helping student-athletes develop positive character traits, learn life lessons, and grow into healthy young adults.

SECTION 5.5 — HELMETS

All coaches, parents, guardians, and team assistants must comply with all helmet rules at all team practices, team events, and ACA races. In the event a parent, coach or other assistant is seen riding without a helmet, a **25-point penalty** will be applied to his or her team's score at the race where the infraction occurred.

SECTION 5.6 — CELL PHONES

Coaches may not answer a cell phone or make cell phone calls while riding a bike when practicing or pre-riding with the team. Coaches 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. In the event a coach or other assistant is seen using a cell phone while riding, a **25-point penalty** will be applied to his or her team's score at the race where the infraction occurred.

SECTION 5.7 — RIDING & SUPPORT ON THE COURSE

5.7.A 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:

1. No riding on the course.
2. No running or riding alongside the course or alongside a student while they are racing.
3. No providing food, water, or support outside of the Feed Zones.

5.7.B A violation of this rule will result in a penalty against the team that the ACA Executive Director determines to be the intended beneficiary of such action.

1. First Offense: **25-point penalty** deducted from team score on race day.
2. Second offense: **50-point penalty** deducted from team score on race day.
3. Third offense: **100-point penalty** deducted from team score on race day.

SECTION 5.8 — ADULT CODE OF CONDUCT

Adults within the ACA community agree to follow this code of conduct to maintain a culture of safety, responsibility and respect. You are asked to review and agree to this adult code of conduct during the registration process.

Maintain appropriate behavior for an adult leader associated with a youth development organization by:

- Follow your training and ACA policies, rules and guidelines at all times.
- Follow Athlete Abuse Prevention Program training, policies, rules and guidelines and particularly:
 - Never engage in behavior that could be interpreted as “grooming behavior” (further described in mandatory athlete abuse prevention training).
 - All 1:1 interaction between a student-athlete and coach must be observable & interruptible. That is, they must take place someplace where another adult can see what is happening and intervene if the interaction looks inappropriate. For example, unless immediate family members, ACA coaches should never meet 1:1 with student-athletes for bike rides or other activities within or outside of the ACA season.
 - If deciding to use phone, social media, online or other virtual communications, the 1:1 policy still applies. Keep communications transparent, accessible, professional

“T.A.P.” and only within your ACA role via your official ACA platforms.

- Sexual harassment by ACA community members will not be tolerated. These forms of harassment include, but are not limited to: offensive or unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances or propositions, repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic or degrading comments about an individual and/or their appearance. The display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures and any offensive or abusive physical contact will also not be tolerated.
- Discrimination by ACA community members will not be tolerated. The ACA prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type with regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.
- Participants’ safety must be a priority at ALL times. It is imperative that we ensure that student-athletes are behaving in a safe, responsible and respectful manner. If you see or hear something that in any way compromises the safety of our community, it is your job to step in and intervene.
- Operate within your ACA training and experience while only providing ACA-approved activities.
- Use your best judgment. If you have concerns that a task, project or activity you are working on is dangerous, or is not going to meet the agreed-upon objectives let the person in charge know.
- Regardless of your specific role, you are a role model and authority figure.
- Your primary role is to ensure the safety of participants within each activity or event.
- Be supportive. If a fellow ACA community member is struggling, it is expected that you support them. If you are unable, let the person in charge know.

- Be transparent. If you have a concern, share it with the person in charge. If the person in charge is the person with whom you have a concern, share it with the ACA Executive Director.
- Always support each individual in their leadership role.
- Work as a team. Present a unified front to the student-athletes, their families and the broader ACA community.
- Communicate. Be open to giving and receiving feedback.
- Address all concerns brought to your attention, including any observed prejudice or discriminatory behavior.
- Ensure guardians know key aspects of your ACA activities including start-times, end-times, locations and other information.
- When leading or promoting an activity or event not associated with the ACA, be sure to communicate it is not.

Failure to follow this Code of Conduct and ACA rules and guidelines as additionally described in the ACA Handbook, Athlete Abuse Prevention Program, and Electronic Communication and Social Media Guidelines may lead to suspension or expulsion from ACA activities.

CHAPTER 6: TEAM ELIGIBILITY & RULES

SECTION 6.1—DIVISIONS & CONFERENCES

6.1.A Divisions: The ACA is divided into Division I, consisting of larger teams, and Division II, consisting of smaller teams. Divisions are scored independently. If an ACA division grows too large such that it can no longer reasonably accommodate all the students who wish to compete, the ACA may, at the ACA Executive Director's discretion, divide either the division or the ACA itself into separate, independently scored geographical conferences.

1. Unless otherwise specified by the ACA, the ACA is divided into Division I and Division II as follows:
 - a. Division I consists of teams with 12 or more registered racing student-athletes.
 - b. Division II consists of teams with 11 or fewer registered racing student-athletes.
2. Teams that are short of the minimum required for Division I by two or fewer racing student-athletes may petition for placement in Division I. Teams that are over the minimum required for Division I by four or fewer racing student-athletes may petition for placement into Division II. To be considered, such petitions must be timely submitted no later than the 14th day prior to the first race of the season. Untimely petitions will not be considered.

6.1.B Geographical Conferences

1. The ACA may, at the ACA Executive Director's discretion, create separate conferences that must be established based upon specified geographical areas within the ACA's defined region.
2. The ACA Executive Director will maintain a written description specifying the geographical area for each conference that is made available to all ACA teams and riders on the ACA's website.
3. Teams and riders are assigned to a conference as follows:
 - a. For single school-based teams, the team is located in the conference where the school is located;

- b. For composite teams, the team is located in the conference where the majority of its students go to school or, if the majority of the students are homeschooled, then where the majority of all of the students on the team primarily reside; and
 - c. Independent riders may be located in the conference where they reside or located in a particular conference irrespective of where they reside. The ACA Executive Director will make the final determination.
4. Teams and riders may petition to the ACA Executive Director for reassignment to a different conference than the one dictated by the foregoing guidelines.

SECTION 6.2 — TEAM COMPOSITION

6.2.A Team Types

1. Single School-Based Teams: Must be comprised of full-time students from the same school, public or private.
 - a. Only one team may represent a school.
 - b. Official school status is 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.
 - c. 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.
2. Composite Teams: Must be comprised of full-time students from more than one school and must include "composite" in the team name. A composite team must be approved by the ACA Executive Director based upon a written proposal timely submitted to the ACA 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 ACA Executive 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.

6.2.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 ACA 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 ACA Executive Director shall annually review and approve each composite team's eligibility. The ACA 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 ACA Executive Director.
2. Composite teams must comply, subject to the ACA's local state laws, with the following scoring restrictions:
 - a. Teams must compete in Division II but may, at the ACA Executive 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. Middle school riders' scores are excluded from the composite teams' scores.
 - c. Teams are limited to a maximum of 11 registered riders, excluding middle school riders. In addition to serving the above-stated policy to establish school-based teams, limiting such teams to 11 riders prevents any competitive advantage through the formation of large "super teams," which the ACA 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 ACA ridership and to be inclusive to all riders. In the event the ACA Rules Committee determines that ACA policies are not served and are contravened by the limitation, the ACA 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 ACA Executive 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 ACA Executive Director for an exception to this rule.
 - c. Teams of 12 or more student-athletes, excluding any middle school riders, must be subdivided into separate, independently scoring teams of 11 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. 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.

6.2.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 ACA Executive Director ahead of the season. Once the season begins, the association shall remain in place until the season ends.

SECTION 6.3 — STUDENT-ATHLETES MUST JOIN TEAMS

Student-athletes who are enrolled at a school that has a club or team or reside in a geographic region that is served by a composite team in good standing with the ACA 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.

SECTION 6.4 — ONLINE CHARTER SCHOOL & HOMESCHOOL STUDENTS

A student who is enrolled in an online charter school or homeschooled and who is domiciled within the attendance zone of a school-based team may join that team, notwithstanding any other bylaw. If no team exists, then they may participate on a local composite team subject to the standard composite team rules.

SECTION 6.5 — INDEPENDENT RACERS

Independent racers are an exception that must be approved by the ACA Executive Director. A student-athletes who does not have a club or team at the school that they attend or a composite team that serves the area in which they reside may petition to participate as an independent rider. If there are four or more independent racers at the same school or within the confines of the composite team rules, they are required to form a team.

SECTION 6.6 — TEAM RECRUITING & MID-SEASON TRANSFERS

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

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

6.6.B 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.

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

6.6.D 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 ACA Executive Director's discretion, accumulate points scored by the student-athlete after the transfer for determining team standings. The ACA Executive 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.

SECTION 6.7 — TEAM REGISTRATION

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

6.7.B No new teams will be added to the series once the rider registration has closed. The deadline for online annual Team Registration is the same date as the rider registration deadline. The registration deadline date is posted online on the ACA's website.

SECTION 6.8 — TEAM DIRECTOR/HEAD COACH

To be eligible to participate in the ACA, all teams must have a Team Director or Head Coach who satisfies the requirements in the schedule below. The ACA takes risk management very seriously and our license requirements also reflect our commitment to supporting student-athletes. The ACA is a community where the action of one team may affect the

entire ACA. 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 Coaches to obtain a Level 3 License by their team's second season. Grace periods and other exception may be applied based on the ACA Executive Director's discretion. The requirements for each license level are detailed on the NICA website.

Minimum Requirement

First-Year Team	NICA Coach License Level 1 is required for the team to register as an ACA team
Second-Year Team	NICA Coach License Level 2 is required for the team to register as an ACA team
Third-Year Team	NICA Coach License Level 3 is required for the team to register as an ACA team

SECTION 6.9 — DESIGNATED REPORTER

Each team must assign an individual to be the Designated Reporter for the team, responsible for submitting all injury and incident reports online.

SECTION 6.10 — TEAM SIZE LIMITATIONS

6.10.A Team Directors/Head Coaches have the discretion to determine the size of their teams. Factors that affect team size include, but are not limited to, the number of trained coaches, team transportation, the capacity of nearby practice trails, and parental support.

1. Team Directors/Head Coaches may use a variety measures to limit team size, including registration deadline; student grade point average, and practice and race attendance.
2. Team Directors/Head Coaches may not use a rider's speed, time trials or race results to limit participation on the team.

SECTION 6.11 — TEAM TRAINING LIMITS

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

6.11.B ACA 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.

6.11.C 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 ACA races.

6.11.D Each year is divided into a preseason, a regular season, and an off-season.

1. Preseason: Teams and clubs can commence limited preseason team activities on April 1.
 - a. The team, club, and coaches must be registered with the ACA to participate in, and conduct activities. Only the following pre-season activities are permitted and must be pre-approved by the ACA Executive Director. The approval form can be found on the ACA's website.
 - i. Bike checks, equipment inspections, and bike fit;
 - ii. Mechanical workshops;
 - iii. All-inclusive fun rides; and
 - iv. Skills clinics
 - b. The maximum number of pre-season activities is six (6).
2. Regular Season: Regular training, to include up to four (4) practices per week, may commence on July 1.
 - a. Teams and clubs may participate in races only during the regular season.

- b. No team or club rides, or any other training activities, may take place following the 14th consecutive day after the final ACA race of the season. Special post-season activities and rides after this two-week period may be approved and allowed by the ACA Executive Director. The approval form can be found on the ACA's website.
3. **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:
 - a. An ACA team racing under the school name;
 - b. Using the school jersey at races as a team;
 - c. Having practices that meet on school grounds;
 - d. Having regular meetings at school that organize activity for off-season training and racing;
 - e. Using any ACA team property without a letter of permission from school administration; and
 - f. Using the same ACA team website as an outlet for organizing off-season practices or racing.

The ACA respects off-season non-ACA 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 an ACA-affiliated team during the off-season will be ineligible to compete in ACA races the following season.

6.11.E Individuals who coach a ACA team as well as a non-ACA team must follow all rules regarding ACA team training limits. An individual who coaches an ACA team who also coaches those team members, either individually or as the same team under another name, outside of the team training limits will be deemed to have violated the ACA Handbook.

6.11.F If a separate fee is charged in a capacity independent from the ACA for non-ACA events, and sufficient other steps are taken to distinguish between ACA and non-ACA activities including, without limitation, written parental consent acknowledging the distinction

between the ACA and non-ACA events for each rider, separate team uniforms and names, and a separate activity calendar in writing, then no violation will be automatically presumed, though such a violation is not precluded in light of other facts that indicate an intent to avoid the rules regarding team training limitations to achieve a competitive advantage. A requirement that any student-athlete must sign up for both the ACA and non-ACA coaching activities will be an automatic violation regardless of other factors. Willful violation of the rules by a coach may result in penalties, including possible suspension or revocation of their NICA Coach License.

CHAPTER 7: CATEGORY PLACEMENT

SECTION 7.1 — CATEGORY PLACEMENT STANDARDS

7.1.A Category placement guidelines and policies are designed to facilitate and promote fair, safe and challenging competition. Student-athletes do not choose their category, but are placed into categories according to the following standards and criteria.

7.1.B Categories are based on grade level, gender and/or ability. A student-athletes prior performance may factor into placement. Individual race results and a student's end-of-season overall standings dictate placement from season to season. All race results and overall season standings are available on the ACA website.

7.1.C To calculate the finishing percentile, for each separate race the finishing place is divided by the total number of riders, including DNFs, and the quotient is then multiplied by 100. Do not round off the percentile up or down.

7.1.D 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.

7.1.E 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 10th-12th graders with no prior results are placed into Junior Varsity 2.

7.1.F Petitions for exceptions to the category placement criteria are limited for each grade level to certain categories.

7.1.G Middle-school students may not compete in or petition to upgrade into high school categories.

SECTION 7.2 — CATEGORY PLACEMENT CRITERIA

Placement criteria, excluding petitions, are as follows:

Category

6th Grade 6th graders only.

7th Grade 7th graders only.

8th Grade	8 th graders only.
Freshman	9 th graders only.
Junior Varsity 2	10 th – 12 th graders.
Junior Varsity 1	<p>10th graders who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Placed in the top 25% in any two Freshman races, including State Championships, in the prior year, or b) Placed in the top 30% in the Conference Overall Series Freshman standings in the prior year, or <p>10th – 12th graders who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Placed in the top 25% in any two Junior Varsity 2 races, including State Championships, in the prior year, or b) Placed in the top 30% in the Conference Overall Series Junior Varsity 2 standings in the prior year, or c) Raced Junior Varsity 1 the prior year, but did not qualify to upgrade to Varsity.
Varsity	<p>10th – 12th graders who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Placed in the top 25% in any two Junior Varsity 1 races, including State Championships, in the prior year, or b) Placed in the top 30% in the Conference Overall Series Junior Varsity 1 standings in the prior year, or c) Raced Varsity the prior year.

SECTION 7.3 — PETITIONING FOR A PLACEMENT CRITERIA EXCEPTION

7.3.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. 9th graders may petition to race Junior Varsity 2, Junior Varsity 1 or Varsity;
2. 10th, 11th and 12th graders may petition to race Junior Varsity 1 or Varsity.

7.3.B Student-athletes must 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:

1. The student-athlete's performance and experience level clearly exceeds the level of all other riders competing in the rider's designated category. 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
2. The upgrade will place the student into a more appropriate competitive peer group.

7.3.C Successful petitions are subject to revocation at any time at the ACA Executive 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 ACA Executive Director's sole discretion, for any change in categories for a rider that is subsequently revoked on grounds that the change was contrary to ACA policies.

7.3.D Petitions for an exception to the Placement Criteria and request for placement in another category may be submitted to the ACA Executive Director or the ACA Rules Committee or any other individual or committee designated by the ACA Executive Director or the ACA's board of directors. To petition for such an exception, students must complete and submit the petition form found on the ACA's website according to the instructions provided on the form.

7.3.E The petition requires a coach’s comments and signature. If there is no coach, the student must contact the ACA Executive Director and a coach advisor will be appointed. A parent may be approved as the advisor. The ACA Executive Director or the ACA Rules Committee shall consider the petition and render a decision in a timely manner.

7.3.F Petitions must be submitted with sufficient time for consideration. Last-minute petitions cannot be rushed. 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.

SECTION 7.4 — TRANSGENDER STUDENT-ATHLETES

All student-athletes shall have the opportunity to participate in ACA activities in a manner that is consistent with their gender identity via the procedure below. Once the student has been granted eligibility to participate in the ACA consistent with the athlete’s gender identity, the eligibility is granted for the duration of the student’s participation and does not need to be renewed every sport season or school year. All discussion and documentation will be kept confidential, and the proceedings will be sealed unless the student and family make a specific request.

7.4.A Notice to the Team: The student or parent/guardian shall contact the Team Director or Head Coach indicating that the student has a consistent gender identity different than the sex listed on the student’s school registration records, and that the student desires to participate in activities in a manner consistent with the student’s gender identity.

7.4.B Notice to the ACA: The Team Director or Head Coach shall contact the ACA Executive Director.

7.4.C Eligibility Appeal: The appeal student should provide the ACA with the following documentation and information:

1. A letter from the student-athlete requesting to participate on a team in their identified gender which differs from their sex assigned at birth. The letter should include:
 - a. A description of their gender story, including age at emerging awareness of incongruence between sex assigned at birth and gender identity and where the student-athlete is in the gender transition process;

- b. If they have participated in sports previously and if so, whether they were allowed to participate in their identified gender and what that experience was like;
 - c. Any additional information the student-athlete feels is important.
2. A letter of support from the student-athlete's parent or guardian.
 3. A letter of support from a school administrator.
 4. A letter of support from a qualified healthcare provider.

7.4.D Review: Upon receipt of the above documentation, the ACA shall review the appeal. The ACA may request an in-person meeting with the student and parents/guardians if there are any additional questions or concerns by the ACA after review of above documentation. If the ACA finds that the student-athlete's request is appropriate and is not motivated by an improper purpose and there are no adverse health risks to the student-athlete, then the ACA shall grant eligibility to participate in the ACA consistent with the student-athlete's gender identity.

CHAPTER 8: RACE GUIDE

The following race production, safety and scoring standards are intended as guidance to be adopted or modified at the ACA's discretion.

SECTION 8.1 — RACE COURSE INFORMATION

8.1.A 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.

8.1.B Course Length and Difficulty: The ideal ACA-sanctioned 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. The event times should be:

1. Middle School – not to exceed 45 minutes;
2. Freshman and Junior Varsity 2 – not to exceed 90 minutes;
3. Junior Varsity 1 – not to exceed 105 minutes; and
4. Varsity – not to exceed 120 minutes.

8.1.C Safety Guidelines for Courses: ACA-sanctioned cross-country courses must be designed for maximal safety. Course guidelines are:

1. Uphill starts or some climbing in first half-mile;
2. 33-inch wide start lanes;
3. Uphill finishes;
4. Uphill feed zones;
5. Inspection and addressing of:
 - a. Off-camber turns and ruts;
 - b. Large or loose rocks;
 - c. Sharp turns on fast sections;
 - d. Water crossings;
 - e. Areas where excessive speeds can be achieved; and
 - f. Other obvious injury vectors.

8.1.D 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.

8.1.E Standard Turn Arrow Locations: Arrow signs are to be placed before each intersection to indicate an upcoming turn, with a second arrow sign placed at the intersection. The direction of travel through the intersection is then confirmed by a third arrow sign located farther along the racecourse in the new direction. Wrong way signs are used to mark all potential wrong turns. Signs shall be placed at distances from the intersection determined by sight lines that afford the rider the best opportunity to see the markings at race pace while affording the rider ample opportunity to safely complete the turn or see the wrong way prior to inadvertently making a wrong turn.

8.1.F 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.

8.1.G Hazard Signs: For all hazardous situations along a racecourse circuit, caution signs or two or three arrow signs placed upside down must be located preceding the hazard at a distance which affords the rider ample opportunity to react at race pace. 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.

8.1.H 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.

8.1.I 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.

8.1.J List of Signs: Directional and warning signs for mountain bike circuits are:

1. Arrows indicating course direction, turns, and hazards;

2. Caution;
3. Wrong Way;
4. Marshal Point;
5. EMS Staging; and
6. EMS Route.



SECTION 8.2 — 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.

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

8.2.B Autos in the Pit Zone: To minimize congestion, the ACA reserves all rights to manage the flow of automobile traffic in and out of the pit zone. Parents, coaches, and student-athletes are encouraged to limit driving into the pit zone by pooling their efforts and cooperating with other parents, coaches, and student-athletes to transfer equipment.

Accommodations will be made for large and heavy items, though teams are encouraged to have their pit areas set up one hour before the start of the first race.

Recreational Vehicles (RVs) are not permitted in the pit zone. Pickup trucks with camper shells are permitted.

8.2.C Gas Powered Generators Prohibited: Gas powered generators (built in or external) are not permitted in the pit zone.

8.2.D Camping Prohibited: Camping is not allowed in the designated pit zone area.

8.2.E No Extension of Pit Zone: Teams may not erect team-branded tents outside of their designated pit zone area. Tents for shade are allowed to be placed along the race course as long as they don't obstruct the view of the race course, impede pedestrian traffic or cause damage to the venue.

SECTION 8.3 — DESIGNATED FEED ZONE

A designated Feed Zone will be present and easily accessible at all races. The Feed Zone shall have a well-marked start and end. The following rules apply to the rider and the rider's coaches, parents, or other volunteers who may assist in feeding the rider at the Feed Zone.

8.3.A Feeders Must Use the Feed Zone: Feeders may only hand riders food and drinks within the boundaries of the Feed Zone. As set out in Section 4.26, riders will be penalized for accepting food or drink outside of the Feed Zone boundaries.

8.3.B Interference Prohibited: Feeding one student-athlete must not cause other riders to slow down or veer off course or otherwise interfere with other riders.

8.3.C Food and Drink Only: Student-athletes may not accept items such as tools, gear, or parts within the Feed Zone boundaries during races. As set out in Section 4.27, such other hand-offs will be considered outside assistance and riders will be penalized.

8.3.D Cold Weather 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.

8.3.E Hand-Offs: 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. 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. As set out in Section 4.27, such other contact will be considered outside assistance and riders will be penalized.

8.3.F No Running: Running in the Feed Zone is not permitted under any circumstances. Running increases the risk of collisions and interference with riders and other feeders.

8.3.G Stay to the Right: 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. Riders who wish to feed should move towards the right side of the course when approaching the Feed Zone while those riders who do not wish to feed should move towards the left side of the course prior to reaching the feed zone. After feeding a rider, the feeder must move clear of the feeding zone to allow plenty of room for other feeders.

8.3.H Feeder Identification: Feeders must wear a shirt, jacket, hat, vest, jersey, or adhesive name tag that identifies the team of the riders they are feeding.

8.3.I Number of Feeders: Each team is allowed a limited number of feeders in the Feed Zone, as indicated below, 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

8.3.J No Throwing Water: Throwing water on riders in the Feed Zone or the area immediately preceding the Feed Zone is not permitted.

8.3.K 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.

8.3.L Inspection of Supplies: To enforce rules pertaining to the consumption of banned substances, race officials may request to inspect Feed Zone supplies at any time.

SECTION 8.4 — RACE OFFICIALS

The following duties shall be performed by ACA officials who shall endeavor to uphold and enforce the ACA Handbook and shall do so in an impartial manner. The general conduct, safety, scoring, and enforcement of rules is managed at races by the following officials:

8.4.A Chief Referee: The Chief Referee supervises the general conduct of each race and ensure that the event is run under the ACA Handbook.

The Chief Referee has 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 ACA Rules Committee.

1. The Chief Referee may neutralize, shorten, suspend, or cancel any race if dangerous conditions exist or hazardous weather arises.
2. The Chief Referee has 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
3. The Chief Referee will handle any protests arising at the event. The Chief Referee may call a meeting of all available ACA Rules Committee 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 can be convened. Such a deferred meeting must occur within five days after the race. If a meeting cannot be convened with five days, the Chief Referee shall act in its place to render a timely decision.
4. The Chief Referee may assign duties and delegate authority to the other officials, below, for each event.

8.4.B Start/Finish Line Referee: The Start/Finish Line Referee is 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 chutes, and enforcing cutoff times.

1. Penalties, cutoff times, and last finisher time estimates must be communicated to the Chief Referee. All penalties assessed shall be reported to the Chief Referee.

8.4.C Chief Scoring Official: The Chief Scoring Official supervises the timing and scoring crew. The Chief Scoring Official is 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.

8.4.D Chief Course Marshal: The Chief Course Marshal manages the operations of Course Marshals, which includes providing radios, vests, maps, whistles and flags, conducting Course Marshal meetings, assigning locations, and taking reports. The Chief Course Marshal has 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.

8.4.E 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:

1. Carry a radio, a notepad and pen, and a course map;
2. Wear a designated Course Marshal vest;
3. 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
4. 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.

8.4.F Course Sweepers: 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.

SECTION 8.5 — FIELD SIZE

In order to control total field sizes, ACA teams are assigned to conferences and divisions, creating multiple fields within a category.

8.5.A The ACA shall attempt to create fields that allow riders from teams in the same conference or division to compete against each other. However, allocation into separate fields 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.

8.5.B A single category may be split into multiple fields, for example:

<u>Boys Categories</u>	<u>Girls Categories</u>
6 th Grade	6 th Grade
7 th Grade	7 th Grade
8 th Grade	8 th Grade
Freshman – Division I	Freshman
Freshman – Division II	Junior Varsity 2
Junior Varsity 2 – Division I	Junior Varsity 1
Junior Varsity 2 – Division II	Varsity
Junior Varsity 1 – Division I	
Junior Varsity 1 – Division II	
Varsity	

8.5.C The ACA Executive Director will make the final determination with regard to the ACA’s divisions, conferences, categories and fields.

SECTION 8.6 — RACE STAGING GUIDELINES

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

8.6.A All riders will be staged at races. The staging order is based on the overall placing in that field in the current season for high school and the previous race placing in that category in the current season for middle school.

1. The staging order at the first race of the season shall be based upon the overall points earned by each rider in the previous season. No adjustments will be made based on category changes or other circumstances. The staging order for middle school and freshman riders at the first race will be done by random draw.

2. Any rider who has not previously competed in an ACA event will be put in the race field, at random, behind all staged riders.

8.6.B 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 Boys Junior Varsity 2 fields can begin staging at 12:45 p.m. if the first Boys Junior Varsity 2 starts at 1:00 p.m.). 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 may be applied, as set out in Section 4.19.B.

8.6.C Racers must enter the staging area at the designated entrance for their category. As set out in Section 4.19.A, racers cutting into the side or front of the group will be penalized.

1. Coaches are expected to support the staging rules. If a coach assists a racer in cutting into the side or front of the group, or if a rider in clear view of his or her coach is breaking the staging rules without intervention, a penalty shall be applied to that rider's team, as set out in Section 4.19.A.1.

8.6.D Racers must position themselves in designated start lanes without overlapping the wheels of the rider in front of them.

SECTION 8.7 — START LINE CALL-UPS

8.7.A The top 10 placed riders in each field will receive call-ups to the start line at all races.

8.7.B Call-ups at the first race of the season shall be based upon the overall points earned by each rider in the previous season. No adjustments will be made based on category changes or other circumstances. There are no call-ups for freshman and middle school riders at the first race.

8.7.C At all subsequent races, the call-ups are based on the overall placing in that field in the current season for high school and the previous race placing in that category in the current season for middle school.

SECTION 8.8 — STUDENT-ATHLETES MAY BE PULLED

Lapped racers and racers outside the time limit may be pulled from the race at the finish line once the leader has completed the race. At the ACA Executive 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.

SECTION 8.9 — TIME LIMITS MAY BE IMPOSED

8.9.A 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.

8.9.B If a racer makes the time cutoff but does not complete the final lap due to a mechanical, crash, or other reason, it is considered a DNF.

8.9.C 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.

SECTION 8.10 — 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.

SECTION 8.11 — RACE FINISHES

8.11.A Under normal circumstances, all lap and finish positions will be determined by electronic timing chips (transponders).

8.11.B In the event the electronic timing system fails to record a time or lap position for any rider, a video camera may be used at the finish line to aid the scorekeepers in determining laps completed or the finishing order of a close race. Should video footage from an ACA-designated camera be unavailable or inconclusive for any reason, the scoring of the laps or finish will be based solely on the scorekeepers' decision.

8.11.C In the case of a visual tie or where a clear determination cannot be made, the riders concerned will be ranked in the order of the best lap time made during the race.

SECTION 8.12 — WEATHER POLICY

Below are the guidelines for how the ACA will conduct races in the event of challenging weather. Our primary considerations are the safety of riders, support staff and spectators, and potential damage to the venue and trails.

Any decisions regarding canceling, postponing or altering race start times, lap lengths, number of laps, etc. will be made jointly by the ACA Executive Director, Race Director, Operations Director, Chief Referee and the land manager. Often this decision cannot be made until the morning of the race due to the unpredictable and rapidly changing nature of severe weather.

The ACA will make every attempt to notify the racing population as soon as possible via email, social media and website updates.

8.12.A Race Date: Races are held on their scheduled dates unless the race course on the day of the race is deemed unrideable and/or dangerous.

8.12.B Start Time: The ACA will have the option to alter the start of a race from its published times if the weather has created dangerous conditions.

8.12.C Course and Lap Length: Courses and/or lap lengths may be altered or shortened because of weather conditions.

1. Changes to race course and/or lap count will be announced at the pre-race coach meeting, if changes are known at that time.
2. Last minute changes will be broadcast to racers at the start of each field via the staging and starting staff.

8.12.D Lightening: All racing will stop immediately in the presence of lightning, as signified by the Race Director. Course Marshals will direct racers off course where they can seek shelter in vehicles, trailers/RVs or buildings.

8.12.E Re-Starting a Race: Re-starting a race that has been stopped due to lightning or other emergency:

1. Depending on schedule and number of laps completed, the race may be declared over;
2. If time permits, racers will be able to resume laps beginning from the lap line.

8.12.F Race Registration Fees:

1. If a race venue is moved or a race is rescheduled, race registration fees will automatically be applied to the moved or rescheduled race.
2. If a race is canceled due to weather conditions, fees will not be refunded.

8.12.G Race Points:

1. If a race is canceled (unable to be moved or rescheduled):
 - a. No team points will be awarded and the race will not be included in the overall team series point standings.
 - b. No individual points will be awarded and the race will not be included in the overall individual series point standings. The 25 Season Bonus Points will be awarded based on starting all races in the shortened series.
2. If a race is partially completed (some fields complete their race and others do not):
 - a. No team points will be awarded and the race will not be included in the overall team series point standings.
 - b. Individual points will be awarded in all of the fields that completed their race and those fields will proceed through the series as normal.
 - c. No individual points will be awarded in the fields for which races were not completed and the race will not be included in the overall individual series point standings. The 25 Season Bonus Points will be awarded based on completion of all races in the shortened series.

SECTION 8.13 — DRONE POLICY

Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), also known as drones, may only be flown at ACA races with the written permission of the ACA Executive Director. With permission, drones may be flown at a ACA event as long as the operator complies with Federal Aviation Administration regulations, as well as any additional measures specified by the ACA. Unmanned aircraft are excluded from ACA's liability insurance policy. Operators must carry their own liability policies.

CHAPTER 9: SCORING & AWARDS

SECTION 9.1 — INDIVIDUAL SERIES SCORING

Student-athletes compete against other racers in the same category. Individual scoring is not divided into Division I and II, unless they are racing in separate fields, as set out in Section 8.5.

SECTION 9.2 — OVERALL INDIVIDUAL SERIES SCORING

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

9.2.B A missed race would be the lowest score dropped.

9.2.C If there are fewer than four races in the series, in the case of a race cancelation, no score will be dropped.

9.2.D In the event of a tie, placement will be determined based on the number of wins.

1. Should a tie remain, finishes of second, third, etc, will be tallied until the tie is broken.
2. If a tie remains, the best finish in the last race will determine placement.

9.2.E The State Championships race is not included in the race series for Overall Individual Series scoring.

9.2.F Overall individual series scoring is not applicable to middle school.

SECTION 9.3 — POINT SYSTEM

9.3.A Points are awarded to all starters. There is a 40-point bonus for Junior Varsity 1 racers and a 75-point bonus for Varsity racers. Racers who do not finish a race (DNF) will be awarded the baseline number of points for their category. Refer to Appendix A for the Individual Point Scale.

9.3.B In the event a student successfully petitions to change categories, 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.

SECTION 9.4 — POINT BONUS FOR STARTING ALL RACES

9.4.A All student-athletes who start each and every race in the series shall be awarded an additional 25 Season Bonus Points.

9.4.B If a race is canceled, it will not count as a series race and Season Bonus Points shall be awarded based on starting all races in the shortened series.

9.4.C 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.

SECTION 9.5 — TEAM SCORING MATRIX

Division I team 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. Division II team 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.

9.5.A 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	

9.5.B The ACA Executive Director, with approval of the ACA Rules Committee, may make modifications to these scoring rules. Visit the Team Information page on the ACA website to confirm the team scoring rules.

9.5.C Middle school riders' scores are not included in the team's score.

SECTION 9.6 — 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.

SECTION 9.7 — AWARDS AT EACH RACE

9.7.A Individual medals are awarded five places deep in each field at each series race and the State Championships race. Whenever separate fields of the same categories are run, separate medals are awarded to each.

9.7.B Team trophies are awarded three places deep in each division at each series race and the State Championships race.

SECTION 9.8 — AWARDS FOR OVERALL SERIES

9.8.A Individual overall series medals are awarded five places deep in each field. Whenever separate fields of the same categories are run, separate medals are awarded to each.

9.8.B Team overall series trophies are awarded three places deep in each division.

SECTION 9.9 — PODIUM ETIQUETTE

Riders are not permitted to bring to the podium during the awards ceremonies any sponsorship, advertising, or product placement items including, without limitation, their bicycles.

SECTION 9.10 — STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS RACE

9.10.A Student-athletes must individually qualify for the State Championships race, based on the following criteria:

1. Complete a minimum of three (3) series races; and
2. Top Overall Individual Series point earners as follow:
 - a. All Varsity Boys and Girls;

- b. All Junior Varsity 1 Boys and Girls;
- c. Top 50 Junior Varsity 2 Division I Boys per conference;
- d. Top 50 Junior Varsity 2 Division II Boys per conference;
- e. Top 50 Junior Varsity 2 Girls per conference;
- f. Top 50 Freshman Division I Boys per conference;
- g. Top 50 Freshman Division II Boys per conference;
- h. Top 50 Freshman Girls per conference;
- i. All high school seniors regardless of category and placement.

9.10.B State Champion jerseys are awarded to the winner in each field.

9.10.C The race is only open to high school student-athletes.

9.10.D Team scoring shall be the same as all series races.

SECTION 9.11 — RACE RESULTS AND PROTEST PROCESS

9.11.A Preliminary and Official Results

1. 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.
2. Protests to the preliminary results and opposition to penalties must be submitted, using the forms provided, to a race official at the scoring tent within 15 minutes of the posting time.
3. After the timely protests and opposition to penalties are considered, ruled upon, and approved by the ACA Executive 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.
4. At the discretion of the ACA Executive Director or Chief Referee, the decision and ruling on a protest or opposition to a penalty may be deferred until after race day. 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.

9.11.B Extended Protest Period (discretionary)

1. At the ACA Executive Director's discretion, an extended protest period may be permitted after the results are posted online on the ACA's website, during which student-athletes may protest the results or oppose the assessment of penalties.
2. 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 ACA's website. The online posting date of the results and the protest submission deadline shall be indicated on the website.
3. 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 to the ACA Executive Director, Chief Referee, or other ACA official designated by the ACA Executive Director to receive such protests.

9.11.C Protest – After Race Day

1. Protests made on race day but deferred for later decision and protests submitted during an extended protest period shall be heard by the ACA Executive Director, or Chief Referee, or members of the ACA Rules Committee, or any one or combination thereof.
2. ACA 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. Submitting such statements after the protest period is permissible only if done at the request of ACA officials.
3. In the event the protest or opposition is deemed significant by a ACA official, the student-athlete or coach shall be notified and three or more ACA 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. ACA 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.

9.11.D Judgement Calls

1. ACA 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.
2. 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 ACA 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.

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

APPENDIX A: INDIVIDUAL POINT SCALE

PLACE	FRESHMAN & JUNIOR VARSITY 2	JUNIOR VARSITY 1	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

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
Etc.	-1 Point	-1 Point	-1 Point
Baseline	25	65	100