NICA Handbook

2021 Rules & Guidelines

FUN • INCLUSIVITY • EQUITY • RESPECT • COMMUNITY

UTAH LEAGUE EDITION

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1 EFFECTIVE DATE

This edition of the NICA Rules and Guidelines is made effective April 1, 2021 (the "Effective Date"), for the 2021 Fall Season for the NICA Leagues. All prior rules and regulations are superseded as of the Effective Date.

2 CONSEQUENCES AND PENALTIES

Some rule violations will result in consequences at one of the three following levels: Yellow, Orange, Red. However, the consequences can also be applied in other situations at a league official's discretion. Not all rules have consequences that fall within these three levels. Chief Officials and the League's Rules Committee are responsible for enforcing consequences and may also sanction other penalties that are not specified in the rulebook, but are deemed appropriate.

Further, some of the rules addressing specific behavior and circumstances provides for consequences in addition to those contemplated by this rule and shall apply as described therein.

2.1 Consequence Levels

2.1.1 YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

First offense: Warning.
Subsequent offenses: 5-minute penalty.

2.1.2 ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

First Offense: 5-minute penalty.
Second offense: 10-minute penalty.
Third offense: Disqualification from a race.

2.1.3 RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

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

2.2 Wearing Helmets Strictly Enforced

2.2.1 Student-Athletes' Helmets

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

Student-athletes must wear approved helmets at all times. Under no 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. See Rule 7.1 for additional requirements and details regarding helmets and for a list of approved helmet standards.

2.2.2 Coaches' Helmets

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

2.2.3 Parents' Helmets

Parents shall comply with all helmet rules at all races. In the event a parent is seen riding without a helmet, a **25-point penalty** may be applied to his or her team's score at the race where the infraction occurred. Parents must wear helmets for the following reasons:

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

2.3 Practice Controlled Riding

YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

Student-athletes must practice safe riding techniques and be in control of their bicycles at all times. Riding out of control or with excessive speed is not tolerated. Having a reckless attitude or taking dangerous risks is not tolerated. A dangerous risk is defined as willingly attempting anything that is beyond one's ability to control the bike or puts someone else in danger (see Rule 2.15).

2.4 Legal Mountain Biking Trails Only

RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

As representatives of NICA, the League, and our sport, student-athletes must ride only on authorized trails. Students found riding on illegal trails at ANY time, whether on team rides or on their own, will face consequences. It is the student-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.

2.5 Positive Sporting Attitude

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

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

2.6 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.

2.7 Cell Phones

2.7.1 Student-Athletes

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

Student-athletes may not use a cell phone 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.

2.7.2 Coaches may not use cell phones while riding a bike when practicing or pre-riding with their 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 is seen using a cell phone while riding, a **25-point penalty** will be applied to his or her team's score.

2.8 USADA Banned Substances

RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

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

2.9 Substance Use

RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

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

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

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

2.9.3 Alcohol and Drug Use:

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

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

c. Third and subsequent violations:
   1. On the confirmation of the third or subsequent violations, the student-athlete will lose eligibility for participation for an additional six races.
   2. On the third or subsequent violations, if the student-athlete 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 weeks.

2.10 List of Other Banned Substances (B-List)

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

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

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

2.10.3 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.

2.11 Abusive Behavior Not Tolerated

RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

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

2.12 Sexual Harassment Policy

RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

2.12.1 The League strictly prohibit sexual harassment in any form, including verbal, physical, and visual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual advances or visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior and includes harassment of a person of the same sex or based on

gender. Sexual harassment includes: unwanted sexual advances or visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, displaying of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; verbal conduct such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs and jokes, verbal sexual advances or propositions; and physical conduct such as touching or blocking movements.

2.12.2 Any student-athlete who believes he or she has been sexually harassed by an employee, agent, or another student-athlete should promptly report the facts of the alleged incident(s) and the name of the individual involved to any adult school staff member, League 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 League program or activity.

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

2.13 Matching Jerseys Required

YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

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 or a local shop jersey.

2.14 Pre-Ride Rules

2.14.1 Pre-Ride Provided When Possible
Student-athletes will be given the opportunity to walk the course and participate in a practice ride whenever possible.

2.14.2 Student-Athletes and Coaches Only on The Course

a. Only registered student-athletes and coaches may ride the designated race course during designated pre-ride times. No coach is permitted to ride the course during an event.
b. A violation of this rule will result in a team-level penalty against the associated team of the offender:
    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.

2.14.3 Pre-Ride Prior to Race Day

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

a. Pre-rides that are conducted prior to race day must comply with the rules and regulations regarding trail use at the race venue.
b. Pre-riding is strictly prohibited on setup day except for the designated pre-ride time. See the race flyer for designated pre-ride times.

2.14.4 Pre-Ride on the Race Day During Designated Times Only

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

Pre-rides on race day must be confined to the time designated by the League. Student-athletes who are caught in the act of pre-riding outside of the designated time will be penalized. Student-athletes 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.

2.14.5 Do Not Modify the Course

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.

2.14.6 Do Not Ride the Couse Backwards

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

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.

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

2.15 Walk the Bike Through Crowded Areas

YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

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

2.16 Staging for Race Starts

2.16.1 Guidelines

YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

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

a. Student-athletes must not stage or loiter around the start line until 20 minutes before their start time. Student-athletes who line up at or near the staging area too early may be required to return to their team's pit area (or a time penalty of 1 minute may be applied).

b. Student-athletes must stand in their staging order at their pre-assigned gate with their category and placement from the previous race written on their hand or arm.
c. When entering the staging area, student-athletes must position themselves in designated start lanes without overlapping the wheels of the rider in front of them.
d. Student-athletes must wait at the designated entrance for their category in an orderly fashion. Upon being called into the staging area by a race official, student-athletes may enter the staging area while walking their bikes. Student-athletes staging incorrectly or cutting into the side or front of the group will be required to start in the last row.

2.16.2 Only student-athletes are allowed in the staging area. All parents, coaches and spectators are to remain clear of the staging area.

2.16.3 If a coach, team parent, or teammate assists a student-athlete in staging incorrectly by helping a rider cut in front or blocking other riders, a team point penalty of 200 points will be applied. Coaches are expected to support the staging rules. If a student-athlete in clear view of his or her coach is breaking the staging rules without intervention, the 200-point penalty shall be applied to that student-athlete's team.

2.16.4 A race begins when the staging manager says "go," not when student-athletes cross the start line.

For more information regarding staging practices, refer to Rule 11.3.

2.17 Racing the Wrong Category

RED LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

2.17.1 Student-athletes are responsible for knowing, understanding, and following the category placement rules and the Placement Criteria. Any questions should be directed to the League Director or the Regional Race Director.

2.17.2 Junior Devo student-athletes who race in the wrong category may be disqualified from that race.

2.17.3 High school student-athletes who race in the wrong category shall be disqualified from that race.

See Rule 11.5 regarding missed starts.

2.18 Start with One Foot on the Ground

YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES
Student-athletes must start races from a standstill position with one foot on the ground.

2.19 Passing Slower Student-Athletes

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

2.19.1 When overtaking a racer on the race course, the passing racer should do so respectfully and must:
a. Pass only when safe to do so and without contact;
b. Call out "On your left" or "On your right" or use other similar language to indicate whether the pass will be on the other racer's left or right side.

2.19.2 Passing in a manner that compromises the safety of other student-athletes will not be tolerated.

2.20 Bike Pushers Must Yield

ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES

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 those riding their bicycles provided pushing racers do not impede the progress of the riding racers.

2.21 Outside Assistance

2.21.1 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. If a student-athlete does not self-report, the penalty may be doubled.

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

2.21.3 No penalty will be assessed to any student-athlete who utilizes Neutral Support during the course of their race.

2.22 Switching Bikes and Wheels

2.22.1 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.

2.22.2 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 pre-assembled wheel with a hub, rim, and spokes) in a race.

2.23 Cutting the Course Not Permitted

2.23.1 A racer may not leave the prescribed course unless ordered or permitted to do so by public authorities or a race official. In the case of mechanical problems, racers shall walk along the course to the nearest course marshal, who will contact the Chief Course Marshal for further instructions. In the case of medical emergencies, racers shall remain still and wait for a course marshal or medical help.

2.23.2 In the event a student-athlete 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.

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

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

2.23.5 Passing an Obstacle
ORANGE LEVEL CONSEQUENCES
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.

2.23.6 In the event a student-athlete re-enters the course at a different location, if the League or Race 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 student-athlete.

2.24 Feeders Must Use the Zone

YELLOW LEVEL CONSEQUENCES
Coaches, parents, or other volunteers may only hand student-athletes food and drinks in the feed zone. Student-athletes will be penalized for accepting food or drink outside of the feed zone boundaries.

3 STUDENT-ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

3.1 Eligible Students

The Utah League's race series is open to all students who attend public or private school or who are homeschooled for high school (grades 9–12) and middle school (grades 7-8) within the entire state of Utah.

3.2 Inter-League Participation and Out-Of-Region Students

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

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

a. Declare that they are committed to participating and scoring exclusively in the other league's race series;
b. Be scored and registered in the league in which they have declared their participation; and
c. Participate in only one season, either spring or fall, per academic year and are subject to the Team Training Limits and race season limitations under Rule 8.17 and as provided in Appendix B, as applicable to the league in which they have declared their participation.

3.3 Student Age and Grade

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

a. Be enrolled in middle school (grades 7-8), 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;
b. 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
c. Not have a high school diploma, general education diploma (GED), or otherwise be graduated from high school.

3.3.2 Student-athletes who have skipped or been held back:

a. A single grade is placed into categories according to their grade levels as provided under the Category Placement Rules (Rule 10.5); or
b. More than one grade must consult with the League director regarding placement into the appropriate categories.

3.4 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 League director must consider such age-

based placement in the event homeschooled student-athletes seek alternative placement under the Category Placement Rules (Rule 10.5).

3.5 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.

3.6 Registered NICA Student-Athletes Only on Race Courses

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

3.7 Requirements for Student-Athlete Registration

Student-athletes must register with the League. Registration requirements include:
a. Online Registration Forms;
b. Registration Fee;
c. Signed Release of Liability;
d. Signed Medical Form;
e. Signed Media Form; and
f. Signed Code of Conduct Form.

3.8 Race Registration

Season and race registration will be closed on a predetermined date. Student-athletes must register and pay by the announced season deadline to participate.

4 GENERAL STUDENT-ATHLETE RULES

4.1 Applicability

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

4.1.2 These rules apply to all student-athletes during all practices, races, individual training rides, and at all other times while riding bikes. While the penalties described in Rule 2 are primarily tied to League events, coaches and parents are encouraged to enforce similar policies of safety, etiquette, and trail use during any off-season rides.

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

by the League Rules Committee may be subject to review by the President of NICA and the National Rules Committee.

4.2 Concussion Return-to-Play Policy

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

4.2.2 A student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a league activity, or who is suffering the effects of a concussion sustained outside of league activity, shall be immediately removed from the activity for the remainder of the day, and shall not be permitted to return to the activity until he or she is evaluated by a licensed health care provider. The student-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. If the licensed health care provider determines that the student-athlete sustained a concussion or a head injury, the student-athlete shall also complete the 7-day minimum graduated return- to-play protocol provided by the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) under the supervision of a licensed health care provider. See the CIF website or download the form here: http://static.psbin.com/e/4/ec33zijmqdi511/CIF_Concussion_Return_to_Play_Protocol.pdf

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

4.3 Avoid Riding Alone

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

4.4 Obey Traffic Laws

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

4.5 Respect Drivers, Pedestrians, & Other Trail Users

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

4.6 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.

4.7 Represent Your NICA League & Mountain Biking

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

4.8 Leave No Trace

4.8.1 Be sensitive to the dirt beneath you. Recognize different types of soils and trail construction; practice low-impact cycling. Wet and muddy trails are more vulnerable to damage. When the trail bed is soft, consider other riding options. Ride it, don't slide or skid. Ride through mud puddles, not around them (which widens the trail). Stay on existing trails and do not create new ones. Don't cut switchbacks. Never build a new trail, jumps, or other riding features without the written permission of the land managers. Be sure to pack out at least as much as you pack in.

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

4.9 Plan Ahead

Know your equipment, your ability, and the area in which you are riding and prepare accordingly. Be self-sufficient at all times, keep your equipment in good repair, and carry necessary gear for changes in the weather, the onset of darkness, or other inclement

conditions. A well-executed trip is a satisfaction to you and not a burden to others. Always wear a helmet (see Rule 7.1) and appropriate safety gear.

4.10 Risk Acceptance

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

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

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

4.11 Release Forms

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

5 COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

5.1 Duty of Care

5.1.1 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.

5.1.2 Utah league coaches have the responsibility to manage risk in accordance with NICA guidelines in an effort to protect student-athletes. As such, coaches have the right to place more stringent eligibility guidelines for their teams to ensure that the number of participants does not exceed the resources available. When participants exceed

resources, preference will be given to registered students of the school over homeschooled and charter school athletes.

5.1.3 Any disputes under this rule will be handled in accordance with NICA guidelines.

5.2 Race Attendance

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

5.3 Positive Sporting Behavior; League Director Complete Discretion

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

5.4 Team Training Limits Strictly Enforced

5.4.1 Individuals who coach a NICA team as well as a non-NICA team must follow all rules regarding league team training limits. An individual who coaches a league 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 NICA rulebook.

5.4.2 If a separate fee is charged in a capacity independent from NICA for non-NICA events, and sufficient other steps are taken to distinguish between NICA and non-NICA activities including, without limitation, written parental consent acknowledging the distinction between the NICA and non-NICA 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 NICA and non-NICA 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 his or her NICA coaching license.

6 PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

6.1 Handling Protests

Parents must handle protests, complaints, and/or conflicts with a positive and respectful attitude (see Rule 15.4). Parents should keep in mind that League officials have complete and total discretion for the implementation of these rules. It is required that parents demonstrate respect for and deference to the person of and the decisions of the League officials and failure to do so may result in restrictions imposed on a student-athlete's participation in the League.

6.2 Parents Riding and Providing Support on the Course

During a race, parents must not ride or run on the course within 200 meters of any student-athletes. Parents cannot run alongside the course with a student-athlete for more than 50 meters, and may not provide any food or beverage or otherwise provide physical support to student-athletes outside of the designated feed zones. As stated otherwise in these rules, failure to comply with this or any other rule may result in limitations to the parent(s) attendance or child's participation in the current or future events.

6.3 Positive Sporting Behavior

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

6.3.2 What parents can do to encourage positive sporting behavior:

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

7 EQUIPMENT RULES

7.1 Wearing Helmets Strictly Enforced

7.1.1 Student-athletes must wear an approved helmet at all times. See below for the list of approved helmet standards. Under no circumstances should a student-athlete be on their bicycle without a helmet fastened to their

head, even when riding a very short distance. Student-athletes must also keep their helmet on when walking or running on the course with a mechanical. In addition:

a. Helmet straps must be adjusted to the extent that two fingers can be pushed under the strap, whereas three fingers would be difficult.
b. Helmets should not have any cracks or dents from previous falls or mishandling.
c. Helmets should be the correct size with little to no side-to-side or front-to-back movement.
d. The helmet rules are not applicable to student-athletes warming up on bikes that are securely mounted to stationary trainers.

7.1.2 Approved Helmets must meet one of the following standards:

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

7.2 Mountain Bikes Only

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

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

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

7.3 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.

7.4 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.

7.5 Hands on Bars; No Bar Ends

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

7.6 Handlebar End Plugs and Stem Caps Required

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

7.7 Repair Bikes Off the Trail

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

7.8 Bring the Bike

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.

7.9 Footwear

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

7.10 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.

7.11 Number Plates & Bibs

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

7.11.2 Race bibs should be attached to the student-athletes jersey in a manner which allows the number to be easily read by race officials. Information regarding on which side of the jersey the bib should be placed will be given to head coaches at the head coach meeting.

8 TEAM RULES & ELIGIBILITY

8.1 League Divisions and Subregions

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

8.1.2 Divisions

a. Leagues are divided into Division I, consisting of larger teams, and Division II, consisting of smaller teams. A Division III may be created for scoring or racing purposes if the League decides it is necessary. Divisions are scored independently. If a league Division grows too large such that it can no longer reasonably accommodate all the students who wish to compete, the League may, at the League director's discretion, divide either the Division or the League itself into separate, independently scored geographical subregions.
b. Upon season rider registration close, teams will be placed into Division I or Division II based on the number of registered high school riders.

8.1.3 Geographical Subregions

a. The League may, at the League director's discretion, create separate subregions that must be established based upon specified geographical areas within the League's defined region.
b. The League director must maintain a written description specifying the geographical area for each subregion that is made available to all League teams and student-athletes through the league's website.
c. The division into subregions must be made according to the following rules, prior to team and student-athlete assignment under subparagraph (4) below:
    1. Applicable only to Division II, so that only Division II teams and student-athletes are to be scored separately according to subregion; or
    2. Applicable to both Division I and II teams and student-athletes, so that both Divisions are to be scored separately according to subregions; or
    3. Each subregion can be run as though it were a Tier 1 league so that teams and student-athletes are scored solely according to subregion with no regard to Division and team size.
d. Teams and student-athletes are assigned to a subregion as follows:
    1. For Single-School-Based Teams, the team is located in the subregion where the school is located;
    2. For County-Based Homeschool Teams, the team is located in the subregion where the students, or a majority of the students, primarily reside;
    3. For Composite Teams, the team is located in the subregion 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
    4. Independent riders are located in the subregion where they primarily reside.

8.2 Team Composition

8.2.1 Team Types:

a. **Single School-Based Teams**: Must be comprised of full-time students from the same school, public or private.
b. **Composite Teams**: Must be comprised of full-time students from more than one school and must include "composite" in the team name. Homeschool students may also join Composite Teams according to the location of the school they would attend if not homeschooled. A Composite Team must be approved by the League director based upon a written proposal timely submitted to the League prior to team registration for the season in which the

Composite Team wishes to compete. The proposal may include relevant information the organizers wish the League director to consider, but must include the following:

1. The proposed geographical region for its student-athletes;
2. The names of the schools the student-athletes attend and whether any of the student-athletes are homeschooled; and
3. 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.

c. **County-Based Homeschool Teams**: Homeschoolers may organize teams of students (homeschoolers only) who live within the same county or other geographic proximity.

8.2.2 Independent Study students must petition the League with the facts and circumstances of their situation to determine what type of team they are eligible to compete on. Homeschooled students who would otherwise be in middle school are scored in the same manner as Composite Teams set forth below (see 8.2.3(b) and 8.2.3(d)).

8.2.3 Composite Team Limitations

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

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

b. Composite Teams must comply, subject to the League's local state laws, with the following scoring restrictions:
   1. Teams must compete in Division II but may, at the League director's discretion and to be determined prior to the beginning of the season, be scored and awarded separately from Division I and II teams.
   2. Middle school student-athletes' scores are excluded from the Composite Teams' scores.
   3. Team's size is limited as to prevent any competitive advantage through the formation of large "super teams," which NICA has determined constitutes unfair competition. However, in certain regions and rural areas, these policies may not be served and the team size limitation may contravene policies to expand League ridership and to be inclusive to all riders. In the event the League's Rules Committee determines that NICA policies are not served and are contravened by the limitation, the League in its discretion may choose not to apply it and must also determine whether it is appropriate to score such larger teams in a separate category.

4. A single Composite Team may be comprised of subdivided teams according to subsection (3) below.
5. Each subdivided team shall be scored independently.

c. Composite Team subdivision rules:
   1. The League director must approve the subdivided teams that comprise a single Composite Team.
   2. If twelve or more student-athletes are from the same school and the team has thirty (30) or more 9-12th grade student-athletes, then the team must be subdivided into a separate team the following year and scored as representatives of that school.
   3. Upon subdivision, student-athletes will 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.
   4. 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.

8.2.4 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 student-athletes who attend the same opposite sex school. This same-sex school association is for scoring purposes only and does not result in a composite club. The associated teams, regardless of the size or division of the component parts, shall compete in the same division they would compete in were they a single school club. The association exists on a season-by-season basis and permission must be secured from the League Director ahead of the season. Once the season begins, the association shall remain in place until the season ends.

8.3 Team Recruiting and Mid-Season Transfers

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

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

8.3.3 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.

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

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

8.4 Proof of Attendance

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

8.5 Homeschoolers on School-Based Teams

In accordance with the provisions of the Utah School Activities Association Handbook (USAAH), a student that is legitimately enrolled in a homeschool, public charter school, online school, private school, or district alternative school educational program in grades 9-12 may participate as a member of a team for a school that is otherwise permitted to compete. The student must participate on the team for the school (a) within whose boundary the permanent residence of the student's parent or guardian is situated, or (b) from which the student withdrew in order to enroll in his or her current educational program. The team's school must meet all legal requirements that allow its students to participate.

8.6 Homeschool and Composite Team Approval

8.6.1 Homeschool and Composite teams must state and gain approval of their geographic scope. Homeschool teams are scored in the same manner as Composite teams as provided under Rule 8.1.

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

8.7 Independent Racers

Independent racers are a rare exception that must be approved by the League Director. Student-athletes who do not have a club or team at the school that they attend may petition to participate as an independent racer. For safety and inclusion, an independent racer may be asked to practice with a team that is geographically acceptable. If there are four or more independent racers at the same school or within the confines of the composite team rules, then they are required to form a team.

8.8 Student-Athletes Must Join School Teams

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

8.9 One School, One Team

Only one team may represent a school.

8.10 Team Size Limitations

8.10.1 As volunteer coaches, the league gives head coaches the discretion to determine the size of their team. Some factors that affect team size include parental support, trained ride leaders and assistant coaches, team transportation, and the capacity of nearby practice trails. Coaches may use a variety of the following to limit team size, which may include:

a. Early registration deadlines
b. Student grade point average
c. Practice and race attendance.

8.10.2 Coaches may not use a rider's speed, time trials or race results to limit participation on the team.

8.11 Active Teams Must Register

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

8.12 Team Registration Deadline

8.12.1 No new teams will be added to the series scoring once the season registration has closed.

8.12.2 The deadline for online annual Team Registration is before season rider registration closes.

8.13 Team Registration Fee

8.13.1 The deadline for teams to pay the annual team registration fee is before the rider registration deadline.

8.13.2 Change in Divisions:

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

8.14 All Student-Athletes and Coaches Must Register

All student-athletes and all coaches (all levels) must register with the League. Student-athletes and coaches (all levels) who are not registered are not fully insured.

a. Student-athletes must pay a registration fee, unless they are eligible for a scholarship.
b. Student grace period: all student-athletes are insured at one (1) practice to "try it out," so long as a signed release form is on file with the team coach.
c. There is no grace period for coaches — they are not fully insured until they are registered (Level 1 license at minimum).
d. All registration is conducted online through the NICA Pit Zone.

8.15 Official School Status Not Needed

8.15.1 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.

8.15.2 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.

8.16 Independent Jerseys

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

8.17 Coach to Student-Athlete Ratio

Teams must maintain a ratio of 1 licensed coach for every 6 student-athletes at all team events. Teams will not be allowed to schedule or participate in any activities until notice is received from the League Director or Region Director that the team has been approved to commence activities.

8.18 Team Training Limits

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

a. Teams can commence limited activities during the pre-season. Allowable pre-season activities are bike checks, mechanical workshops, "fun rides," or skills clinics.
b. During the pre-season, teams are allowed to have up to 8 scheduled pre-season activities (bike checks, mechanical workshops, "fun rides," or skills clinics).
c. Trail work days will not count as one of a team's 8 scheduled pre-season activities.
d. During the regular season, teams may conduct up to 4 practices per week, 3 of which may be conducted on trail. Refer to Appendix B for more information.
e. Teams may not conduct any organizational activity aimed towards competing at races during their off-season.
f. 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, student-athlete, and team to compete in NICA races.

8.19 NICA Coach Licenses and Background Checks

All adults participating in team rides must have a NICA coach license and undergo a background check.

8.20 Team Director Requirements (Level 3 Licensing)

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

8.21 Level 3 Licensing

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

8.22 Level 2 Licensing

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

8.23 Level 1 License

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

9 RACE COURSE INFORMATION

9.1 Cross-Country (XC) Race Definition

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

9.2 Course Length and Difficulty

9.2.1 The ideal NICA cross-country race course has a circuit short enough to require multiple laps for a race and includes terrain that can be completed by beginner riders. The number of laps should be determined according to the riders' ability to complete the race within a specific time. The event times should be:

a. *Middle school leagues only*: 45 minutes or less for Middle School boys and girls;
b. 60 minutes or less for Single Lap category boys and girls;
c. 45 to 90 minutes for Freshman boys and girls;
d. 60 to 90 minutes for JV boys and girls; and
e. 90 to 120 minutes for Varsity boys and girls.

9.2.2 The League director or Race director may alter the number of laps any category will race at any time.

9.3 Category Time Limits

9.3.1 Each category is given a race time limit. The time limits are:
a. 45 minutes for Middle School boys and girls;
b. 60 minutes for Single Lap category boys and girls;
c. 90 minutes for Freshman boys and girls;
d. 90 minutes for JV boys and girls; and
e. 120 minutes for Varsity boys and girls.

9.3.2 Student-athletes may be pulled off course to finish early before their final lap if their current pace suggests that they will not finish within their category's time limit. For example, if the Freshman Girls category is racing two laps, student-athletes who do not complete their first lap within 45 minutes will be pulled and will finish after one lap.

9.3.3 Student-athletes who are pulled off course to finish early will receive points based on their finishing placement, after all the student-athletes who complete the final lap.

9.4 Safety Guidelines for Courses

NICA cross-country courses must be designed for maximal safety. Course guidelines are:
a. Uphill starts or some climbing in first half-mile;
b. 33-inch wide start lanes;
c. Uphill finishes;
d. Uphill feed zones; and
e. Inspection and addressing of:
    1. off-camber turns and ruts;
    2. large or loose rocks;
    3. sharp turns on fast sections;
    4. water crossings;
    5. areas where excessive speeds can be achieved; and
    6. other obvious injury vectors.

9.5 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.

9.6 Standard Turn Arrow Locations

An arrow sign is to be placed 30 meters before each intersection to indicate an upcoming turn and a second arrow sign is placed at the intersection. The direction of travel through the intersection is then confirmed by a third arrow sign located 10 meters farther along the

race course in the new direction. Wrong way signs are used to mark all potential wrong turns.

9.7 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.

9.8 Hazard Signs

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

9.9 Standard Placement of Signs

Course signage should, whenever possible, be placed on the right side of the course and securely staked into the ground.

9.10 Use of Ribbon

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

9.11 List of Signs

Directional and warning signs for mountain bike circuits are:
a. Arrows indicating course direction (Rule 9.5) and turns (Rule 9.6);
b. Caution (Rule 9.9);
c. Wrong Way (Rule 9.5 and Rule 9.6);
d. EMS Course Access Point;
e. Alternate Route on Course; and
f. Dismount Required (off bike).

10 CATEGORY PLACEMENT

10.1 Category Placement

10.1.1 Category placement and division rules are designed to facilitate and promote fair, safe, and challenging competition. Placement of student-athletes is based primarily on their League race results and end-of-season rankings from the preceding year. Student-athletes do not choose their category, but are placed into categories according to the rules below. Student-athletes seeking an alternative placement may petition to the Region director for an exception (see Rule 10.6).

10.1.2 Student-athletes in 7th and 8th grade may race in Junior Devo categories. Student athletes in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade may race in High School categories.

10.2 Categories

The scored categories are as follows:

10.2.1 Jr Devo Boys:
Beginner 7th
Beginner 8th
Intermediate 7th
Intermediate 8th
Advanced

10.2.2 Jr Devo Girls:
Beginner
Intermediate
Advanced

10.2.3 HS Boys:
Single Lap Race (SLR)
Freshmen A
Freshmen B
JV A
JV B
JV C
JV D
Varsity

10.2.4 HS Girls:
Single Lap Race (SLR)
Freshmen
JV A
JV B
Varsity

10.3 Divisions

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

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

allocation based solely according to team divisions. Whenever separate races of the same categories are run, separate medals must be awarded.

10.4 Transgender Student-Athletes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

10.5 Category Placement Rules

10.5.1 Summary

a. Categories are based on grade level and student-athletes' prior performance. Individual race results and a student-athlete's end-of-season overall standings dictate placement from season to season. All race results and overall season standings are available at the League website.
b. 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.
c. 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.

d. Students who did not compete in the prior year and have no results are placed into the category are placed into the category that is recommended by their coach, with oversight from the League.
e. All 9th graders will be placed in a Freshmen category and all 10th, 11th and 12th graders will be placed in a Junior Varsity category.
f. Petitions for exceptions to the category placement criteria are limited for each grade level to certain categories. See Rule 10.6 for the permissible petition upgrades.
g. Middle-school students cannot petition for an upgrade into the high school categories.

10.5.2 Placement Criteria
Placement criteria, excluding petitions, are as follows:
a. Middle School: 7th – 8th graders only.
b. Single Lap Race (SLR): 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders whose coach submits a Single Lap category change request for the rider.
c. Freshman: 9th graders only.
d. Junior Varsity: All 10th, 11th, and 12th graders who were not placed in Varsity.
e. Varsity: 10th, 11th, and 12th graders who qualify.

10.6 Petitioning for a Placement Criteria Exception

10.6.1 It is NICA and League policy that student-athletes compete in appropriate competitive peer groups and to prevent strategic gamesmanship in category placement. Petitions for an upgrade in categories should; therefore, only be granted upon a showing that:
a. The student-athlete's performance and experience level clearly exceeds the level of all other riders competing in the category designated under the Rule 10.5 Placement Criteria — i.e., no other rider in the same category has a reasonable chance of being competitive with the student seeking the upgrade; and
b. The upgrade will place the student into a more appropriate competitive peer group.

10.6.2 To petition for an exception to the Placement Criteria, students must consult their coaches. The head coach must complete and submit the Category Placement Petition webform found at the League's website according to the instructions provided on the form. The petition must be submitted by a head coach. If there is no head coach, the student-athlete must contact their regional director and a coach advisor will be appointed. A parent may be assigned as the advisor.

10.6.3 Petition upgrade options are limited to the following:
a. Middle school student-athletes cannot petition for an upgrade into the high school categories.
b. 9th graders may petition to race in a higher skilled Freshman category or in the JVA category.
c. JV student-athletes may petition to race in a higher skilled JV category or Varsity.

d. 9th graders who have previously downgraded into the Single Lap Race category may upgrade to race in a Freshman category.
e. 10th, 11th, and 12th graders who have previously downgraded into the Single Lap category may upgrade to race in a JV category.

10.6.4 Petition downgrade options are limited to the following:
a. 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders may petition into the Single Lap category.
b. Downgrade petitions for any category other than Single Lap will only be granted for medical reasons or similar extenuating circumstances. A doctor's note may be requested alongside a downgrade petition.

10.6.5 Petitions may be submitted once registration closes.
a. Petitions submitted before the race season begins should be submitted as early as possible.
b. Petitions must be submitted by 9:00 am Mountain Time on the Monday before the upcoming race that the given student-athlete may attend. Petitions submitted after this time will not be reviewed for the upcoming race.
c. No category petitions will be accepted after the student-athlete's 3rd regional race.
d. Riders will not lose their current season points in the event that their upgrade petition is granted.
e. Riders will lose current season points in the event that they downgrade to the Single Lap category or in the event that any other downgrade petition is granted.

See Rule 13.3 regarding the transfer of individual points incident to a student-athlete's mid-season change in categories.

10.6.6 Successful petitions are subject to revocation at any time at the League or Region director's sole discretion, in which event the student-athlete shall be placed in the appropriate category according to the Placement Criteria. Individual and team penalties may be assessed, at the League or Region director's sole discretion, for any change in categories for a student-athlete that is subsequently revoked on grounds that the change was contrary to NICA and League policies.

11 INDIVIDUAL RACING RULES

11.1 Leader's Jersey

The student-athlete in each 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 League races, so long as they remain the top points holder. In the case of a tie, both student-athletes wear leader's jerseys.

11.2 Easy Leader Recognition

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

11.3 Staging for Race Starts

11.3.1 Listen to Pre-Race Announcements
Student-athletes must be present and attentive during pre-race announcements. Students-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.

11.3.2 Start Line Call-Ups
a. Start line call-ups for top placed student-athletes takes place at all races. At the first race of the season, the call-ups are based on the points from the previous season, regardless of the category where the points were earned. At all subsequent races, the call-ups are based on the most recent race results that each student-athlete was scheduled to attend.
b. The following number of riders will be called up by name for each race start:
    1. Field size of 24 or less riders: Top 5 are called up
    2. Field size of 25–49 riders: Top 10 are called up
    3. Field size of 50-74 riders: Top 15 are called up
    4. Field size of 75+ riders: Top 20 are called up

11.3.3 If a student-athlete misses their call-up, their place will not be held. They will be allowed to stage in the next available grouping.

11.3.4 Following the named call ups, student-athletes will be called into the staging area one at a time based on results from the most recent race each student-athlete was invited to attend. Student-athletes who do not know their staging order will be staged at the end of their category.

11.3.5 Student-athletes who successfully petitioned into a different category before a given race will stage at the end of their new category at that race.

11.4 First Race Call-Ups

11.4.1 For Freshman student-athletes, the following applies for the first race:
a. The junior devo race results from the previous season will be used, when available, to determine the call-ups for the first race of the season.
b. D1 Teams:
    1. Coaches must submit the top three Freshman boy and girl student-athletes in each category per team to be staged, three weeks prior to the first race. Top 1 will be randomized and called up by name first, followed by second, then third submitted top riders, until allotted number of named call-ups is fulfilled according to field size. Randomization for the remaining riders done via spreadsheet will be published on the website prior to the first race.
    2. All other student-athletes are staged by their last plate number according to a sequence randomly drawn from 0 to 9.
c. D2 Teams:
    1. Coaches must submit the top Freshman boy and girl student-athletes in each category per team to be staged, three weeks prior

to the first race. These riders will be randomized and called up by name until allotted number of named call-ups is fulfilled according to field size. Randomization for the remaining riders done via spreadsheet will be published on the website prior to the first race.

2. All other student-athletes are staged by their last plate number according to a sequence randomly drawn from 0 to 9.

11.4.2 For Varsity riders, the following applies for the first race:

a. Staging starts with student-athletes who raced Varsity in the previous season, who are staged according to overall points from the previous season;
b. Next, student-athletes who raced JVA in the previous season are staged according to their overall points from the previous season (JVA);
c. Next, student-athletes who raced JVB through the remaining categories in the previous season are staged according to their overall points from the previous season; and
d. Finally, student-athletes who successfully petitioned to race Varsity are staged according to their previous season points.

11.4.3 For all other categories:
Call-ups at the first race of the season shall be based upon the overall points earned by each student-athlete in the previous season. No adjustments will be made based on category changes or other circumstances.

11.5 Missed Starts

11.5.1 Student-athletes must start on time with their group. If a student-athlete misses their start and does not roll out of the start area with their group, they may start at the end of another category within the same wave. The student-athlete's time will not be adjusted to reflect that they started after their assigned category. Student-athletes who do not start with their category will not receive an individual score or be eligible to score for their team.

11.5.2 Student-athletes must race within the same wave that their category is assigned.

11.6 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.

11.7 Leader Owns the Trail but Cannot Block

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

11.8 Approaching the Feed Zone

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.

11.9 Student-Athletes May Be Pulled

Lapped racers and racers outside the time limit may be pulled from the race at the finish line. At the Race 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. Pulled racers earn individual points, but their points are not eligible for team scoring.

11.10 Time Limits May Be Imposed

11.10.1 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.

11.10.2 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.

11.10.3 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.

11.11 Field Size Limits

Category fields that have more than 100 racers will be split into two equal-sized start heats.

11.12 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.

12 PIT ZONE, FEED ZONE AND COACH ZONE RULES

12.1 Pit Zone

12.1.1 Designated Pit Zone Areas
Teams are assigned predetermined areas in the race pit zone. Pit zone areas are determined based on the size of the team. All team equipment, including cars and trailers, must be set up within the assigned areas. All team equipment

must be properly secured. Teams may not erect tents, tables, bike stands, or mechanical stations outside of their areas in the pit zone. Camping is not allowed in the pit zone.

12.1.2 Bike Parking
Coaches and student-athletes must park their bikes out of the throughways to avoid obstructing cars, pedestrians, and other riders.

12.1.3 Autos in the Pit Zone

a. To minimize congestion, the League reserves all rights to manage the flow of automobile traffic into and out of the pit zone. Only those vehicles with Pit Zone or Head Coach hangtags will be allowed to enter the Pit Zone.
b. Vehicles are allowed to remain in the team pit zone area, but must be fully contained within the boundaries of the designated team area. Vehicles that remain in the pit zone must remain there for the duration of the race day and may only leave during the times listed on the race flyer.
c. The pit zone hours as posted on the race flyer must be adhered to by all attendees.
d. Recreational Vehicles (RVs) are not permitted in the pit zone. Pickup trucks with camper shells may be permitted. Gas powered generators (built in or external) may not be permitted in the pit zone at certain venues. A full-size fire extinguisher must be placed next to every generator.

12.1.4 No Extension of Pit Zone
Teams will 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. No tents may be set up in the area of the League snow fencing.

12.1.5 Failure to comply with the requirements contained within this section may result in a team penalty, up to and including loss of team pit zone passes.

12.2 Feed Zone

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

12.2.2 No Interference with Other Student-Athletes
Feeding one student-athlete must not cause other student-athletes to slow down or veer off course.

12.2.3 Food and Drink Only
Student-athletes may not accept items (such as tools, gear, or parts) within the feed zone boundaries during races, or the outside assistance penalty will apply (Rule 2.21).

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

12.2.5 No Physical Contact
a. All hand-offs must be conducted hand-to-hand only — from the hand of the feeder to the hand of the student-athlete. No other physical contact between student-athletes and feeders is allowed. Such other contact will be considered outside assistance (Rule 2.21) and a penalty will apply.
b. It is not permitted for a feeder to place water bottles onto the bike or hydration packs onto student-athletes, nor may items be put into the student-athlete's mouth or the pockets on the student-athlete's jersey.

12.2.6 No Running in The Feed Zone
Running in the feed zone is not permitted under any circumstances. Running increases the risk of collisions and interference with student-athletes and other feeders.

12.2.7 Feed on Right Hand Side
a. 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.
b. 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.
c. After feeding a student-athlete, the feeder must move clear of the feeding zone to allow plenty of room for other feeders.

12.2.8 Visible Team Identity in The Feed Zone
Feeders must wear a shirt, jacket, hat, vest, jersey, or adhesive name tag that identifies the team of the student-athletes they are feeding.

12.2.9 Limited Feeders Per Team
Each team is allowed a limited number of feeders in the feed zone as indicated below. The number is based on the number of student-athletes that are competing in the current wave.

# Racers	**# Feeders**
5 or less	2
6-10	3
11-20	4
21 or more	5

12.2.10 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.

12.2.11 Feed Zone Is Caffeine Free
As caffeine is a banned substance (Rule 2.8), feeders must not hand off any caffeinated products to student-athletes. Student-athletes will be penalized for accepting caffeinated products. Race officials may request to inspect feed zone supplies at any time.

12.2.12 No Throwing Water on Student-Athletes in Feed Zone
Throwing water on student-athletes in the feed zone or the area immediately preceding the feed zone is not permitted.

12.3 Coach Zone

12.3.1 The Coach Zone is located at the end of the exit chute of the race course and is designated for coaches to ensure the health and welfare of their riders during and at the end of their race.

12.3.2 All teams must have a coach present in the Coach Zone at all times when a team member is on course.

12.3.3 Each team is allowed a limited number of coaches in the coach zone as indicated below. The number is based on the number of student-athletes that are competing in the current wave.

# Racers	# Coaches
5 or less	2
6-10	3
11-20	4
21 or more	5

13 TEAM AND INDIVIDUAL SCORING RULES

13.1 Individual Series Scoring

Student-athletes compete against other racers in the same category. Individual scoring is not divided into Divisions I and II, unless they are racing in separate categories, e.g., Freshman Boys Division I and Freshman Boys Division II are scored separately. See categories under Rule 10.

13.2 Overall Individual Series Scoring

13.2.1 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. A missed race would be the lowest score dropped. If there are fewer than four races in the series, in the case of a race cancellation, no score will be dropped.

13.2.2 The State Championship race is not included in the race series for the Overall Individual Series scoring.

13.3 Point System

13.3.1 Points are awarded to all starters. Student-athletes that do not finish a race (DNF) will be awarded the baseline number of points for their category.

- See Appendix A for the Individual Point Scale.

13.3.2 In the event of a successful upgrade petition to change categories under Rule 10.6, individual points earned in one category will transfer to another category. In the event of a successful downgrade petition to change categories, individual points earned in one category will not transfer to the lower category and all points will be forfeited.

13.3.3 A student-athlete's points scored toward team standings prior to the change in categories remain unaffected. Student-athletes who successfully petition to be placed in a lower category are eligible to score team points in that lower category.

13.4 League Scoring Matrix

13.4.1 Division I scoring is based on the top sixteen point-earners, with a maximum of twelve of those point-earners scoring in either the boys' or girls' categories.

13.4.2 Division II 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.

13.4.3 If a Division III is created for team scoring, Division III 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.

13.4.4 Teams that do not field the minimum number of scoring riders at a race, including the minimum number of riders of each gender, will not receive a team score at that race.

13.4.5 The number of scoring riders per team in each Division may be altered after the rider registration deadline at the League Director and Race Director's discretion in order to accommodate the teams that are placed in each Division.

13.4.6 Racers that are pulled from the race for time limits are not eligible for team scoring.

13.5 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.

13.6 Awards at Each Race

13.6.1 Individual medals are awarded at least five places deep at each race, including the State Championships, except in the case of races with field sizes with fewer than 20 student-athletes, in which case medals are awarded at least three places deep.

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

13.7 Awards for Overall Series

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

13.8 State Championship Race

Student-athletes must individually qualify for the state championship race. The race is only open to high school student-athletes. Qualification criteria will be published prior to student-athlete registration.

14 RACE OFFICIALS

14.1 Impartiality

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

14.2 Race Official Positions

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

a. Race/League Director;
b. Chief Official;
c. Chief Scoring/Timing Official; and
d. Rules and Appeals Committee Members

14.3 Officials Uniforms

Race Officials must wear provided uniforms.

14.4 Chief Official

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

14.5 Additional Powers of Chief Official

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

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

14.6 Duties and Powers of Other Officials

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

14.7 Start/Finish Line Officials

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

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

14.8 Chief Scoring Official

Chief Scoring Officials are responsible for running the scoring program, investigating and troubleshooting discrepancies, posting preliminary results, fielding protests regarding preliminary results and scoring, and providing final results for the awards ceremony. They also have the authority to interpret and enforce the rules pertaining to scoring. All penalties assessed shall be reported to the Chief Official.

14.9 Chief Course Marshal

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

14.10 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:

a. Carry a radio, a notepad and pen, and a course map;
b. Wear a designated Course Marshal vest;
c. 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
d. 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.

14.11 Course Sweeper

Course Sweepers communicate with the Chief Course Marshal and the Start/Finish Line Official. The Sweeper's responsibilities are to be aware of, and ride behind, the last rider on the racecourse at a distance, and report to the Chief Course Marshal and Start/Finish Line Official 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.

14.12 League Rules Committee

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

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

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

14.13 Petition Forms & Incident Reports

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

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

14.14 On-Site Protests

The Chief Official will handle any protests arising at the event. The Chief Official may call a meeting of all available LRC members at an event to rule on any protests. If no members are available, the Chief Official may defer a protest ruling until after the event and such a meeting under Rule 15.2 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 Official shall act in its place to render a timely decision.

14.15 Tie Determinations

In the event of a photo finish and tie determination, the Chief Timing Official, Chief Official, and Race Director will use only league timing equipment to make the final placement determination.

15 PROTESTS

15.1 Preliminary and Official Results (Mandatory)

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

15.1.2 Protest period deadline on race day
Protests to the preliminary results and opposition to penalties must be submitted, using the forms provided, to a race official at the scoring trailer within 15 minutes of the posting time.

15.1.3 Official results
After the timely protests and opposition to penalties are considered, ruled upon, and approved by the League/Race Director or the Chief Official, 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.

15.1.4 Deferred rulings
At the discretion of the League/Race Director or Chief Official, the decision and ruling on a protest or opposition to a penalty may be deferred until after race day (Rule 15.2). 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.

15.2 Extended Protest Period (Discretionary)

15.2.1 Results posted online
At the League/Race Director's discretion, an extended protest period may be permitted after the results are posted online on the League's website, during

which student-athletes may protest the results or oppose the assessment of penalties.

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

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

15.3 Protest Decisions After Race Day

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

15.3.2 Additional information
League officials shall provide their best efforts to make reasonable inquiries and provide a timely decision and ruling. Student-athletes and coaches who are involved on either side of the dispute may submit statements within the applicable protest period under Rule 15.1 or Rule 15.2. Submitting such statements after the protest period is permissible only if done at the request of League officials.

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

15.4 Judgment Calls

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

15.4.2 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 League officials are required to make. It is further expected of student-athletes, 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.

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

16 GRIEVANCES AND NO RETALIATION POLICY

16.1 Guidance for Sharing Grievances

16.1.1 NICA 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/league. The grievance procedure is in place to ensure that all community members are treated in a fair and equitable manner.

16.1.2 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.

16.1.3 If the complaint is against the head coach, team director or other leadership position, the matter should be taken to and discussed with the League Director.

16.1.4 If the matter cannot be resolved at this level, the complaint should be made in writing and submitted to Utah High School Cycling League Board Rules and Ethics Committee.

16.1.5 At this point, the aggrieved party will be notified of the issue/concern/complaint and the Board Rules and Ethics Committee will make every attempt to have the issue resolved within fourteen days. All complaints will be treated in a confidential manner.

16.2 No Retaliation Policy

No individual who reports a suspected violation of any League 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.

APPENDIX A – INDIVIDUAL SCORING TABLE

	Girls Boys	Girls Boys	Girls Boys	Boys	Girls Boys
Place	**Varsity**	**JV A**	**JV B Fresh A**	**JV C JV D Fresh B**	**Single Lap Race (SLR)**
1	300	290	280	270	200
2	299	289	279	269	199
3	298	288	278	268	198
4	297	287	277	267	197
5	296	286	276	266	196
6	295	285	275	265	195
7	294	284	274	264	194
8	293	283	273	263	193
9	292	282	272	262	192
10	291	281	271	261	191
11	290	280	270	260	190
12	289	279	269	259	189
13	288	278	268	258	188
14	287	277	267	257	187
15	286	276	266	256	186
16	285	275	265	255	185
17	284	274	264	254	184
18	283	273	263	253	183
19	282	272	262	252	182
20	281	271	261	251	181
21	280	270	260	250	180
22	279	269	259	249	179
23	278	268	258	248	178
24	277	267	257	247	187

25	276	266	256	246	186
26	275	265	255	245	185
27	274	264	254	244	184
28	273	263	253	243	183
29	272	262	252	242	182
30	271	261	251	241	181
31	270	260	250	240	180
32	269	259	249	239	179
33	268	258	248	238	178
34	267	257	247	237	177
35	266	256	246	236	176
36	265	255	245	235	175
37	264	254	244	234	174
38	263	253	243	233	173
39	262	252	242	232	172
40	261	251	241	231	171
41	260	250	240	230	170
42	259	249	239	229	169
43	258	248	238	228	168
44	257	247	237	227	167
45	256	246	236	226	166
46	255	245	235	225	165
47	254	244	234	224	164
48	253	243	233	223	163
49	252	242	232	222	162
50	251	241	231	221	161
51	250	240	230	220	160
Etc.	-1 point	- 1 point	- 1 point	- 1 point	- 1 point
Baseline	**101**	**91**	**81**	**71**	**1**

APPENDIX B – TEAM TRAINING LIMITS

A. TEAM TRAINING LIMITS

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

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

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

B. PRESEASON

a. Start Date. Teams and clubs can commence limited preseason team activities on April 1.
b. Allowable Activities. The team, club, and coaches must be registered with NICA to participate in, and conduct, activities. Only the following pre-season activities are permitted and must be pre-approved by the Region director:
    1. Bike checks, equipment inspections, and bike fit;
    2. Mechanical workshops;
    3. All-inclusive fun rides; and
    4. Skills clinics
c. Activities Limit. The maximum number of preseason activities is 8.

C. REGULAR SEASON

a. Start Date. Regular training, to include up to four practices per week, may commence on June 1st.
    - At least one of the four practices per week must either be off-trails or with a special program. Allowed activities include:
        1. Trail work days;
        2. Mechanical workshops;
        3. Skills clinics, staying off trails;
        4. GRiT or other League programming.
b. Racing Limits. Teams and clubs may participate in races only during the regular season.
c. End of Season. No team or club rides, or any other training activities, may take place following the 14th consecutive day after the final League race of the season. Special postseason activities (ie. team party/banquet) are not subject to this restriction.

D. OFF-SEASON

The off-season is defined as periods not within the applicable preseason 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. A league team racing under the school name;
b. Using the team 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 league team property without a letter of permission from school administration; and

f. Using the same league team communication methods (website, social media, group messaging, etc.) as an outlet for organizing off-season practices or racing.

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

APPENDIX C – LICENSE LEVEL REQUIREMENTS

License Requirement	Level 1 Age 18+	Level 2 Age 21+	Level 3 Age 21+
Role Description	Can ride with the team but cannot lead a group or a practice.	Can lead a specific group within a team. Has the ability to plan practices under Head Coach Supervision	Can plan practices and lead groups. Plans ride schedules and training plans as directed by Head Coach. This level can also be a Head Coach or Team Director
Participation Agreement	Required Annually	Required Annually	Required Annually
Coach License Membership Fee - $25	Required Annually	Required Annually	Required Annually
Background Check	Required Annually	Required Annually	Required Annually
NFHS: Concussion in Sports	Required Annually	Required Annually	Required Annually
Athlete Abuse Awareness Training	Required Every 2 Years	Required Every 2 Years	Required Every 2 Years
Risk Management 1	Required Every 2 Years	Not Required	Not Required
Risk Management 2	Not Required	Required Every 2 Years	Not Required
Risk Management 3	Not Required	Not Required	Required Every 2 Years
NICA Student-Athlete Coaching Philosophy	Required Annually	Required Annually	Required Annually
Basic First Aid/CPR	Not Required	Required. Expires after 2 years	Required. Expires after 2 years
NICA-Approved First Aid or Wilderness First Aid	Not Required	Not Required	Required. Expires after 2 years
Field Work Hours	Not Required	20 Hours Required	80 Hours Required
On-The-Bike Skills	Not Required	Required	Required
1-Day Leaders' Summit	Not Required	Not Required	Required
Level 3 Exam	Not Required	Not Required	Required
Continuing Education Units	Not Required	3 units required every 3 years	9 units required every 3 years