



Sporting Regulations 2025

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Chapter 1 Definitions & Scope

Minnesota Cycling Association (MCA) - The Minnesota Cycling Association (MCA) is a 501c3 youth development organization focused primarily on mountain biking.

MCA Activities –races, practices, team training rides, team meetings, coach training, and any other event run by the MCA or an MCA team.

Riders or Student-athletes – an individual in grades 6 – 12, participating in the Minnesota Cycling Association.

Coach(es) – an adult who meets the requirements for certification as a coach for the Minnesota Cycling Association **and** is registered as a licensed coach for the current season.

Staff & Volunteers – individuals working or volunteering with the Minnesota Cycling Association.

Parents & Guardians – parent or legal guardian of a student-athlete participating in the Minnesota Cycling Association.

Event attendees & spectators – individuals present onsite during a Minnesota Cycling Association race or event.

Competition Committee – committee responsible for the interpretation of the rules and resolving disputes regarding application and enforcement of the rules. Competition Committee members include the Race Director, Coaching Director, and MCA Director. Additional non-interested parties may be brought in as necessary, depending on the circumstances and/or their expertise.

Cross County Race – a cross-country mountain bike race is a mass start competition held on a circuit course of trails, grass and unpaved dirt or gravel roads.

Applicability

These rules apply to all student-athletes during all practices, races, individual training rides, at all times while riding your bike during the MCA season, and at any time when acting as a representative of a MCA team or the MCA, which includes any time you are wearing team clothing. Student-athletes should be aware their conduct reflects on the MCA and other members of the MCA community.

Rules applicable to coaches apply during all practices, races, individual training rides, at all other times while riding your bike during the MCA season, when you may influence MCA student-athletes, and at any time when acting as a representative of an MCA team or the MCA. Coaches should be aware that they are a role model for student-athletes year-round. Their behavior and conduct in public, or in private, where student-athletes may observe, must adhere to these standards.

Some rules apply to the behavior and conduct of other persons, including parents and guardians of student-athletes and other MCA event attendees.

Season Schedule

The MCA season schedules are generally set each year as follows:

- Preseason: activities begin May 1
- Regular season: practice begins July 1 and concludes two weeks after the last race event
- Racing season: begins with the date of the first race, typically late August and ends with the State Championship in October.

Consequences & Penalty Structure

These are the penalties applied to student-athletes for rule violations. Rules with different consequences are specified within those rules.

A rule violation by a Coach, Parent, Guardian or Event attendee may be applied to their associated student-athlete or team.

Student-athletes and Coaches are also bound by their respective Code of Conduct and may be penalized differently for a violation of the Code of Conduct.

Penalties will be applied by MCA officials, specifically by the Referee, Race Director, or Competition Committee. The officials applying penalties and consequences strive to apply the rules fairly, considering each individual situation.

Review or appeal of a decision to apply penalties or consequences, if required, is done by the Competition Committee.

The standard student-athlete penalties are at one of three levels:

Yellow Level:

First offense: warning (verbal)

Second offense: 5-minute penalty

Third offense: 10-minute penalty

Orange Level:

First offense: 5-minute penalty

Second offense: 10-minute penalty

Third offense: Disqualification from race

Red Level:

First offense: Disqualification from race, or next race if between races

Second offense: Disqualification from more than one race

Additional penalties or consequences may be applied at the discretion of the Referee, Race Director or Competition Committee as deemed appropriate.

Appeals

The Competition Committee is responsible for the interpretation of the rulebook and the resolution of any disputes regarding the application and enforcement of the rules. The Head Coach may appeal any rule decision or penalty assessed to a student-athlete or team by an official to the Competition Committee.

Grievance Process

The MCA recognizes that student-athletes, parents, coaches and volunteers have the right to raise grievances about any matter related to their involvement with the organization. A grievance could be related to another community member, a member of the paid staff, or the way they are being treated by the team or the MCA. The grievance procedure is in place to ensure that all community members are treated in a fair and equitable manner.

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.

If the complaint is against the Head Coach, Team Director or other leadership position, the matter should be taken to and discussed with the MCA Director. This and all complaints will be treated in a confidential manner.

Chapter 2 Policies

Concussion & Return to Play:

The MCA follows Minnesota Statute 121A.38 which governs return-to-play concussion procedures in high school sports.

Concussion: A student-athlete shall be removed from participation if:

- they exhibit signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion, **or**
- they are suspected of sustaining a concussion, **or**
- they have sustained a concussion.

Return-to-play: The student-athlete should be completely symptom free at rest and during exertion prior to returning to full participation **and** have been evaluated by a provider trained and experienced in evaluating and managing concussions who has given written permission to again participate in the activity. Return to play guidelines are outlined in detail under [Coach Resources](#) on the MCA website.

Reporting: A concussion incurred during participation, removal from practice or activity due to a concussion incurred outside of MCA activities but during the season must be reported to the Coach and a Return to play clearance must be submitted prior to further participation in activities. Reporting form is found on the MCA website under [Coach Resources](#).

Drugs, Alcohol & Banned Substances

Banned Substances:

Student-athletes are prohibited from using performance enhancing or otherwise illegal substances. Student-athletes are subject to all U.S. Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) rules pertaining to anti-doping. A list of banned substances can be found at [USADA's website](#). Confirmed use of a banned substance will result in disqualification from one full season or the equivalent number of races spanning two seasons.

Prescription Drug Use:

Student-athletes may only use their own prescription drugs. Using someone else's prescription drug or off-label use of a prescribed drug can fall under the banned substances rule. **Red level**

Tobacco & Nicotine Use:

Use of tobacco and nicotine products, including vaping or e-cigarettes, by student-athletes is prohibited. **Red level**

Alcohol & Drug Use:

Use of alcohol or illicit drugs by student-athletes is prohibited. This includes cannabis or unprescribed pharmaceutical drugs.

- **First violation:** The student-athlete will lose eligibility for 2 races or 2 weeks (14 calendar days), whichever is greater. The student-athlete must continue to attend and participate in regular practice with their team to remain eligible for future participation.

- **Second violation:** The student-athlete will lose eligibility for the next 3 races or 3 weeks (21 calendar days), whichever is greater. The student-athlete must continue to attend and participate in regular practice with their team to remain eligible for future participation.
- **Third and subsequent violation:** The student-athlete will lose eligibility for participation for the next year, for a subsequent violation. If the student becomes a participant in an alcohol and/or drug treatment program on their own volition, the student-athlete *may be* eligible for participation a minimum of 6 weeks after entering treatment, upon request and review by the MCA Director.

Deference & Discretion:

The MCA places a high priority on early recognition and treatment of alcohol and drug problems. The MCA reserves 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. MCA retains unlimited discretion to modify the penalty/penalties prescribed by these rules, including, but not limited to application of a more lenient or more severe penalty, based on the circumstances.

Voluntary Referral: Any student-athlete who requests help, or is referred voluntarily, prior to a violation will not be suspended from participation if they successfully complete the appropriate educational program or community treatment program.

Caffeine & other substances:

The MCA considers caffeinated products inappropriate for student-athletes for health and performance-enhancing reasons. Caffeinated sport products such as bars, gels, and sport drinks, are prohibited before or during MCA races, practices, and other activities. The consumption of products containing caffeine, including but not limited to pop, energy drinks and coffee by student-athletes at MCA races and practices is prohibited. Substances containing Creatine, Guaraná Root, and Taurine are also banned from consumption at all MCA practices, races or other events.

Sexual Harassment Policy

The MCA strictly prohibits 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.

Reporting Sexual Harassment: If any student-athlete, coach, parent, volunteer, staff or employee feels they have been sexually harassed at an MCA event, they should report the incident immediately to the MCA Director or Coaching Director. If any student, coach, parent, volunteer, or employee feels they have been a victim of abuse, assault, or battery at an MCA event, they should report the incident immediately to the MCA Director. All reports will be handled in a confidential manner.

Consequences, Deference & Discretion: At the time an individual makes a report of prohibited behavior under this policy, MCA will discuss the matter with the reporting individual(s) and any individual(s) who is the subject of the alleged harassment. The discussion will include specific measures available to ensure the personal safety of everyone involved while the investigation is pending and moving forward, and agreement on which measures best suit the situation and the individuals involved. If a complaint is substantiated, consequences can include disqualification from races or involvement in MCA activities. MCA retains discretion to determine the most appropriate penalties regarding participation in the MCA.

Abusive Behavior

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

Coaches, parents, guardians, or other event attendees are expected to model positive sporting behavior. They are similarly prohibited from engaging in behavior that may be considered abuse, assault or battery. Furthermore, they should not engage in profanity, bullying or other forms of intimidation at any MCA event. Engaging in any of these behaviors will result in consequences ranging from a penalty applied to the student-athlete or team, removal from the venue, and/or a referral to law enforcement if an individual engages in abusive behavior at an MCA event.

Non-Discrimination in Participation

The MCA recognizes the value of participation for all student-athletes. The MCA prohibits all forms of discrimination, including discrimination and harassment of any type based on race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local laws.

No Retaliation

Nobody who reports a suspected violation of any MCA 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.

No Weapons

No weapons are allowed at any MCA event.

Chapter 3 Code of Conduct & Safety Standards

Student-athletes and coaches are expected to always do the following when riding a bike and participating in MCA activities:

- Wear a securely fastened helmet at all times on a bike. **Orange level**
- Ride safely and under control. Excessive speed, reckless riding, inability to control the bike, or endangerment of self or others is considered riding out of control. **Yellow level**
- No profanity. **Yellow level**
- No abusive behavior toward others, including but not limited to: physically touching in any unwelcome or threatening way, threatening abuse or harm, using force towards another, threatening force, or any conduct classified as assault. **Red level**
- Riders should not ride with headphones, earbuds, speakers, or other portable musical devices, including playing music on their cell phone while riding. **Yellow level**
- Riders may not answer a cell phone, make a call, talk on the phone, or text while riding a bike. To do so, riders must come to a complete stop, have both feet on the ground, and be clear of traffic flow. **Orange level**
- Follow leave no trace trail guidance and weather-related trail rules.

- Do not litter.
- Ride only authorized, legal trails.
- Obey traffic laws, including always riding to the right side of the road and in bike lanes when available; stop at all stop signs and red lights; signal your turns; and use required lights and reflectors at dusk/night.
- Follow the appropriate coach to student-athlete ratios for trail or road rides, or any ride where student-athletes may be split-up or out of view of others. Only Level 2 or Level 3 coaches may lead rides. Whenever possible, more than one coach should lead a ride. If there are 6 or fewer student-athletes in attendance at an MCA Event, a 1 coach to 6 student-athlete ratio (1:6) is acceptable. If there are more than 6 student-athletes in attendance at an MCA Event, a 2 coach to 8 student-athlete ratio (2:8) is required, with at least one of the coaches a Level 2 or Level 3 coach. A one coach to one student athlete ratio (1:1) is never appropriate.
- Avoid riding alone whenever possible. Student-athletes should never ride alone at an MCA practice. If riding alone, student-athletes should alert someone to the general location of the ride, the planned route, and the approximate length of the ride and anticipated time of return.
- 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. Don't startle others. Show respect when passing by announcing your pass and slowing. Anticipate other trail users around corners or in blind spots. Yield to uphill traffic. Yielding means slow down, communicate, be prepared to stop if necessary and pass safely.
- Student-athletes and coaches who participate in any of the events associated with the MCA including, without limitation, races, training rides, clinics, camps, and practice skill sessions, do so at their own risk. Whether or not you are registered with the MCA, no liability shall be attached to the MCA 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.

Chapter 4 Equipment Rules

Helmet

Student-athletes, coaches and anyone on a bike at an MCA event must wear a securely fastened helmet at all times on a bike. **Orange level**

- **Standards:** Approved Helmets must meet one of the following standards: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) standard for bicycle helmets, Snell Memorial Foundation Standard "B" or "N" series, American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standard F-1447, European Committee for Standardization (CE EN1078) standard for bicycle helmets.
- **Fit:** Helmet straps must be adjusted to the extent that two fingers can be pushed under the strap, whereas insertion of three fingers would not be reasonably possible. Helmets should be the correct size with minimal side-to-side or front-to-back movement.
- **Condition:** Helmets should not have any cracks or dents from previous falls or mishandling.
- **Full-face:** Full-face helmets are only allowed with advance permission from the Race Director or Referee

Bikes

- **Mountain Bikes Only:** Student-athletes must compete using mountain bikes that have 26- to 29-inch wheels with tires not narrower than 1.75 inches. If a rider is unable to ride a mountain bike with 26- to 29-inch wheels due to their height or other physical limitation or attribute, a rider may compete on a mountain bike with smaller wheels.
- **Tires:** Tires must have knobby tread. Slick tires and studded tires are prohibited.
- **Handlebars:** drop bars are not allowed; bar ends (forward pointing handle grip extensions) are not allowed. **End plugs and stem caps are required.**
- **Brakes:** Bikes must have fully operational front and rear brakes. Brakes must be adjusted to provide significant stopping power. Brake pads should not be worn below recommended limits.
- **Gearing:** Bikes must have multiple gears, including at least five cogs in the rear. Single-speed bikes are not allowed.
- **Maintenance:** Student-athletes should inspect their bikes before each event to ensure trail worthiness.
- **Accessories:** Kickstands are not allowed.

Cameras & Accessories

- **Action cameras:** GoPro and similar cameras are allowed if they are securely fastened to the rider or the bike. Selfie-sticks or cameras held by hand are not permitted.
- **Speakers:** speakers or other sound amplification devices are not allowed to be used by student athletes during their race competition. These are generally allowed for spectators, if the use does not disrupt the event.
- **GPS devices, computers, data trackers:** computers, GPS trackers, and other monitor devices are allowed for student-athlete's personal use. These should be securely fastened to a mount, stored in a pocket, or otherwise secured on the student-athlete.

Clothing & Shoes

- **Shoes:** Student-athletes must wear shoes that are fully enclosed and fastened with straps, buckles or laces.
- **Jersey Policy:** Teams must have matching jerseys for their student-athletes and all team members must race wearing their team jerseys. Teams may use custom matching jerseys, but they may also choose some other appropriate jersey — such as a solid color. All teams must follow the [MCA Team Apparel Policy explained on the MCA website](#).
 - **Independent student-athletes:** Student-athletes should choose and wear a vendor neutral jersey and shorts, which should not be a company, cycling team or club. Student-athletes should wear the same jersey design throughout a season.
- **No logos:** The policy of the Minnesota Cycling Association is to have only area names, high school names, logos, or mascots featured on racing apparel used in races. No company or manufacturers names or logos other than the apparel manufacturer will be allowed on racing apparel used in Minnesota Cycling Association races. This includes jerseys and riding shorts. Student-athletes using racing apparel that violates this policy will be subject to a orange level penalty..
- **Cold/inclement weather rule:** When the cold weather rule is in effect (as declared by the Race Director), student-athletes may wear additional layers that obscure their team jersey or are not in compliance with the apparel policy.
- **Leader's Jersey:** Each week, the student-athlete in each category with the highest average point total in the individual points calculation is awarded the leader's jersey. Each points leader is expected to wear the leader's jersey at all MCA races so long as they remain the top points

holder. See the “[Overall Individual Season Scoring](#)” section in Chapter 11 for an explanation of the calculation.

Chapter 5 Race Course

Length and Difficulty

The ideal MCA 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:

- 15 - 30 minutes for Middle School
- 30 - 60 minutes for Freshman and JV2
- 45 - 75 minutes for JV3
- 60 - 90 minutes for Varsity

Course Signage & Marking

Signs are posted along the course to indicate the course to follow, curves, intersections, and warn of situations that are potentially dangerous for the racers. Signs are posted regularly along the course, at least every quarter mile, letting the riders know that they are on course.

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

Hazards: For all hazardous situations along a race course circuit, caution signs or two or three arrow signs placed upside down must be located preceding the hazard at a distance which affords the rider ample opportunity to react at race pace. A hazard on the circuit may be due to an obstacle, the quality of the surface, the angle of the track, or any other condition not specifically addressed that presents additional risk to riders.

Chapter 6 Racing Rules

In addition to the above rules, certain rules apply specifically to race events.

1. **Helmet:**

- a. A securely fastened helmet is always required on the bike. **Orange level**
- b. Student-athletes warming up on a bike that is securely mounted to a stationary trainer do not require a helmet.
- c. Everyone must have a helmet on and fastened when walking or running with a bike on the race course. **Orange level**

2. **Walk the bike:** Walk the bike in all signed areas. Walking the bike means both feet must be on the ground, bikes may not be “scootered” with one foot on a pedal. Individuals are expected to walk the bike in crowded areas, in the staging area, and the pit zone. This includes within 20 feet of any team tent, MCA tent, or trailer located in the infield area. **Yellow level**

3. **Number plates:**

- a. Student-athletes must have their current assigned MCA number plate attached to their bikes at all times at the event. **Yellow level**
 - b. Number plates should be attached with a minimum of three fasteners.
 - c. Number plates should be legible, perpendicular to the ground and in front of any cables. Student-athletes should not alter their number plate in any way that reduces the amount of white space around the number or obscures the information printed on the plate.
 - d. Number plates should be removed when bikes are being transported.
 - e. Replacement number plates will be charged a fee; once a plate is replaced a student-athlete must race with the most recently issued replacement.
 - f. Rear plates should be attached to the rider's jersey (or backpack) in a way that is visible to the rider behind them. Rear plates are only required while racing on course.
 - g. Student-athletes must race with their current assigned MCA number plate only. **Orange level**
4. **Team clothing:** Student-athletes must wear appropriate team clothing, in compliance with the Team Apparel Policy. **Orange level**
5. **Cold/inclement weather rule:** When the cold weather rule is in effect (as declared by the Race Director), student-athletes may wear additional layers that obscure their team jersey or are not in compliance with the apparel policy.
6. **Race correct category:** Student-athletes must race in their correct, assigned category at a race. A student-athlete racing in the wrong category will be disqualified. **Red level**
7. **Items stay with the rider:** A rider cannot discard or accept items anywhere on the course which includes once they have entered the starting grid. This includes sunglasses, cycling computers, wrappers, bottles, clothing, and any other item. **Yellow level.** The exceptions are:
- a. In the designated feed zone at any time
 - b. Handing clothing or blankets out in the starting grid when the cold weather rule is in effect.
 - c. Prescription medical devices, as detailed.
- Prescription medical items:** Student-athletes who regularly use an inhaler or other similar device are expected to be prepared and carry their prescribed item with them. A student-athlete may accept their prescribed medical device or item such as an inhaler, EpiPen or similar along the course, in the feed zone, or in the starting area.
8. **Only student-athletes on course:** Only student-athletes registered for the race and assigned accredited volunteers with appropriate plates (Rovers, Sweeps, Photographer) are permitted to ride on the course during an event. Coaches are not permitted to ride the course during a race. A 25 point penalty will be applied to the team of any coach or individual riding the course during the race.
9. **No profanity:**
- a. Student-athletes should not use profanity while racing. **Yellow level**
 - b. Profanity directed towards other student-athletes, coaches, staff, volunteers, parents or event attendees is prohibited. **Orange level**
10. **No headphones:** Student-athletes may not race with headphones or earbuds. **Yellow level**
11. **Cannot ride backwards on course:** Student-athletes must ride in the designated direction of the course, riding, walking or otherwise traveling backwards on the course is prohibited. **Orange level**
12. **No progress without a bike:** Student-athletes must not progress on the race course without a bike. **Orange level**
13. **No wheelies:** Wheelies or stoppies are not allowed on the race course or in crowded areas at races. **Yellow level**

14. **Unsafe racing:** Unsafe racing practices that are prohibited include: swerving into another rider, swerving with the intent to impede another rider, suddenly stopping, intentionally crashing into another rider, grabbing or pushing another rider, intentionally touching another rider's handlebars, or other dangerous conduct directed towards another rider. **Red level.**
15. **Inattentive racing** such as reckless riding, inability to control the bike, riding out of control or in an unsafe manner, including major deviations, are not allowed. **Orange level**
16. **Hands on the bars:** Student-athletes must ride with hands on the bars within reach of the brake levers. **Yellow level**
 - a. Taking both hands off the bars while on the race course, including raising both hands/arms up at the finish line, is not allowed. **Yellow level**
 - b. Riding with forearms on the bars or riding with hands on the fork crowns is prohibited. **Yellow level**
17. **Passing:** When overtaking another rider on the racecourse, the passing rider should do so respectfully and safely and must:
 - a. Pass only when safe to do so and without any physical contact with the other rider. **Orange level**
 - b. Communicate the pass in advance, saying "on your left" or "on your right" or similar language to indicate where the pass will happen.
 - c. The leading rider owns the trail and is not required to move aside or yield the riding line to the rider wishing to pass **but** the leading rider may not bodily interfere with the intent to impede another rider's progress (e.g.: by changing lines, sticking out elbows, knees, etc.). The overtaking rider is responsible for making the pass. **Orange level**
 - d. Lapped riders must yield the course to overtaking riders.
 - e. Student-athletes in multiple category races must follow all the passing rules; a leading rider on the trail is not required to yield to an overtaking rider from a different category. Student-athletes in this situation should announce their category, and when possible, the rider being overtaken should work with the overtaking rider to ensure a safe pass for the leading rider of a different category.
 - f. **Penalties:** physical contact, bodily interference with passing, or unsafe passing will be an **orange level** consequence; other passing violations may be **yellow level** consequence.
18. **Pushers must yield:** Student-athletes riding bicycles have the right of way over riders pushing bicycles. When practical, riders pushing must stay on the least rideable portion of the trail when being passed. Student-athletes pushing or carrying bicycles may overtake riders riding their bicycles provided pushing riders do not impede the progress of the riding student-athlete. **Yellow level**
19. **Mechanical problems:** In the case of mechanical problems, student-athletes may progress along the course, walking their bike to the finish line. The student-athlete pushing the bike must stay on the course and may not obstruct the progress of others. **Yellow level**
20. **Repair off the trail:** If a student-athlete has a mechanical problem or mishap, the student-athlete should move off the trail as far as practicable while working on repairs and not block the way for others.
21. **Outside Assistance:**
 - a. Student-athletes must repair their own flat tires and mechanical problems and carry their own tools and supplies. A student-athlete accepting hands-on assistance, tools, or parts (such as a tube, quick link, plug) from someone else to repair a problem during a race receives a **3-minute penalty**.
 - b. Student-athletes are expected to self-report the outside assistance to the referee. Riders who fail to report may have the penalty doubled.

- c. A rider leaving the course to repair their bike must reenter the course at the same location they left the course for the repair.
 - d. Riders may not accept water, food or drink, or any other item outside of the feed zone. A rider doing so will receive a 3-minute penalty.
22. **Bike or Component Swap:**
- a. Riders must complete the entire race on the same bike.
 - b. A 5-minute penalty will apply if a rider switches to a different bike or accepts a swap of a component such as a wheel, seat, seat post, cassette, pedals, handlebars, brakes, or other component.
 - c. Riders are expected to self-report the swap to the referee. Riders who fail to report may have the penalty doubled.
 - d. A rider must move their race plate to the new bike when doing a bike swap.
 - e. A rider leaving the course to switch bikes must reenter the course at the same location they left the course for the bike swap.
23. **Course cutting or deviation:**
- a. **Cutting the course:** Student-athletes may not intentionally cut the course or ride off course. **Red level**
 - b. **Deviation from course:** Student-athletes may not deviate from the edge of the trail (as delineated) by more than 3 feet. If the trail is clearly on one side of a pole, course tape, tree or other obstacle, the student-athlete must pass the feature on the trail side of the feature. **Orange level**
 - a. **No advantage can be gained:** in the event a student-athlete goes off course, whether intentionally, inadvertently, or to switch or repair a bike, they are not permitted to gain advantage from leaving the course and must make best efforts to re-enter the course at the same location they went off-course. In the event a student-athlete reenters the course at a different location, if the Referee determines that an advantage was gained as a result, a time penalty shall be assessed against the student-athlete. **Orange level**
24. **Medical emergencies:** In the case of medical emergencies, student-athletes shall remain still and wait for a course marshal or medical help.
25. **Emergency situations/vehicles:** In the event a race course is blocked by a vehicle or an emergency, all student-athletes should stop in a single file row without changing position. Student-athletes should remain in those positions until instructed to re-start racing by race officials.
26. **Time limits:** Student-athletes may be pulled and placed at the finish line after time limits have been reached. These student-athletes will be considered to have finished and will be placed accordingly. 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. If a student-athlete makes the time cutoff but does not complete the final lap due to a mechanical, crash, or other reason, it is considered a DNF.
27. **Pulled riders:** In addition to student-athletes who are outside the time limit, student-athletes may be pulled from a race at any location on the course due to circumstances that make it unsafe for them to proceed. Race officials in consultation with the Referee may, when appropriate, opt to pull a student-athlete who appears to be overheated, hypothermic, overly exhausted, or in any way injured, overstressed, or at risk of injury. Student-athletes that are pulled out of the race must not continue and will be placed according to their position at the time they are pulled.
28. **Course closures or changes:** Course closures or changes may be announced at any time without

advance notice and may impact the duration of the race. These may include:

- a. A race being shortened due to an emergent situation;
- b. The neutralization of a feature where riders must walk or proceed single file for safety;
- c. The removal of a part of trail.

Chapter 7 Pre-Ride

Definition: Pre-ride is a regularly scheduled practice ride on the race course that takes place at designated times, generally on the same weekend as the race. Student-athletes will be given the opportunity to participate in a practice ride of the race course whenever possible. Practice rides on race courses at other times should follow the rules regarding trail use at the venue but are not covered by pre-ride rules.

Student-athletes and Coaches only: Only student-athletes riding **with** their team coaches may ride the race course during pre-ride. Coach-to-student-athlete ratios must be maintained. **Orange level**

Number plates required to pre-ride: Student-athletes and coaches are required to have their number plate attached to their bike when participating in pre-ride. **Yellow level**

Designated times only: Pre-ride on event weekends is limited to the time designated by the MCA. Student athletes and coaches **cannot** ride the course on event weekends outside the designated pre-ride time. Pre-ride times will be published by the MCA and may be announced or amended at the event. Student-athletes and coaches are responsible for knowing and obeying the start and end times of pre-ride. **Orange level**

Single direction only: Riding is only allowed in the direction of the race during pre-ride. Nobody may ride backwards on the course. If student-athletes or coaches need to backtrack, they should exit the course and walk their bike. **Orange level**

No modification of course: Neither student-athletes nor coaches may add or remove obstacles that are deemed part of the race course by race officials. Report any hazards or concerns to a Course Marshal or Race Director. **Orange level**

Chapter 8 Feed Zone & Pit Zone

Feed Zone

Feed Zone: The location of the feed zone will be designated, have a marked start and end, and be easily accessible.

Feed Zone Personnel: Each team is allowed a limited number of people in the feed zone. The number of individuals present in the feed zone is based on the number of student-athletes competing in the current race.

Number of Riders	Number of persons in Feed Zone
5 or fewer	2
6 – 10	3
11 – 20	4
21 or more	5

Individuals present in the feed zone must wear a shirt, jacket, hat, name tag or other item that clearly indicates their team. Dogs and young children are not permitted in the feed zone.

Rules for Feeding

- **Food and drink only:** student-athletes may only receive food or drink in the feed zone; accepting food or drink outside the feed zone is treated as outside assistance and subject to a 3-minute penalty.
- Student-athletes may not accept any other item other than food or drink in the feed zone. Prohibited items include tools, gear, parts, tubes, or other items.
- **Cold weather exception:** student-athletes may accept clothing in the feed zone when the cold weather rule has been announced by the Race Director. Under this provision, student-athletes may also discard clothing or sunglasses in the feed zone.
- **Hand to hand:** All handing off of food, drink or clothing must be done from the hand of the feeder to the hand of the student-athlete.
- **No running:** there is no running in the feed zone because it increases the risk of collisions and interference with student-athletes and other feeders. Feeders should be in one place while feeding.
- **Single side only:** Handing off items traditionally happens on the right side of the course, allowing riders who are not receiving food or drink to proceed to the left. In the case of venue limitations, feeding may happen on the left side, with the right side left open for through traffic.
- **No interference:** Individuals in the feed zone may not throw water on riders, run alongside riders, or in any way disrupt the path of another rider. Individuals feeding should move clear of the feed zone once they have completed the hand-off to their rider(s).
- **Bikes and equipment prohibited:** The feed zone is for food, drink and clothing only. Bikes, tools, and parts are prohibited. Individuals should leave their bikes well clear of the feed zone, to allow for clear access by all feeding.
- **Penalties:** if a feeder violates these rules and the violation does not involve a specific student-athlete or have a penalty listed, a team penalty of 25 points will be applied.

Pit Zone

The pit zone refers to the team tent area at races. Teams are randomly assigned predetermined areas in the race pit zone. The number of spaces assigned is based on the size of the team registered.

All team equipment must be set up within the assigned areas. Teams may not place tents, chairs, tables, bike stands, or mechanical stations outside of their areas in the pit zone.

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

Autos, trucks, RV's, trailers, mechanized or battery powered vehicles including but not limited to golf carts, motorized scooters (excepting mobility assistance devices used by individuals with disabilities), or UTV's are not allowed.

Gas powered generators (built in or external) are not permitted in the pit zone.

Open flames are not permitted in the pit zone or parking areas, including but not limited to fire pits and heaters with open flames.

The pit zone is a walk your bike area, including all lanes between and around team tents, as well as a 20-foot area extending from the outside edge of any team tent. For student-athletes this is a yellow level offense; for coaches, parents, and other team affiliated parties a 25-point team penalty may be assessed.

Chapter 9 Staging, Start & Call-Ups

Staging

Staging is the process of lining student-athletes up according to call-up position, prior to race start.

- Student-athletes should report to the staging area 10 minutes before the race start.
- Student-athletes will be lined-up on a false grid, in the correct order, 10 minutes before the race start. Student-athletes can line up on the false grid early.
- Student-athletes and coaches should not congregate in the staging area outside of set staging times.
- Student-athletes are responsible for knowing their call-up position, being in the proper place at the assigned time and listening for their name.
- Student-athletes that miss their call-up will start at the back of their designated wave.
- Student-athletes must enter the staging area at the designated entrance for their category or wave. Student-athletes cutting into the side or front of the group will be required to start in the last row.
- If a coach assists a student-athlete in cutting into the side or front of the group, a team point penalty of 200 points will be applied.
- Coaches are expected to support the staging rules. If a student-athlete in clear view of their coach is breaking the staging rules without intervention, **yellow level consequences** may apply to the student-athlete, or a team point penalty may be applied.
- If a parent, guardian, or other attendee interferes with staging or assists a student-athlete in breaking the staging rules, **yellow level consequences** may apply to the student-athlete, or a team point penalty may be applied.
- Student-athletes and coaches are expected to listen to and not be disruptive during staging and pre-race announcements. **Yellow level**
- Once student-athletes are in the starting grid, nothing may be handed out by the student-athlete, and nothing may be handed in to the student-athlete. **Yellow level**
- If coaches, parents, or other individuals assist in handing in or receiving out items in the starting grid, a team point penalty may be applied.
- **Cold/inclement weather rule:** at the discretion of the Race Director, student-athletes may wear additional layers during staging and hand those items out in the starting grid up to 1 minute before race start. This will be announced on event day when applicable.

Starting

- Student-athletes must position themselves in designated start lanes without overlapping the wheels of the student-athlete in front of them. **Yellow level**
- All student-athletes must start with one foot on the ground. **Yellow level**
- Holding onto the snow fence inside the starting grid is prohibited. **Yellow level**
- Student-athletes cannot change lanes or pass other student-athletes until they cross the starting line. The starting line is located at the front of the start zone snow fence and is marked with bright orange paint. **Yellow level**

Call Up Calculation

Start line call-ups for all student-athletes take place at each race.

Calculation: Call-ups are calculated based on the current season average of race finish position. Call-ups are published each week in advance of the race event on the website. Questions or disputes about call-up position calculations must be addressed prior to race day, by the deadline set in the publication of call-ups. Only finish placings in the races during the season will be included in the call-up calculation, did not finishes (DNF) and did not starts are excluded from the call-up calculation.

First Race Call-Up

7th grade – Varsity classes call-ups for the first race of the season are based on the previous regular season average race finish, excluding the results of the State Championship race. If a student-athlete has a bye-week, or does not attend the first race, the first race call-up rule is used to calculate their call-up until they complete a race in the current season.

Student-athletes advancing a category: For student-athletes who advanced a race category or petitioned into a new category, call-up position for the first race of the season will be calculated based on previous regular season average race finish, excluding State Championship, from the category they raced in and then multiplied by 1.3 to calculate the call up position in the higher category.

Petitioned student-athletes: for student-athletes who petitioned into a category after the first race of the previous season, call-up position will be calculated based only on the previous season average finish from the category they petitioned into.

New student-athletes in 7th grade - Varsity categories will receive a call-up at random, behind student-athletes with MCA race history

6th grade call-ups for the first race of the season are calculated in a randomized manner, with student-athletes assigned a random rank value based on the estimated field size. If a student-athlete has a bye-week, or does not attend the first race, a random rank value is used for the first race they attend.

State Championship Call-up

The standard call-up rule will be used for all races, including the senior open.

Chapter 10 Race Officials & Protests

The general conduct, safety, scoring and enforcement of rules is managed at races by race officials, who are the Referee, Chief Course Marshal, Race Director, and Competition Committee.

Referee: The referee supervises the general conduct of the race. The referee has the authority to interpret and enforce the rules as well as the discretion to make rulings on matters not directly addressed in the rules. A decision by the Referee can be appealed to the Competition Committee. The referee has primary responsibility for:

- Assessing penalties for rule infractions
- Pulling riders in the event a rider is outside the time limits or experiencing mechanical or medical issues that put them in danger of exceeding time limits
- Reviewing and addressing protests regarding scoring and results, in consultation with the scoring and timing officials

Chief Course Marshal: The Chief Course Marshals manage the operations of Course Marshals, Rovers and Sweeps which includes assigning locations, taking reports, and ensuring course safety. Chief Course Marshals may enforce these rules pertaining to infractions that occur on the race course, but any penalties will be assessed by the Referee.

Course Marshals, Rovers & Sweepers: Course Marshals, Rovers and Sweeps 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. They report any infractions observed to the Chief Course Marshal.

Race Day Protests

All protests must be filed by a coach to the Referee. Parents are not to be involved with protests.

A protest should assert a rule violation or an error or omission in the scoring.

Protests must be filed prior to the protest period expiring. The protest period will be communicated to the coaches at the start of the season and will be included in email communications with preliminary results.

The Referee will communicate with the student-athlete and coach. Where the conduct of another student-athlete is implicated, the Referee will also communicate with that student-athlete and coach.

The Referee may call a meeting of all available Competition Committee members at an event to rule on any protests.

Deferred rulings: If no members are available, the Referee may defer a protest ruling until after the event. At the discretion of the Race Director or Referee, the decision and ruling on a protest or opposition to a penalty may be deferred until after race day.

Posting of results

Preliminary results. Preliminary race results and penalty assessments are posted online. Protests to the preliminary results and opposition to penalties must be submitted to the Referee as soon as possible, no later than the established protest deadline.

Official results. After the timely protests and opposition to penalties are considered, ruled upon, and approved by the Referee, the results shall be official and posted online. Once the protest period has

expired, all protests have been ruled upon and results have been declared final, no additional protests will be accepted.

Judgment Calls

MCA 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 since 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 every protest that is submitted.

Student-athletes and their families and coaches are expected to understand these limitations and the challenges inherent to resolving disputes of this nature, and the difficult decisions MCA officials are required to make. It is further expected of students, family members, and coaches to be willing to accept what they may consider to be an unfair result. Unfair results are part of every sport no matter the efforts to avoid them and accepting them when they go the other way is considered a sign of good sportsmanship and a strong character trait. Accordingly, threatening or bullying officials, other student-athletes, coaches, spectators, or anyone involved with the MCA regarding protests may result in restrictions imposed on a student-athlete's participation in the MCA, a team penalty, or other penalties.

Chapter 11 Individual and Team Scoring

Individual Series Scoring

Student-athletes compete against others in the same category. Individual scoring is divided into Divisions I and II only when they are racing in separate categories, e.g., Freshman Boys Division I and Freshman Boys Division II are scored separately; JV3 Boys Division I and Division II are scored together.

Point System

Points are awarded to all race finishers. There is a 40-point bonus for JV3 racers and a 75-point bonus for Varsity racers. View Appendix A for the scoring grid.

Pulled riders: If a student-athlete is asked to withdraw at the finish line by the Referee or another Race Official acting at the Referee's direction, that student-athlete will be placed in the results accordingly and therefore will receive points for the race.

DNF: Racers that do not finish a race (DNF) will not be awarded any points for that race.

Overall Individual Series Scoring

Overall series scoring for individuals is an average of the points earned in all the regular-season races a student-athlete could have completed plus their individual score from the State Championship (if they qualify and race). *Could have completed* means all races a team was scheduled to take part in, and which were held. Bye weeks are not included when calculating a student-athlete's points. This looks like: $(\text{Race 1} + \text{Race 2} + \text{Race 3} + \text{Race 4})/4 + \text{State Championship} = \text{Individual Season Score}$.

A student-athlete who does not participate in a race (for any reason) when their team is scheduled receives a 0 for individual score purposes for that race. That race is included in the calculation.

Race changes: In the event of weather or other situations necessitating a course adjustment, the course and format may be shortened or altered so that racing can proceed. Changes to schedule or format will be announced in advance of the race start. In the event a race distance is changed in advance of the start, such as using a short track format, that race counts as a regular race for scoring

purposes. If a race must be aborted due to weather or other emergent circumstances after the race has begun, a decision will be made and publicized about whether it is included in scoring. This will be based on factors including but not limited to: whether riders were aware of the possibility of a shortened race in advance, safety, and the availability of accurate and comprehensive results given the conditions, among others.

Rainout or cancellation: Only held races are used for season points calculations. In the event of rainouts or other race cancellations, impacted teams and riders will have the race average adjusted. Example, a team with a single rain out will now have the season average /3 instead of /4.

Rainouts or cancellations may affect one day of racing only, for example Saturday racing may be cancelled while Sunday racing goes forward as scheduled. The scheduled day of a race will not change: races scheduled on Saturday will not be moved to Sunday and races scheduled on Sunday will not be moved to Saturday.

Category petitions and points: If a student-athlete changes category during the season, their individual points and races from their previous category are not counted in their individual score calculation. Student-athletes who change to a new category only count points earned in their new category and those are calculated based on 3 races + State (maximum of 4 races) or the number of races their team competed in after the first race, accounting for rainouts. A student- athlete’s points scored toward team standings prior to the change in categories are not affected.

Example:

	Rider A (JV3 → Varsity)	Rider B (Varsity)	Rider C (Varsity)
Week 1	1 st – 540 pts JV3	Bye	3rd – 556
Week 2	Bye	2nd – 565	Bye
Week 3	10th – 502 Varsity	0 does not race	2nd – 565
Week 4	5th – 539 Varsity	1st – 575	3rd – 556
Week 5	Bye	Bye	3rd – 556
Week 6	3rd – 556 Varsity	1st – 575	Bye
Week 7	Bye	Bye	Bye
Reg Season Avg.	532 avg (/3 races)	429 avg (/4 races)	558 avg (/4 races)
State Race	3rd - 556	5th - 539	8th – 516
Final Individual Points	1088	968	1074

Bold indicates races included in points calculation.

Leader’s Jersey

Each week, the student-athlete in each category with the highest average point total in the individual points calculation is awarded the leader’s jersey. The calculation is an average of the points earned in all the regular-season races a student-athlete could have completed. Could have completed means all races a team was scheduled to take part in, and which were held. See the language above under “[Overall Individual Season Scoring](#)” for a further explanation.

Leader’s jersey is calculated each season. There is no leader’s jersey worn in Week 1 races. Each points

leader is expected to wear the leader’s jersey at all MCA races, so long as they remain the top points holder. In the case of a tie, all student-athletes wear leaders jerseys.

Bye weeks are not included when calculating a student-athlete’s points. Races where a team is scheduled to race but a student-athlete does not participate for any reason is a 0 for individual score purposes for that student-athlete, and that race is included in the calculation.

On weekends with concurrent races, a leader’s jersey is only awarded and worn by the student-athlete in the category with the highest average point total. Points are awarded at both concurrent races.

If a student-athlete changes category during the season, their individual points and races from their previous category are not counted in their individual score calculation. Student-athletes who change to a new category only count points earned in their new category and those are calculated based on the number of races completed in the new category.

For example: a student-athlete races Week 1 in the 8th grade category, places in 1st and moves up to the Freshman category for the rest of the season; that student-athlete’s points from 8th grade do not count. Their new average will be calculated based only on the races completed within the Freshman category; in the example below, Rider B would have 1000/2 in their Freshman points calculation.

Example:

	Rider A, Freshman Category	Rider B, 8 th Grade → Freshman for Week 3
Week 1	Bye	1 st , 500 (8 th Grade)
Week 2	1 st , 500	Bye
Week 3	0 (does not race)	1 st , 500 (Freshman)
Week 4 (concurrent racing)	1 st , 500	1 st , 500

Rider A has 333 points (1000/3 races), while Rider B has 500 points (1000/2 races) and wears the Leader’s Jersey.

Team transfers and points

Individual points: Student-athletes who transfer team midseason are only eligible to compete in a maximum of 4 regular season races. The student-athlete’s point calculation is based on the team they were racing with at that time and whether they attended a scheduled race. If a student-athlete has not missed any races, but after transferring teams completing all remaining scheduled races would result in the student-athlete exceeding 4 regular season races total, that athlete should miss one race, but it will not be counted as a zero.

Team points: A student-athlete’s points scored toward team standings prior to the transfer remain with the team where they were earned.

Example:

Team 1	Athlete A	Team 2
Race 1	Races JV2 w/ Team 1	Bye
Bye	d/n race	Race 2
Race 3	Races JV2 w/ Team 1	Bye
Race 4	Races JV2 w/ Team 2	Race 4
Bye	d/n race	Race 5
Race 6	Races JV2 w/Team 2	Race 6
State Championship	Races JV2 w/Team 2	Race 7

In this scenario the student-athlete transfers to Team 2 after Race 3, the Team has 4 remaining races due to the bye week schedule difference from Team 1. The student-athlete cannot race all 4, but also will not receive a 0 or be penalized for not racing 1 of those when the team was scheduled due to having previously completed 2 races. If the student-athlete had missed one of the prior races with their original team, they would not be able to add an additional race as they need to race the events their team (at that time) was eligible to race.

Overall series scoring for individuals is an average of all the regular-season race results a student-athlete could have completed plus their individual score from the State Championship. If a student-athlete does not participate in a race that their team did, that race is a 0 for individual score purposes.

Rainout or cancellation: in the event of rainouts or other race cancellations, there is no change to scoring.

Category petitions and points: When a student-athlete successfully petitions to change categories, individual points earned in the previous category do not transfer to the new category. A student-athlete's points scored toward team standings prior to the change in categories are not affected.

Awards

Race awards for Individuals: For each race, individual medals are awarded five places deep for each category if the field size is less than 50 riders. Fields over 50 riders will have 10% of the field, capped at 10 medals maximum. For the State Championship, individual medals are awarded five places deep for each category if the field size is less than 50 riders. Fields with over 50 riders qualifying will award 10% of the qualified riders.

Series awards for Individuals: Individual overall series medals are awarded to finishers in the top 10% of the total number of scoring riders for the series (rounded up) plus two places deep, minimum of five places.

State Championship

Qualification

The top 100 riders from each race category will qualify to race at the State Championship based on the accumulative individual point standings after the final regular season race. If a category is separated into divisions in the regular season (example: JV2, D2 Boys & JV2, D1 Boys), then each category/division combination will have its own qualification and race. Riders must register for at least two races during the regular season to be eligible for the State Championship.

If a rider placed in the top 100 opts not to race, that spot *will not* become available. There is no petition process or exceptions to allow riders outside the top 100 to race.

Senior Open

All seniors who do not qualify to race based on the accumulative individual point standings, qualify to race in a Senior Open event. Seniors must register for at least two races during the regular season to be eligible for the State Championship. This race will use the same race distance as JV2 for all riders participating. Separate men's and women's races may be held. Depending on field sizes, the Senior Open category may be divided by division or other objective method.

Season Points

Points earned for individuals and teams by qualifying race fields will be added to individual and team accumulative points for the season points champion.

Senior Open field results do not accrue points.

State Champion: The team or individual that wins the State Championship Race

Series Champion: The individual or team that wins the accumulative point series.

Team Scoring

Scores are calculated based on the points earned by a set number of student-athletes depending on the division and category.

High School Division I scoring is based on the top-8 point-earners, with a maximum of 6 point-earners scoring in either the boys or girls categories. In other words, the score is the highest possible combination out of the following boy-girl combinations:

BBBBBBGG
BBBBBGGG
BBBBGGGG
BBBGGGGG
BBGGGGGG

High School Division II **and** Middle School scoring is based on the top-4 point earners, with a maximum of 3 point earners scoring in either the boys or girls categories. In other words, the score is the highest possible combination out of the following boy-girl combinations:

BBBG
BBGG
BGGG

Overall Team Scoring: Team scoring will take the average team score from all regular season races a team could have completed and adds the team score from all qualifying fields and racers at the State Championship to determine the team season champion. Points from the Senior Open race at the State Championship are not used for the team scoring.

Overall Team Scoring and Rainouts: In the event of rainouts or other race cancellation, the same scoring model is used.

Team Awards

Race awards for Teams: Team trophies are awarded three places deep in each division, for middle school and high school at each race, including the State Championship.

Series awards for Teams: Team overall series trophies are awarded three places deep in each division.

Chapter 12 Participation and MCA Requirements

Student-Athlete Eligibility:

Participation in the MCA is open to all students who attend public, private or charter school, or who are homeschooled for high school (grades 9–12) and middle school (grades 6-8), within the MCA's region.

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

Student Age and Grade

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

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

Skipped/held back: Student-athletes who have been skipped ahead or held back a single grade are placed into categories according to their grade levels. A student-athlete who has skipped ahead or been held back more than one grade should consult with the MCA Director regarding placement. Placement should generally reflect the student-athlete's age and placement may be handled on a case-by-case basis. No student-athlete may complete more than 7 seasons.

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 for the district in which they reside. MCA Director must consider such age-based placement in the event homeschooled student-athletes seek alternative placement under the Category Placement Standards adopted by the MCA.

PSEO or 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.

Transgender Student-Athletes: A student-athlete wishing to compete in a category consistent with their gender identity may do so by notifying the MCA Director and registering as they identify. If the student-athlete is on a school-based team, and MCA events are considered school events for that team, and the school district or MSHSL has made an eligibility determination, the MCA defers to that determination. The student-athlete's school records may be requested to determine the student's eligibility to participate in the category consistent with their gender identity. If necessary, the MCA director will 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. If a student-athlete has been deemed eligible to compete in a category consistent with their gender identity, the eligibility is granted for the duration of the student-athlete's participation in the MCA. 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 their family make a specific request in writing.

Registration Requirements

Student Athletes

Student-athletes must register with the MCA through the online registration system prior to participating in any MCA sanctioned events. This includes:

- Signed Agreement to Participate/Release of Liability
- Signed Medical Form
- Registration Fee
- Signed Code of Conduct Form

Age of Consent for Signature: The Code of Conduct form must be agreed to and signed by the student-athlete regardless of their age, along with their guardian if the student-athlete is a minor. All other forms must be signed by a legal guardian unless the student-athlete is at least eighteen (18) years old or older. The forms contain language indicating that parents or legal guardians who allow a minor to participate in MCA races or camps, acknowledge, understand, and accept the rules and regulations covering the event and agree to the terms of the MCA's Release form, which shall be binding even if the registration and release forms have not been signed and submitted.

Race Registration

Student-athletes must register and pay for each MCA race, prior to the race. Student-athletes competing without payment or registration can face penalties, including disqualification.

Registration deadlines and processes, including the series package and fees will be publicized on the MCA website. The MCA may modify, supplement, or amend its registration requirements as needed.

Coaches

All coaches must register with the MCA to be covered by MCA insurance. This registration for coaches at all levels carries a membership fee. Coaches are not fully insured until they are registered and obtain a minimum of a Level 1 license.

All adults participating in team rides must:

- be at least 18 years of age, **and**
- have signed participation agreement, release of liability and code of conduct, **and**
- have a coach's license **and**
- have undergone and passed an annual background check.

Teams

All teams must register annually with the MCA. Teams cannot conduct any practices without registering and obtaining insurance through the MCA. A team must be in good standing to register and remain so throughout the season to participate in the MCA.

No new teams will be added to the series scoring after race registration closes.

Chapter 13 Category Placement and MCA Structure

Category placement guidelines and policies are designed to facilitate and promote fair, safe, and challenging competition. Placement of student-athletes is based primarily on their MCA race results and end-of-season rankings from the preceding year. Students do not choose their category but are placed into categories according to the standards and criteria below and are moved up based on demonstrated ability. Students seeking an alternative placement may petition for an exception.

Categories

Boys	Girls
6 th Grade	6 th Grade
7 th Grade	7 th Grade
8 th Grade	8 th Grade
Freshman	Freshman
JV2	JV2
JV3	JV3
Varsity	Varsity

Category Placement Standards

Categories are based on grade level and/or ability. A student-athletes prior performance may factor into placement.

Category placement is based on a student-athlete's MCA race history, or on their age-based category if they have no MCA race history.

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 on the MCA website.

To calculate the finishing percentile, for each separate race the finishing place is divided by the total number of racers, and the quotient is then multiplied by 100.

Students who did not compete in the prior year and have no results are placed into the category that corresponds to their grade level, except that 10th, 11th and 12th graders with no prior results are placed into JV2.

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

Middle-schoolers may petition to upgrade into freshman category only.

Category Placement Criteria Chart

Category	Criteria
6 th Grade	6 th graders only
7 th Grade	7 th graders only
8 th Grade	8 th graders only
Freshman	9 th grade student-athletes or 6 th , 7 th or 8 th grade student-athletes who petition into the category or Student-athletes who raced freshman category in the previous year, as a 6 th , 7 th or 8 th grade student-athlete will return to the freshman category regardless of finish placement.
JV2	10 th , 11 th or 12 th grade student-athletes Returning JV2 student-athletes who did not upgrade to JV3 or Varsity.
JV3	Last season's Freshman category student-athletes who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placed in the top 10% in any two races or Placed in the top 15% of the overall season standings or Petitions into the category. Last season's JV2 category student-athletes who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placed in the top 25% in any two races or Placed in the top 30% of the overall season standings or Petitions into the category or Returning JV3 student-athletes who did not upgrade to Varsity.
Varsity	Last season's Freshman or JV2 category student-athletes who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Petitions into the category Last season's JV3 category student-athletes who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placed in the top 25% in any two races or Placed in the top 30% of the overall season standings or Petitions into the category Returning Varsity student-athletes.

Petitioning for Category Placement Exception

In general, exceptions to the Placement Criteria are discouraged and are granted only under extraordinary circumstances. Petition upgrades are limited to the following:

- Middle school students may only petition to race in the Freshman category.
- 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th graders may only petition to race JV3 and Varsity.

Criteria: It is MCA policy that student-athletes compete in appropriate competitive peer groups and to prevent strategic gamesmanship in category placement. Petitions for an upgrade in categories are only granted upon a showing that:

- The student-athlete has non-MCA race results or other evidence demonstrating they can safely ride and finish within the proscribed lap time for a higher category; **OR**
- The student-athlete has demonstrated through their MCA finish time in their first race of the season that they should be racing in a higher category.

Process: Petitions for an exception to the category placement criteria should be submitted on the [Category Placement Petition for Exception Form](#) found on the MCA's website. The petition requires a coach's comments and signature. If there is no coach, the student must contact the MCA Director and a coach advisor will be appointed.

Petition deadline: All petitions for a team's first race of the season must be submitted prior to August 15th. Petitions after a team's first race must be submitted by midnight on Tuesday prior to the next race. No petitions will be considered after the MCA's fourth scheduled race of the season. Pending the outcome of the petition, the petitioning student must compete in the category determined by the Placement Criteria.

Points: Individual points do not transfer if a student-athlete petitions and changes category mid-season.

Chapter 14 Team Rules & Eligibility

MCA Divisions: Teams are divided into Division I, consisting of larger teams, and Division II, consisting of smaller teams. Divisions are scored independently. Divisions will be assigned based on the number of high school student-athletes racing, to balance field sizes.

- Division I consists of teams with more registered high school category racing student-athletes.
- Division II consists of teams with fewer registered high school category racing student-athletes.

Categories may race with both divisions in a single race (for example: Varsity) or be split into two separate races (for example: JV2 boys) based on field size and race day schedule considerations.

Team Composition

Only one team may represent a school. School based teams are not required to be officially or formally affiliated as a sports team with the school in which the members are enrolled. Teams are responsible for getting permission from the school for use of school name, color, mascot, logos etc.

Independent student-athletes: Student-athletes who do not have a club or team at the school that they attend may compete individually as "independent" racers with the approval of the MCA Director.

School based teams: composed of full-time student-athletes from the high school they attend or will attend. Student-athletes who are enrolled at a school with a team must join and compete as a member of that team.

Homeschool: Homeschool athletes must race for the high school in the district in which they reside.

Composite teams: must be comprised of full-time students from more than one school and must include "composite" in the team's 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 MCA Director based upon a written proposal timely submitted to the MCA 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 MCA Director to consider, but must include the following:

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

Composite team rules

Composite Teams are intended to be temporary solutions only, allowing student-athletes to compete as members of a team in the MCA pending the establishment of a single school-based team that they can

join. The following limitations apply to Composite Teams:

- The MCA Director shall annually review and approve each Composite Team's eligibility. The MCA shall maintain approval forms on file for each Composite Team to include, at a minimum, the following:
 - Description of the team's geographic region;
 - List of the names of all student-athletes, indicating the schools they attend or whether they are homeschooled;
 - Name of the Composite Team;

Scoring restrictions: Composite Teams must comply, subject to the League's local state laws, with the following scoring restrictions:

- Teams must compete in Division II;
- A single Composite Team may be comprised of subdivided teams;
- Each subdivided team shall be scored independently.

Composite Team subdivision rules:

If 5 or more student-athletes are from the same high school, they should be subdivided into a separate team and scored as representatives of that school.

Teams of 12 or more high school category student-athletes, must be subdivided into separate, independently scoring teams of 11 or fewer riders each. Upon subdivision, student-athletes shall be placed on teams based on the following:

- First — Student-athletes attending the same school must be on the same subdivided team; and
- Second — Student-athletes shall be placed on subdivided teams according to the geographic definition, preferably school district based, and with approval of the MCA Director.
- Teams may not be subdivided based on the experience and ability of the student-athletes

Middle school student-athletes will be scored as a separate team in the middle school category.

Team Recruiting and Transfers

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

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

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

The new team shall not be credited with points earned prior to the transfer.

Team Training Limits

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

Any coach working with student-athletes during their off-season that is not sanctioned/insured under another non-scholastic organization may risk the eligibility of the coach, rider, and team to compete in MCA races.

Schedule & Allowed Activities

Pre-Season

Start date: Pre-season activities can begin May 1st.

Allowable activities: The team and coaches must be registered with the MCA to participate in and conduct activities. Only the following pre-season activities are permitted by submitting an activity form. The activity form can be found on the [MCA website](#). Pre-season activities must be pre-approved prior to the event. Allow for a minimum of 7 days.

- Bike checks, equipment inspections, and bike fit;
- Mechanical workshops;
- All-inclusive fun rides; and
- Skills clinics

Activities limit: The maximum number of pre-season activities is 6.

Regular Season

Start date: Regular training, to include up to 4 practices per week, can begin on July 1st.

Racing limits: Teams may participate in races only during the regular season.

End of season: No team rides or other training activities may take place more than 14 days after the final MCA race of the season.

Off Season

The off-season is defined as periods not within the listed pre-season and regular season periods.

Organized team rides and races are prohibited during the off-season. The following activities during the off-season will jeopardize a team or club's eligibility:

- An MCA team racing under the school's name;
- Using the school jersey at races as a team;
- Having practices that meet on school grounds;
- Using any team property without a letter of permission from school administration; and
- Using the team assets (website, social media, etc.) as a mechanism for organizing off-season practices or racing.
- Holding any activity outside of the regular season that will impact a student-athlete's status or eligibility within the team.

All off-season coaching activities 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 MCA races the following season.

Chapter 15 Coach Rules & Requirements

All coaches must register, as noted above.

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

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.

Coach on duty: Each team must provide the name and contact information for a coach on duty for each race. The coach on duty is the contact for any protests or injury and incident reports.

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

Coach licensing: There are three license levels, all coaches must obtain one of the three levels:

- Level 1 Certification: Assists all coaches as directed by the head coach.
- Level 2 Certification: Assists level 3 coaches with advanced tasks such as leading rides.
- Level 3 Certification: Takes a leadership role within the team. Equivalent competencies as head coach.

Detailed coach licensing information and resources are published on the MCA website, under "Coaching."

Head Coach: To be eligible, an MCA team must have a Head Coach who satisfies the following:

- The minimal license requirement increases over the team's first three years. All Head Coaches must obtain a Level 3 License by their team's third season.
- Existing teams with transitioning coaching staff may apply for an exception with the Coaching Director. A plan will need to be provided with a pathway to become compliant.

Coach, Parent, and Guardian Conduct

Helmets Required: All coaches, parents, guardians, and any other individual present must comply with all helmet rules at all team practices, team events, and MCA races.

If at a race, a parent, coach, or other assistant is seen riding without a helmet, a penalty will be applied to their team at the race where the infraction occurred.

Positive Sporting Behavior: It is required that all coaches, parents, guardians, and spectators demonstrate respect for and deference to the person and the decisions of the MCA officials and instructions of volunteers as it relates to sporting behavior of student-athletes, themselves, and other MCA officials. A failure to exhibit respectful behavior, including disregarding directions from course volunteers, may result in restrictions imposed on the coach, the parent, or a student-athlete's participation in the MCA. MCA officials have complete and total discretion for the implementation of the rules, especially regarding sporting behavior.

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

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

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

Violations of rules by coaches, parents, guardians or other team supporters may result in penalties against the team that the Referee determines to be the intended beneficiary of such action.

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

Chapter 16 Weather & Refund Policy

The MCA has guidelines for how we conduct races in the event of challenging weather. Our primary considerations are the safety of student-athletes, support staff and spectators, and potential damage to the venue and trails. The weather policy can be found on the MCA website at:

<https://minnesotacycling.org/refund-policy/>.

Race Scoring

See the guidance in the [Scoring section](#) for how individual series and team series scores are impacted by inclement weather and other cancellations.

Appendix A – Scoring Grid

Place	Varsity	JV3	JV2/Fresh/M.S.
1	575	540	500
2	565	530	490
3	556	521	481
4	547	512	472
5	539	504	464
6	531	496	456
7	523	488	448
8	516	481	441
9	509	474	434
10	502	467	427
11	495	460	420
12	489	454	414
13	483	448	408
14	477	442	402
15	471	436	396
16	465	430	390
17	460	425	385
18	455	420	380
19	450	415	375
20	445	410	370
21	440	405	365
22	435	400	360
23	431	396	356
24	427	392	352
25	423	388	348
26	419	384	344
27	415	380	340
28	411	376	336
29	407	372	332
30	404	369	329
31	401	366	326
32	398	363	323
33	395	360	320
34	392	357	317
35	389	354	314
36	386	351	311
37	383	348	308
38	381	346	306
39	379	344	304

40	377	342	302
41	375	340	300
42	373	338	298
43	371	336	296
44	369	334	294
45	367	332	292
46	365	330	290
47	364	329	289
48	363	328	288
49	362	327	287
50	361	326	286
51(+)	Each place higher, deduct 1 point		