



COVID-19 Return to Racing Guidelines of the Arizona Interscholastic Cycling League

With regular season practices due to begin in August we look to cautiously resume racing in the fall. We are fortunate that our sport is naturally socially distant, but precautions must still be taken. Team-based individual time trials keep the practice pods together, reduce the exposure from other individuals, and still allow individuals and teams to measure their progress over a season against student-athletes from across the state. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recognizes the benefits of physical activity particularly in this time of the COVID-19 pandemic. The challenge is to reintroduce events in a manner that follows federal, state and local public health guidelines to reduce the spread of illness. This document provides guidance for the first phase of return to racing following the direction of local and state health department recommendations. This event plan allows us to operate with a goal of less than 250 people onsite and approximately 100-125 within the main event infield and on course. As a living document, this may be updated as new information and recommendations become available.

RETURN TO RACING OVERVIEW

Event Goals

- Reduce the spread of COVID-19 to the best of our ability by following federal, state and local guidance.
- Within these limitations, offer events that support the emotional and physical wellness of our student-athletes.
- Create an opportunity for student-athletes to measure the progress they are making during the season.
 - Set goals as teams and individuals.
 - Compare times against peers.
 - Conduct team outings.
 - HAVE FUN.

Race Format – Individual Time Trial

- Event will be held over 2 days on scheduled event weekends.
- Teams will be assigned an arrival time, staging time and start time.
- Student-athletes will race a single lap on a traditional course.
 - One team at a time.
- The head coach will seed all riders on the team from fastest to slowest.
 - Boys and girls mixed.
 - High school and middle school mixed.
 - The goal is to minimize passing and where passing occurs, for it to take place within a team that has already been practicing together.
- Riders will be staged on a starting grid spaced 6 feet apart to maintain social distancing.
- Riders will be started at 15 second intervals.
- The elapsed time from when the rider crosses the start line timing mat to when the rider crosses the finish line mat, plus any time penalties, will be used as the rider's total time for the event.
- Teams will be spaced 15 minutes apart to manage total number of people at a venue and reduce the likelihood of passing between teams.

- Individual and team honors for each race and the series overall will be awarded.
 - Not in person.
- Event protocols build on teams successfully following the [Return to Play Guidelines](#).

Wellness and Screening

- Student-athletes, coaches and support staff shall wear face coverings – mask, buff or bandana – at all times, with the exception of riders while competing on course.
- All student-athletes and coaches must be symptom-free for at least 14 days and not exposed to anyone who is sick within that 14-day period before participating in team activities and league events.
- All student-athletes, coaches and support staff who are in a [high-risk category](#) or live at home with anyone who is in a high-risk category shall not attend in-person league events.
- All student-athletes, coaches and support staff should be [screened for signs/symptoms](#) of COVID-19 prior to the start of all team activities and league events. Screening includes a temperature check.
 - Any person with positive symptoms reported will not be allowed to take part in activities and should contact his or her primary care provider or other appropriate healthcare professional.

WHAT DOES A LEAGUE RACE LOOK LIKE THIS SEASON?

Registration

- All registration will be conducted online through the Pit Zone; no onsite registration.
- **Riders must register for all races – Race Package – by August 26.**
 - Putting on a socially distant time trial race will involve a lot of complicated calculations on our part. For this reason, at this time we do not anticipate being able to allow a la carte individual race registration this season.
 - Student-athletes who are “Practice Ready” in the Pit Zone by August 12 will receive a custom plate with their name preprinted on it.
- Lost plates will be managed through a contactless process.

Arriving at the Venue

- Each team will be assigned a scheduled arrival time for the race weekend.
- Parking lots will be designated for student-athletes and coaches at each venue.
 - If you arrive early, wait in your car until your scheduled meeting time.
- At the assigned time for your team (unless told otherwise by your coaches), head to the designated meeting location.
 - These will be marked on the venue maps and with signs onsite.
 - Follow the posted routes and maintain social distancing.
- Teams should take and archive attendance of all student-athletes and coaches at each event.
 - Attendance records will help with contact tracing in the event of a COVID-19 positive test result.
 - Teams will be required to conduct a [Screening and Symptom Checklist](#) for all coaches and student-athletes prior to departing the area.

Warming Up

- Pre-riding the race course will not be allowed on an event weekend (Friday–Sunday).
 - We encourage teams to pre-ride race courses as part of their normal practice routines.
 - To the extent possible, course layout will be similar to past years to minimize the impact of eliminating race weekend pre-ride.
 - If allowed by the land manager the courses will be lightly marked prior to race weekend.
- Coaches will warm up student-athletes.
 - This may include trainers or riding around pre- determined routes by the coaches.

- Do not use any part of the race course to warm up.
- Once warm up is complete, teams will wait in their designated meeting location until a race official escorts the team to the staging area.

Staging

- Teams will be escorted by league staff from the team meeting area to the staging area.
- Coaches will accompany student-athletes, maintaining proper coach to student- athlete ratios (6:1 or 8:2).
- Coaches will line up student-athletes in single file racing order 6 feet apart, from fastest to slowest.
 - Boys and girls mixed.
 - High school and middle school mixed.
- Teams will be allowed up to 15 minutes for staging.
 - Riders must be staged at least 5 minutes before their start time.
- **If a team is LATE and doesn't arrive at their staging time, they can't race.**
 - **This also applies to student-athletes.**
 - This breaks our heart, but the expectation needs to be made as soon as possible.

Start

- The rider in the first position on the start grid is in the “starting position”.
- Once indicated by a starter or video display, the rider may start on course.
 - Official timing for each rider begins when the rider crosses the start line mat.
- Each rider will then move one position forward on the start grid, maintaining 6 feet separation, and a new rider will enter the starting position.
- Riders will be started at 15 second intervals.

Race Course

- The course will be similar in difficulty to a standard league race course.
 - Course signage and course marshals shall remain consistent.
- A rider being overtaken on course should yield to the faster rider as soon as it is safe.
 - Riders must announce the intent to pass while maintaining a distance of at least 20 feet and the rider being passed should acknowledge prior to the pass being attempted.
- Riders should be prepared for mechanicals and not rely on outside assistance.
 - In the event a rider has a mechanical problem and requires instructions or assistance from a sweep, rover or course marshal, all parties should wear masks and maintain social distance.
 - In the event of terminal mechanical problems, riders may progress along the course with their bike to the finish line, however they must not obstruct the progress of other riders.
 - A rider walking on course must yield to a student- athlete riding their bike.
- There will be no Feed Zone on course.

Finish

- An overhead finish truss will indicate the end of the time trial.
 - Official timing for each rider stops when the rider crosses the finish line mat.
- A finish chute will allow riders to safely slow down after the finish line.
- As riders finish, coaches will take them straight back to parking lot in groups of 6 to 8 riders.
- Riders should not spectate or return to the team staging area, except to retrieve left equipment/clothing.

Results and Awards

- Results will be posted on the league website.
- Individual and team honors for each race and the series overall will be awarded, as described in the [2020 Rules & Guidelines](#).

- Awards will be bundled by team and available for pick up at the following race.
- Only the team director or head coach, or a designee, should pick up the awards.
- Individual award pickups are not allowed.
- Protests must be sent to referee@arizonamtb.org within 24 hours of results being posted.
 - Protest can only be filed by the head coach of the protesting team.
- Results will apply towards 2021 Category Placement.

Spectators

- No spectators will be allowed in the racing venue.
 - This includes the start and finish areas, team staging area and on course.
- Coaches will accompany all student-athletes and should maintain proper coach to student-athlete ratios (6:1 or 8:2) when student-athletes are on premise.
- Coaches are encouraged to cheer on their team, but must remain socially distant from one another and stay at least 6 feet away from the edge of the race course .
- Any person without a number plate or league coach identification will be asked to leave the race venue.
- Attendees waiting for student-athletes shall remain in the parking lot and are strongly encouraged to maintain appropriate physical distancing from other attendees waiting for their student-athletes.

Volunteers

- We will only be using our core staff to manage events this year.
 - We will not be accepting any race weekend volunteers.
- Other opportunities for volunteering:
 - Trail maintenance on race courses prior to event weekends; we will be facilitating opportunities like this with home teams.
 - Volunteer to support your team's event weekend logistics (e.g., designate parents or coaches to receive student-athletes in the parking lot after they return from the race course., issue them their own hydration and nutrition that they brought).

Zones and Services

- The following zones and services will not be present at league time trial events:
 - Team pits.
 - Neutral support.
 - Feed zone.
 - Concessions.
 - Vendor expo.
 - Merchandise sales.

First Aid and Mitigation

- First aid kits should include mask and gloves.
 - You may not be able to maintain social distancing in the event of an injury.
 - Make sure to wear mask and gloves when administering aid.
 - Add hand sanitizer to your pack.
- In a student-athlete, coach or support staff reports symptoms of COVID-19 before the event has begun and before the individual has joined the rest of the group:
 - Isolate that individual and send the person home.
 - Notify the individual's family.
 - Notify your head coach and coaching staff.
 - Notify the league director.
 - Make sure that the individual follows the required protocol before returning to any team activity or league event.

- If a student-athlete, coach or support staff reports symptoms of COVID-19 after the event has begun:
 - Have all parties wear masks and maintain social distance.
 - Symptomatic individual should go directly to their car, do not stop.
 - Isolate the individual and notify the event medical coordinator.
 - Notify the individual's family.
 - Notify your head coach and coaching staff.
 - Notify the league director.
 - Make sure that the individual follows the required protocol before returning to any team activity or league event.

Event Preparation

- Set clear expectations – model and remind student-athletes and coaches to maintain distance.
 - What does 6 feet look like.
 - What does 20 feet look like when riding behind other riders.
 - No high fives or hugs, but words are GREAT ways to encourage and give affirmation to your riders.
- All student-athletes and coaches should arrive prepared:
 - Student-athletes wear team uniform.
 - Tube, tools, pump.
 - Water and food.
 - Extra clothes.
 - Hand sanitizer.
 - Disposable gloves in case you need to touch someone else's equipment.
 - Mask, buff or bandana.
 - DO NOT SHARE WATER, FOOD OR EQUIPMENT.
- Coaches should take and archive attendance of student-athletes and coaches.
 - Attendance records will help with contact tracing in the event of a COVID-19 positive test result.
- Student-athletes should check their own bikes and coaches should avoid touching student-athletes' bikes.
- Remind student-athletes and coaches to ride within their limits at this time.
 - Avoid pushing your student-athletes beyond the limits of their ability.
 - In your safety talk, remember to restate expectations to maintain social distancing and how to pass other trail users.

PLANNING AND COMMUNICATION CONSIDERATIONS

Planning Will Be Essential This Year

- Head coaches will need to plan how to communicate the changes for the event format this year to coaches, student-athletes and their families. It will not be possible to observe and teach prior to participation as has traditionally been done in the past.

Communication with Coaches

- Hold a virtual coaches meeting to think through the plans and new considerations due to COVID-19 restrictions within time trials. The teams will be responsible for managing student-athletes and their families during the racing window assigned to the team.

Communication with Student-Athletes and Families

- Embrace the ability to have an event that allows student-athletes to measure progress
- Reset expectations for racing. These events will feel different, but the experience can still be awesome.



- Help student-athletes and families reassess the goals for the season, help them focus on controllables, and avoid focusing on the uncontrollables.
- This year's events will be much more structured and time sensitive. Communicate why these time windows – and strict adherence to them – is important. Without them, events cannot happen.

Consider Having a Preseason Meeting to Discuss Expectations and Protocols

- Hold a virtual student-athlete and parent meeting. Follow [Electronic Communication and Social Media Guidelines](#).
 - Communicate how excited you are to be able to have a season.
 - Remind your team what makes your team special.
 - Reestablish the positive team culture you've been cultivating. Consider hosting a post-race event at another venue that follows the league's return to play guidelines (ex. pre-ride another course in the area).
 - Explain the safety procedures that the league and the team are putting in place.
 - Explain expectations for anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19.
 - Check yourself for COVID-19 symptoms and stay home for 14 days if you or any member of the household has symptoms.
 - Explain how events will be different.
 - Registration cut-off.
 - Arrival time.
 - Pre-assigned team meeting area.
 - Staging procedure.
 - Time trial format.
 - Passing etiquette.
 - Remind all families and student-athletes about the assumed risk involved with events and remind them that no one is required to attend events if they don't feel comfortable.
 - Decisions should incorporate personal circumstances such as family members with whom they live or have contact, being at higher risk for severe illness and/or other personal considerations.
 - Plan for if someone tests positive for COVID-19.
 - Immediately let the head coach or team director know if a participant or a family member of a participant tests positive.
 - Head coach or team director should immediately let the league director know.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following resources are intended to supplement - not replace – league, local, state and federal health and safety laws, rules and regulations.

- [Arizona Department of Health Services: Coronavirus Home](#)
- [Arizona Interscholastic Association Recommended Guidelines for Returning to Athletic Activity](#)
- [Aspen Institute Return to Play COVID 19 Risk Assessment Tool](#)
- [CDC Considerations for Youth Sports](#)
- [CDC Symptoms of Coronavirus](#)
- [NFHS Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities](#)
- [United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee: Return to Training Considerations Post-COVID-19](#)
- [USA Cycling Rider Recommendations](#)