



Tailwind Racing is a leading Michigan USAC (USACycling) mountain bike and cyclo-cross series. The company is family owned and operated, aiming to promote competitive cycling of all ages, genders and expertise. Tailwind is USAC sanctioned, meaning all courses abide by the official USAC rules and regulations. Both cycling categories hold their respective seasons as mountain bike races generally run April-August while cyclo-cross races run September-December. All races are held on weekends.

# TAILWIND RACING GUIDELINES (MTB)

Are you considering entering your first Tailwind mountain biking race? Awesome! Here's a quick run-down of what to expect overall on a Tailwind race day. The guidelines below apply to all Tailwind MTB participants and events.

## CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

### Youth

Youth racers are split into two categories. Youth who are aged 10 & Under and would like to compete on the same course as other racers may do so at the beginner level. No matter the course, these individuals only compete with one lap. Any other youth aged under 10 who would like to compete in a race, but may not be ready for the mountain bike trails, may enter the kids' race. This race is free and generally includes a few laps of a much smaller course. Participants are aged 2-10.

### Beginner

Beginner racers may be brand new to the sport, or considered recreational racers with limited riding time. In USAC licensing standards, they are considered CAT 3 racers. If a Beginner racer consistently finishes in the top 3 throughout a season, they will be expected to move up to the Sport category the following year. Both men and women have their respective Beginner age categories.

### Sport

A Sport racer is an individual who has become experienced on their bike and in the racing scene, with higher than beginner ability. These racers are considered CAT 2 for USAC licensing. If a Sport racer consistently finishes in the top 3 throughout a season, they will be

expected to move up to the Expert category the following year. Both men and women have their respective Sport age categories.

### Expert

Expert racers are considered to have high racing ability. They are considered CAT 1 racers for USAC licensing. Expert Women compete together, while Expert Men have respective age categories.

### Elite

Elite racers have extremely high bike handling skills and ability. For USAC licensing, they have achieved a level of CAT 1 or higher. There are no age categories for Elite Men or Women.

### Clydesdale

Clydesdale racers must weigh a minimum of 200 lbs. They are split into two categories, being Sport and Beginner categories.

### Single Speed

Single Speed racers can only race on a single speed bike. Essentially this means that their bike has a single gear ratio, and they do not have the capability of shifting two gear sets. They are split into two categories, being Sport/Beginner and Elite/Expert.

**\*\*A racer's 2013 USAC MTB race age is their age on December 31, 2013\*\*Bikes must be free-wheel, and not fixed gear\*\***

Men					
Skill Level	Age Group	License	Req'd	\$ Adv	\$DayOf
Elite	All	CAT 1+	Y	30	35
Expert	15-18	CAT 1	Y	25	30
Expert	19-29	CAT 1	Y	25	30
Expert	30-39	CAT 1	Y	25	30
Expert	40-49	CAT 1	Y	25	30
Expert	50+	CAT 1	Y	25	30
Sport	11-14	CAT 2	N	15	15
Sport	15-18	CAT 2	N	25	30
Sport	19-29	CAT 2	N	25	30
Sport	30-39	CAT 2	N	25	30
Sport	40-49	CAT 2	N	25	30
Sport	50-59	CAT 2	N	25	30
Sport	60+	CAT 2	N	25	30
Beginner	11-14	CAT 3	N	15	15
Beginner	15-18	CAT 3	N	25	30
Beginner	19-29	CAT 3	N	25	30
Beginner	30-39	CAT 3	N	25	30
Beginner	40-49	CAT 3	N	25	30
Beginner	50+	CAT 3	N	25	30

Clydesdale (200+ lbs.)					
Skill Level	Age Group	License	Req'd	\$ Adv	\$DayOf
Sport	All	CAT 2	N	25	30
Beginner	All	CAT 3	N	25	30

Women					
Skill Level	Age Group	License	Req'd	\$ Adv	\$DayOf
Elite	All	CAT 1+	Y	30	35
Expert	All	CAT 1	Y	25	30
Sport	15-18	CAT 2	N	25	30
Sport	19-29	CAT 2	N	25	30
Sport	30-39	CAT 2	N	25	30
Sport	40+	CAT 2	N	25	30
Beginner	11-14	CAT 3	N	15	15
Beginner	15-18	CAT 3	N	25	30
Beginner	19-29	CAT 3	N	25	30
Beginner	30-39	CAT 3	N	25	30
Beginner	40+	CAT 3	N	25	30

Youth					
Skill Level	Age Group	License	Req'd	\$ Adv	\$DayOf
Beginner	10 & Under	CAT 3	N	10	10
Beginner	Kids Race	None	N	Free	Free

Single Speed					
Skill Level	Age Group	License	Req'd	\$ Adv	\$DayOf
Elite/Expert	All	CAT 1+	Y	25	30
Sport/Beg	All	CAT 2, 3	N	25	30

## REGISTRATION

Each racer must register for their event ahead of their designated race time. Individuals can register for any race online at <https://www.tailwind-racing.com> through USACycling or on race day at the registration table. All participants will be asked to sign a waiver (electronically if registered online) and those who are **under 18 must have a parent or legal guardian present to sign**. Online registration can be completed UNTIL **11:59 PM the Wednesday** directly before race day. Day-of registration opens at 8:30 AM and will continue to be open until 15 minutes before start time. **All racers who require an annual license must show this license at registration. Racers who reside outside of the US must show their UCI license.**

## SERIES SCORING

Racers receive series points for each race completed as follows:

1st	35
2nd	30
3rd	27
4th	24
5th	21
6th	19
7th	17
8th	15
9th	13
10th	11
11th	10
12th	9
13th	8
14th	7
15th	6
16th	5
17th	4
18th	3
19th	2
20th-Lower	1

Tailwind will total the **FIVE Highest Point Scores out of the Eight Races** for each participant to determine final series placing. Racers must participate in at least **FOUR** races to be eligible for Overall Series Awards. In order to qualify for a series placing, these races must have all been competed in the same racing category. Earned points do not carry from one category to another.

## RACE FEES

Each racer, except those participating solely in the kids' race, must pay a race fee. If the individual registers online, they may pay by credit card. If an individual registers day-of, they may pay cash or check only. **All racers who are not competing as Expert or Elite have a USAC one-day license included with their registration fee.**

## AWARDS

Top 5 finishers in each age category will receive custom Tailwind Racing medals. The top 3 winners in the Elite class will earn part of a \$420 cash prize purse, while the top 3 finishers in each Expert class will earn part of a \$180 Cheetah Bucks purse. The race day awards ceremony times will be announced at the race.

## CHEETAH BUCKS

Cheetah Bucks are awarded to the top 3 Expert finishers. These can be used toward future Tailwind event registration or official Tailwind apparel.

Tailwind staff ensures bananas,

## FOOD

bagels and water are available for racers to consume at every event.

These are always located near registration. Additionally, outside food vendors may be present at certain races to supply meals/food for purchase.



## SPECTATORS/OTHERS PRESENT

Spectators are always welcome! Of course, Tailwind asks that all spectators are respectful of event participants and staff. They will be expected to stay off of the course which is marked with red tape, cones and directional flags. Cheering racers on with cow bells is always a good idea! Many times, sponsoring teams, groups and organizations will also be present at the races. Make sure to check out their respective tents to learn about their group, and any special items they may have to offer!



## WHAT TO EXPECT

**SIGNS:** When you're approaching the race site, you should start seeing some Tailwind directional signs that help guide you to the main event. These can be very helpful, especially in some of the larger parks.



**REGISTRATION:** The registration area varies with each venue. However, you can be sure it will most likely be near our big, brown bus. Registration usually is held underneath pavilions or inside buildings at particular venues. At registration you can pay your race entree fee, grab your personal BIB, transponder, zip ties/safety pins and any swag we may be giving out from our sponsors.



**REGISTERED ONLINE?:** Easy peasy! Just go up to the "Pre-registered" riders line and speak with one of our team members. Give them your name, USAC license (if required for your category) and sign your waiver. They then will give you your pre-assigned BIB number and transponder. Don't forget to grab zip ties for your number plate! Also, make

sure you know your start time and location of the start line.

**REGISTERING DAY-OF?:** Grab a registration sheet/pen from a table near registration and fill out all the required fields. You can then take this to the registration table and a team member will help get you ready for your race. They will only accept cash or check for payment. Once they look over your registration sheet, they then will assign you a BIB number and transponder. Before you leave the table, don't forget to grab zip ties for you number! Also, make sure you know your start time and location of the start line.



**BIB NUMBER:** What exactly do you do with this thing? Well, it depends. If you are at a mountain bike race, this number needs to be zip tied to your handle bars so it is easily read from the front.



**TRANSPONDER:** You must affix your transponder to your left ankle for timing. Do not cross the start or finish line with your transponder outside of your race time.

**KIDS' RACE:** On every event day, Tailwind hosts a FREE kid's race. This typically is held mid-day, is usually located near registration/ the start line and is marked with lime green flags. If you have a child who would like to participate in the kid's race, just ask for



the sign-up sheet at registration. Our team members will then be able to give you a BIB number and twist ties for your child. And, as always, every child is a winner!

**BEFORE YOUR RACE:** Make sure you get all suited up and ready to go! Ensure your BIB is attached correctly, your transponder is on your left ankle and your bike is tuned and ready to go. Also, MAKE SURE YOU ARE WEARING YOUR HELMET! As we are a USAC sanctioned race series, our racers are required to wear helmets... even if they are just riding in the parking lot! If an official sees you riding at the event without a helmet they then have means to disqualify you from the race. And, let's face it--helmets are a smart idea anyhow.

**READY TO RACE:** Once your race is nearing, grab your buddies and group up at the start line. Make sure to be courteous of other racers who may need to move past to get in line with their designated race wave.



Our USAC officials and/or race coordinators may have some important information to give before you start. Listen up—they may be warning you of tricky sections or areas of caution on the course!



**READY, SET, GO!:** On the whistle, GO! Ensure you are courteous to other racers on the course, and that you are following all USAC official rules for your cycling category (mountain bike or cyclo-cross). The course may be mapped by a combination of red tape, orange cones, pink flags and directional signs.



**LAPS:** Each racing category will be required to compete with a specific amount of course laps. Make sure you are aware of your category's lap requirement, as during mountain

bike races you will be expected to keep track of your personal lap progress. Our timing system will count each lap as you pass the appropriate line, and once results are posted you will be able to see where you stand. We also will have a time clock running near this lap line to further help you keep track of your race progress.



**HOT DAYS:** On extremely hot summer days, Tailwind staff will ensure to have a water station located on the course. Feel free to grab a cup from a volunteer as you pass by!



**FINISHED:** Have you just completed your last lap? AWESOME! Now it's time to spin your legs out a bit and perform a cool down. Ensure you exit the course safely, while keeping in mind other racers may still be competing. You will find a large plastic bucket near the finish line. This is where you can return your ankle transponder.



**RESULTS:** Once most/all racers from a designated race wave complete their laps, our team members will finish compiling the results sheet. An announcement will be made over the speakers saying the preliminary results have been posted. At this point, anyone may view the preliminary (meaning not 100% finalized) results and look for any discrepancies. The results are usually posted on or near the bus. If you have a disagreement with the results, make sure to speak with a team member. They will call over a USAC official to speak with you. Once any discrepancies have been corrected, our team members will then announce results have been finalized and prepare for the award ceremony.

Results are posted on the USAC website within 24 hrs after race day.



**PRIZE GIVEAWAYS:** Many times, our series and bike shop sponsors will donate prizes to act as race giveaways. Tailwind staff randomly selects winners from a list of all registered riders for that particular race day. Once these names are chosen, the prizes will be set out and labeled with the winners' names.

**AWARDS:** Once results are finalized team members will announce the award ceremony. Tailwind gives medals to the top 5 finishers in all racing categories. Each of the top 5 racers will be announced and invited to come receive their award. Podiums will be present for the contestants to stand on, and time will be allowed for pictures to be taken. Traditionally, Tailwind racers raise their arms for podium pictures.



## ABOUT US

Tailwind Enterprises was founded by Robert Linden in 1997. For over 10 years Robert and his crew worked to build a strong foundation for the company while creating competitive, yet family friendly, racing events.



In 2011 Tailwind Enterprises transferred over the racing series to Tailwind Racing, with the Wissman family as the new operators. These are the folks you will see and interact with at the races today.



And, of course, Tailwind also has a strong crew of team members and support. Tailwind could not run without the tireless efforts of these individuals.



Tailwind Racing guidelines are reviewed yearly to reflect any updates or changes in the series. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact our team by emailing [info@tailwind-racing.com](mailto:info@tailwind-racing.com) All Tailwind races are USAC sanctioned, and abide by all USAC rules and regulations.