

2020 RACE SERIES PLAN FOR COVID-19 COMPLIANCE AND MITIGATION (SEPTEMBER 23, 2020)

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September 23 Update

Today, the MiSCA Board of Directors, in partnership with the land managers for Milford Trail, Merrell Trail, and Bloomer Park, agreed to increase the participation limit to 376 racers. Additionally, language was added to the original plan to include contact information for the responsible party on-site on race day (Sean Warren, Race Director, 248-671-3029). Appendix A was removed while charts are being revised.

September 3 Update

Today, Governor Gretchen Whitmer released [Executive Order 176](#) addressing organized sports. We've updated our plan to include the following language: Our events will comply with the Governor's Executive orders regarding organized sports. This plan coordinates timing and location of participants, staff, volunteers, and spectators to ensure no more than 100 people will be in the general vicinity of the course, tents, registration, etc. at any time. Any changes to this plan will continue to comply with state and local guidance.

Summary

The Michigan Scholastic Cycling Association (MiSCA) is committed to providing a safe, enjoyable racing experience for student athletes. For the 2020 Race Series, this includes creating a race series that includes significant measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and comply with applicable state and local requirements. Our events will comply with the Governor's Executive orders regarding organized sports. This plan coordinates timing and location of participants, staff, volunteers, and spectators to ensure no more than 100 people will be in the general vicinity of the course, tents, registration, etc. at any time.

Traditionally, MiSCA races include a main event area that includes the start line, race staging area for wave starts, the finish line, timing equipment, registration and first aid, team tents, and spectators. For 2020, this defined event area will not include team tents, will include restricted areas around registration and staging to force physical distancing and protect athletes, and require a mask or face covering for all coaches, athletes, and spectators within this area (except for athletes that are on course). Spectators will be discouraged from attending or being near the event area. Race staff, course marshals, and other volunteers will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms per the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) guidelines prior to any participation. All positions will be able to facilitate physical distancing and use of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, masks, and eye protection will be advised if any interaction is required to address injuries or incidents. A time-trial start method will be used to minimize the numbers of riders on course at any given time and to minimize passing on-course. Athletes will have staggered staging and arrival times and will be asked to avoid arriving at the park well early of their start time.

Regulations and Guidance

MiSCA is developing its policies for the 2020 Race Series based on the MHSAA's Return to Play Guidelines. For sport-specific guidance, MiSCA draws a correlation with the Fall Planning for Cross Country, as this is the closest sport in execution. Further, State of Michigan Executive Orders for regions 1 and 2 related to high school and youth sports, events and gatherings, and other restrictions are evaluated.

MHSAA currently considers Cross Country a low-risk sport and is preparing for fall competitions. Likewise, MiSCA is considering mountain bike racing as a low-risk sport.

Current Guidance for Team Activities

Guidance for teams to begin organized activities was provided on 11 June 2020. The "[Updates On Summer Activity & Re-opening](#)" can be found at www.miscabike.org/covid-19.

Overview of Process for Racing

- **Time Trial Format:** Unlike a typical XC race with a mass start, each rider receives an individual start time and races against the clock. Riders are placed based on their overall time, not necessarily the order they crossed the finish line.
- **Registration:** All racers must register online at www.miscabike.org/register; same-day registration will not be offered. Registration will close once the participant limit is reached or the Monday before race day, whichever comes first.
 - **Participant Limit:** Participation will be limited to 376 riders per day. Races will remain on Sunday only.
 - **Race Limit:** After Aug 12, riders may only register for up to 4 races total.
- **Start-Time Assignments:** Registered riders will be ordered by their average lap times and assigned a start time. Times will be emailed to parents with an arrival window and detailed expectations. Start lists will also be posted at www.miscabike.org/start.
- **Pre-screening:** Racers, volunteers, and staff will be screened for coronavirus symptoms utilizing CDC and MHSAA guidelines prior to participating.
- **Pre-riding:** Course pre-rides should occur on the days leading up to the race; NO pre-riding is allowed the day of the race.
- **Distancing:** Participants must maintain 6' distancing whenever possible.
- **Masks:** Masks are required within MiSCA's defined event area (registration, staging, start, finish, and the race course) when not actively riding. Masks are encouraged at all other times you are unable to maintain 6' distance.
- **Spectators:** Spectators are not allowed into the staging area and should avoid the event area unless they have a demonstrated need to be there. Athletes are strongly asked to limit family members to the minimum number their situation allows. Preferably, this is no more than 1 family member per athlete.
- **Food:** No open food items are to be shared between families. No tailgating or buffet-style food service.
- **Arrival:** Riders may arrive to the park 30-minutes prior to their assigned start-time.
- **Race Plates:** Rider plates and pre-purchased merchandise will be provided to head coaches at or before Race 1. Independent riders will obtain materials from the Registration tent.
- **Check-in:** Riders should report to staging no earlier than 10-minutes prior to their assigned start-time. Riders will be checked to ensure they meet screening guidelines and that they have arrived within their staging window. Adults are not allowed past this point.
- **Waves:** MiSCA will pause staging/starts for a short period of time after every 40-48 racers.
- **Start:** Riders will be staged in 2 single-file rows inside the start chute, staggering starts every 60-seconds. Masks may be removed within your 60-second countdown.
- **Finish:** Upon finishing, riders will return to their vehicles and are asked to depart the race venue within 10 minutes of completing their race.
- **Results:** Live results are available at www.newtontiming.com and will not be printed/posted at the event. See MiSCA staff to report issues.
- **Awards:** Medals and awards will be provided to head coaches and distributed by your team. See MiSCA staff for issues or for independent riders.
- **Leader Jerseys:** Current series leaders that have not yet received a 2020 leader's jersey may pick it up from the MiSCA registration tent at the following race.

Race Day Contact

The Race Director will be on site during the event and is responsible for ensuring this plan is followed. Please contact Sean Warren at 248-671-3029 if any issues or concerns should arise.

Registration

There will be no day-of registration. All registrations must be completed in advance at www.miscabike.org/register. As of September 23, each race is limited to 376 athletes total, with no limit restrictions by category. Athletes registering for races after Aug 12 will be limited to a maximum of four races. Athletes that registered for five or six races prior to Aug 12 will not be affected by this requirement, though they may not register for additional races.

Examples:

- a. An athlete registered for the full six race series prior to Aug 12. Their registration is not affected and they may participate in all six races.
- b. An athlete registered for five races prior to Aug 12. Their registration is not affected and they may participate in all five races. However, after Aug 12, they cannot register for any additional races.
- c. An athlete registered for four races prior to Aug 12. Their registration is not affected and they may participate in all four races. However, after Aug 12, they cannot register for any additional races.
- d. An athlete registered for less than 4 races prior to Aug 12. After Aug 12, they are limited to a maximum of four races.

Overall caps are required to keep event numbers within requirements, permit for physical distancing in the event area, and control the length of the day. The four race maximum is intended to allow more athletes to participate during the season.

Race plates will be distributed to head coaches prior to or at the first race. Independent riders will obtain their plate from the Registration tent at the first race they attend. Replacement plates may be obtained by athletes from the Registration tent at all races, though replacement plate fees still apply to cover the plate and dual timing chip costs.

Facilities / Sanitation

MiSCA races do not include any indoor activities. Park facilities, such as pavilions and restrooms, will be utilized if available and appropriate. For parks without restroom facilities available, portable restrooms will be secured. If practicable, a hand wash station will be secured as well.

Mask/Face Covering Policy

Any persons in the event area, as defined below, will be required to maintain physical distancing and wear a mask or face covering. Staff and volunteers that are not in the event area but are assisting near the course will be required to wear a mask or face covering. Athletes not on-course or immediately about to be on-course will be required to wear a mask or face covering. Any team gatherings will be required to include masks or face coverings if not actively biking. Outside of the event area, masks or face coverings for all persons will be advised, however, cannot be effectively monitored for compliance.

Penalties will be developed for non-compliance by athletes, coaches, and parents, and may include time penalties, temporary ejection from the race venue, and disqualification from that race and/or remaining races. For persons that are not associated with MiSCA or any teams (general public), local law enforcement may be engaged to ensure we can maintain a safe environment for athletes.

Event Area and Course Setup

Traditionally, MiSCA races include a main event area that includes the start line, race staging area for wave starts, the finish line, timing equipment, registration and first aid, team tents, and spectators. For 2020, this defined event area will not include team tents, will include restricted areas around registration and staging to force physical distancing and protect athletes, and will require a mask or face covering for all coaches, athletes, and others within this area (except for athletes that are on course).

Staging will be a restricted area that will be sized to allow for physical distancing. Only athletes that are within their allotted staging time will be allowed to enter the staging area. A check-in process will ensure all athletes are screened per MHSAA guidelines. Athletes may be able to self-report temperature prior to arriving at the park, or temperature may be taken with a contactless thermometer as part of the check-in process.

Another restricted area will be around the Registration tent. Though no day-of registration will be offered, there is still a need for a central location for questions, replacement racer plates, and clarifications. This registration area will be cordoned off to manage interactions and physical distancing. Doubled-up tables will be used to force physical distancing between the staff and participants, and surfaces will be disinfected frequently. Masks will be required in this area.

Outside of the restricted registration and staging areas, an event area will be clearly defined and reminders of physical distancing and wearing a mask will be present. Within this area, compliance will be expected, and those without any specific business to attend to in this area will be asked to avoid this area.

Team tents may be setup but must be outside of the event area and spread out from other team tents. MiSCA will define where team tents, if used, will be allowed. Tailgating or shared buffet-style food is not allowed. Athletes are strongly encouraged to be responsible for their own food and drink, but prep-packaged shared food is permitted as long as it can be distributed in a sanitary manner. Physical distancing must be observed and masks must be worn, and coolers and tables should be disinfected regularly. Teams may not congregate in large numbers under the team tent.

Check In and Staging

A staging area will be defined with stakes/delineators and tape and will encompass the start line. The staging area will be set up to allow athletes to self-stage in the correct order with minimal interaction. The area will be sized to ensure at least 6 feet of physical distance can be maintained, though masks will be required until the athlete is at the starting line.

Athletes will be assigned a start time and staging location based on their category (Varsity, JV, Middle School, etc.) and their anticipated lap time. Categories and start times will be broken down into approximately 8 groups of 40-48 riders each. Genders and traditional categories may be mixed within these groups in order to favor anticipated lap times; ordering by lap time will reduce the need for passing on the course. In each group, start times will be 60 seconds apart. The start time of the next group of 40-48 riders will be after a short break after the last athlete from the previous group enters the race course. This schedule will allow the number of athletes on course from each group/category to remain around 55 at any given time, with a total of approximately 75 athletes and volunteers on course at any given time. To help in planning, estimated start time windows are provided below.

- Varsity, Junior Varsity, Advanced Middle School: 9am-12pm
- High School Novice and Middle School: 11am-2pm
- Upper and Lower Elementary: 2pm-4pm

Athletes will report to the staging area no earlier than 10 minutes before their scheduled start time. Prior to entering, a staff member or volunteer will check-in the athlete. The check-in process will ensure he/she self-certified prior to arriving to the park and/or will certify in-person the following, per MHSAA Return to Play guidelines:

- Current temperature does not exceed 100.3 degrees Fahrenheit, and has not exceeded 100.3 degrees Fahrenheit in the past 10 days,
- He/she has not come into close contact or cared for someone who tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 10 days,
- He/she has not had a sore throat, cough, or shortness of breath in the past 10 days.

The person conducting check-in will be able to maintain six feet of physical distancing from the athlete, with the exception of contactless temperature checks that may require a lesser distance. Arrival time will be recorded and stored for at least 14 days.

Upon entering staging, the athlete will report to the staging location they were provided, which will be in one of two rows extending back from the start line. Periodically, as athletes depart for the race course, athletes in staging will move forward towards the start line. This process will be managed by a staff member. Athletes and staff will be able to maintain physical distancing and will be required to wear a mask or face covering.

Once the athlete is at the start line, they will be able to remove and stow or safely dispose of their mask. Volunteers or staff will not be allowed to collect or hold masks, and parents or coaches will not be permitted near the start line to collect or hold masks. One rider will depart every 60 seconds, alternating between the two rows in staging (once an athlete reaches the start line, they have approximately 120 seconds before they depart onto the race course. Timing is chip timed.

Athletes and families will be provided an email before the race with detailed instructions for arrival, check-in, staging, and departure. Start times will also be posted at www.miscabike.org.

Athlete Arrival and Warm Up

Athletes will be asked to not arrive at the park more than 30 minutes ahead of their scheduled start time. This will allow 20-25 minutes for warm-up and race preparation away from the event area. Coaches may assist, though organized team activities are discouraged and would be difficult to execute in a time-trial race format. If multiple athletes choose to warm-up together, physical distancing is required. Use of an alternate location to warm-up is encouraged.

Although athletes that have arrived at the park but not yet entered staging will not be near the event area, they are included in our participant estimates.

While On-Course

While on course, athletes will not be required to wear a mask. Through a time-trial format and careful staging of riders, the need for athletes to pass is minimized. However, passing will still need to occur. Given the nature of mountain bike courses, providing at least six feet of space for passing is not practical. However, race course design includes areas that are wider than single-track that allow for safe passing opportunities and passing on bike courses is not conducive to "slow" passing; passes occur quickly. Riders are encouraged to exhibit safe passing techniques in accordance with MiSCA Race Rules.

Course Marshals will be on course in stationary and roaming capacities to respond to incidents, ensure the rules of racing are followed, and manage any locations that could have race/non-race interactions, such as paved-path crossings.

Athlete Departure

Athletes that complete their race will be able to depart quickly from the race course into an open area after crossing the finish line. This area shall be free from spectators or coaches to allow for quick exit and to maintain physical distance since the athlete will not yet have donned a mask. Once safe and practical to do so, the athlete shall don a mask if they return to the event area or are in a group. Athletes are asked to be at their vehicle or depart the race venue within 10 minutes of completing their race.

Although athletes that have exited the course but not yet departed will not be near the event area, they are included in our participant estimates.

Athlete Registration Caps

To keep the number of participants within requirements, as of September 23, each MiSCA race day will only be able to accommodate a maximum of 376 athletes. Registration caps will not be based on category, but will be overall. This number may adjust upward or downward as new guidance is published by MHSAA and state and local officials. With this cap, the first athlete will enter the race course at 9:00AM. The final athlete on course is estimated to exit the course at approximately 5:00 PM.

Coaches

It is assumed that each team will need to have (a) coach(es) on-site throughout the day. Teams shall limit the number of coaches on-site (acting in a coaching capacity and not in a parental capacity) to two. In general, coaches should remain away from the event area (i.e., at their team tent) unless they have a demonstrated need to be in the event area.

Volunteers and Staff

Volunteers and staff are required in order to execute a safe and effective event. Volunteer positions will be minimized to only those required to safely execute the event and will include stationary and roaming course marshals. These volunteers are critical to observing race etiquette, managing race/non-race interaction points (such as path crossings), and to respond to any medical incidents. Stationary course marshals are generally parents or coaches; roaming course marshals are generally National Mountain Bike Patrollers or coaches with first aid and CPR certifications. All volunteers and staff shall wear a mask while in the event area or interacting with any participants or members of the public. Course marshals will be reminded to use all required PPE when responding to a medical incident.

Volunteers and staff will be required to check-in and self-certify prior to arrival or in-person to the same requirements as athletes. Disposable gloves and sanitizing materials will be available for staff and volunteers.

Scheduling of volunteers to meet minimum safety requirements will have to occur ahead of time. Parent-coaches and parents with multiple athletes participating will be encouraged to sign up for race-day course marshal positions. The Volunteer Coordinator will communicate volunteer needs to teams, request assistance from coaches in filling positions, and manage the sign-up system. All course marshal volunteers will check-in with and work with the Chief Course Marshal for assignments and support during the race.

Staff and volunteers are included in participant estimates.

Spectators

In general, family members are advised to not attend or to remain away from the event area. If family members choose to remain on-site, they are asked to stay away from the event area unless they have a clear need to be in that area. Otherwise, they must remain at least six feet from the edge of the course at all times. Athletes are strongly asked to limit family members to the minimum number their situation allows. Preferably, this means no more than 1 family member or guardian per athlete whenever possible.

Results, Standings, and Awards

Due to the nature of a time trial format and to avoid loitering, standings and awards will not be published or announced at the race. Live results will be available at www.newtontiming.com. Standings will be published after the race concludes. Awards may be picked up from the Registration tent by coaches for distribution to their team at the following race. After the final race of the season, awards will be provided to coaches in another manner for distribution to their team.

For the points series, only the top 3 races for athletes will be considered. This will allow for more flexibility based on athlete caps at races, require less athletes to attend all six races, and protect for the possibility of a canceled race. Series awards at the end of the season will be awarded unless circumstances exist that prevent a reasonably fair and equitable accrual of points. Leader jerseys will be awarded based on series points and may be picked up by the series leader from Registration at the next race.