



**NICA**



## Trail Riding Code Of Conduct

Welcome to the Takoma Park Mountain Bike (MTB) Composite Team 2018 season! As a member of the Takoma Park MTB Composite Team, you agree to follow these trail and riding rules of conduct at all times, not just during NICA events or practices. As a NICA rider, you are representing the mountain bike community. Following these rules will help keep you, your team and your community safe. They will also help you develop a positive relationship between cyclists and other trail or road users throughout our area.

Please read the Takoma Park MTB Composite Team rules below. Then, check the appropriate boxes, sign, and return to your team director or head coach.

1. **Ride with Respect.** NICA requires all student-athletes, coaches and volunteers ride with a riding style of respect and safety. This includes taking personal responsibility for managing and controlling your own riding style and behavior at all times. Be mindful. Ride in control. Respect yourself, fellow teammates, your coaches, equipment, other members of the community and the environment.
2. **Always Wear a Helmet.** Under no circumstances should you be on a bicycle without a helmet fastened. This includes riding on your personal time, at practices, events and races. Student-athletes will be disqualified for riding without a helmet at races.
3. **Yield to Other Trail Users.** Respect and yield to all other trail users. Always be prepared to stop. Always yield to the uphill rider if you are riding downhill. Ride with your eyes up, and always expect to see other trail users around corners. Pull over with plenty of distance between you and other trail users. Make your interactions with other trail users positive. Always call out, or put a handlebar bell on your bike and use it!
4. **Pass with Care.** Always be kind and polite. Communicate! Make sure other trail users acknowledge your presence before you attempt to pass. Always stop at a reasonable distance and ask for passing instructions from horseback riders. Horses can be easily spooked by bicycles. Mountain bike encounters can be very dangerous for horseback riders and horses if not handled properly.
5. **Stay on Trails.** Riding off the designated trail damages fragile ecosystems. Never cut switchbacks - it accelerates erosion. Beware of the surfaces you are riding on and adjust your riding and braking style as needed. Do not widen existing trails to avoid mud. Ride or walk through deep mud sections and puddles.
6. **Ride Only Authorized Trails.** Check with local authorities regarding open trails and conditions. Check with landowners regarding private land access. Do not ride trails closed to bicycles. Be aware bicycles are not permitted in federal Wilderness areas.
7. **Respect Wildlife and Livestock.** Do not frighten animals. Give them plenty of space and never approach wild animals. Carry bear spray as needed. Always close gates behind you.

For more resources, visit: [www.nationalmtb.org/nica-coaches-resources/](http://www.nationalmtb.org/nica-coaches-resources/)

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8. **Do Not Litter.** Pack out what you pack in. Make every effort to pick up other people's trash. Minimize your own impacts the best you can.
9. **Be Prepared.** Be prepared to fix basic mechanicals such as flat tires and broken chains, and conduct simple bike adjustments. Carry and know how to use basic tools, including tire levers, a spare tube, a pump and a multi-tool. Check weather forecasts before you ride. Expect weather changes. Bring warm and waterproof layers and have at least one first aid kit in your group.
10. **Plan Ahead.** Leave word where you plan to go, when you plan to return, and follow your plan. Carry a light if you expect to finish a ride close to dark.
11. **No USADA Banned Substances.** NICA student-athletes are subject to all U.S. Anti-Doping Agency rules pertaining to anti-doping. The use of performance enhancing substances will result in the immediate disqualification from a full season or the equivalent number of races. This includes using caffeine as part of your training or racing regime.
12. **Follow NICA Rules and Guidelines.** Review and adhere to the [NICA Rules & Guidelines](http://www.nationalmtb.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/NICA-Rulebook-01-NICA-Master-2017-2018.pdf), available online at <http://www.nationalmtb.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/NICA-Rulebook-01-NICA-Master-2017-2018.pdf>. If you are unsure of anything, ask a coach.

***Please read and check the box before each item:***

### **Safety**

- I will always ride with respect and within my ability. I will always ride in control.
- I will always wear appropriate safety gear:
  - I will always ride wearing a helmet.
  - I will wear proper gloves and clothing and bring warm/waterproof layers.
  - I will wear protective eyewear.
- I will complete my ABCD bike check before each ride:
  - A - Air.
  - B - Brakes.
  - C - Chain
  - D - Derailleur (shifting).
  - I will not ride my bicycle if it is unsafe to ride.
- I will never ride alone in isolated areas.
- I will always let someone know where I am riding, when I plan to return, and stick to my plan.
- I will bring proper hydration and nutrition on every ride.
- I will bring appropriate tools and parts, including at a minimum a spare tube, tire levers, and pump.
- I will not ride terrain or at speeds which are unsafe or beyond my technical ability.
- I will not ride in unsafe conditions:

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- I will not ride trails with excessive exposure to drops and falls.
- I will not ride in unsafe weather conditions such as lightning, flash floods, extreme heat or cold.
- I will not ride muddy trails.

**Respect**

- I will respect my teammates, competitors, and other trail users
  - I will never trash talk, insult or use inappropriate language while riding.
  - I will move aside to allow safe passing when a faster competitor is moving by me.
  - When passing from behind, I will announce my presence and intention and specify passing side.
  - I will always do my best when racing or riding my bike.
  - I will always ride with courtesy, whether racing or training.
- I will follow the rules of right of way
  - I will stop or slow down when approaching an equestrian, hiker or dog walker.
  - I will provide right of way to pedestrians and equestrians.
  - Stop and ask for passing instructions from equestrians. I should never pass a horse without the horseback rider knowing I'm there and having given permission to pass.
- I will respect the land and the environment
  - I will never litter or leave trash on the trail.
  - I will ride only on designated and legal trails and routes.
  - I will pick up trash whenever possible when riding.
  - I will learn to brake correctly to minimize trail erosion.
  - I will not ride on trails when the weather and surface conditions will cause damage.
  - I will not perform trail maintenance on trails without full permission and permits from the land owner/manager.
- I understand the use of performance enhancing drugs (list of banned substances available at U.S. Anti-doping website), including caffeine, is not tolerated at any NICA event.
- I understand and will follow the NICA Rules and Guidelines. I also understand that failure to do so may lead to my suspension or expulsion from League activities.

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**Student-Athlete/Volunteer Sign Here**

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**Print Name**

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**Date**

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