

Intro to Cyclocross 2023 – What you need to know

The vibe at a CX race is unlike any other racing I've seen. With a course in a small, contained space, it is truly a spectator sport. Add in sometimes challenging conditions (mud! snow!), as well as barriers, steps, off camber turns, steep hills, and sand pits, and you have an entertaining race to watch and/or do. Hanging out at the Avout Racing Oasis with teammates and families is super fun.

Calendar

The practice and race calendars are in TeamSnap – be sure to download the app to your phones if you haven't already. Late in the season, the practice times get earlier as we lose daylight. The whole schedule is there now. While there is always the chance something will change, we will do our best to stick to it for the entire season! It takes a lot for us to cancel a CX practice, since part CX is the crazy weather and conditions, but we will alert via TeamSnap if we need to cancel.

RSVPs

Please RSVP in TeamSnap for practices and races – this is always helpful for our planning. We would love for you to make all the practices and races, but understand there will be conflicts, so please just mark Yes or No for all TeamSnap events!

Bike

Don't let the lack of a CX bike keep you from racing. Give a race a go on your mountain bike before investing in a CX bike. Some juniors will race on a mountain bike all season long. Check our team [Facebook page](#) if you are looking to buy (or sell) a CX bike. It's a good idea to take the water bottle cages off your bike (for easier carrying), and we recommend riding and racing without a camelbak.

Clinic

To get a jump start on the season we are doing a CX Clinic at Bradford on Saturday, August 19. This will be a fun way to learn or practice some key skills, get to know your teammates, and bring a friend who may want to try CX. Please please RSVP in TeamSnap now! (Have any friends who want to join sign up [here](#).)

Team Oasis

We all know that the races aren't nearly as fun without the team oasis! With a long calendar of races, the only way the oasis happens is with the help of the entire CX team. We need each team member to sign up for ONE slot this season. That's it. Please do it so I don't have to beg. :) If you have more than one junior on the team, please sign up for the number of juniors that are on the team. [Sign up](#) early to get your top choice.

Training Plan

Each of you has access to the team built training plan that is tailored to the race schedule, peaking for State and National Championships! If you want to join the CX program, just email Coach Matt at sterlingspeed@gmail.com. This season workouts will include power and heart rate information along with our usual RPE metric. Don't have a training peaks account? Easy...follow the two steps below and we'll get you set up: (1) FREE Training Peaks Account: www.trainingpeaks.com (2) Adding Matt McNamara as your coach: <https://home.trainingpeaks.com/attachtocoach?sharedKey=OIIXRKZNCXMQ>

Mandatory Parent Meeting

We had a great mandatory parent meeting in the spring for the parents of our Academy MTB juniors. It's great information for CX too. If you did not attend or view this recording, please watch it [here](#). Your junior will thank you!

Licenses

All juniors will need a [USAC junior race license/membership](#) and a [Bicycle Colorado license](#). Use code RATTLER23 for \$25 off a USAC license first, and then USAC will share that information with Bicycle Colorado for a free state license. You should get a USAC license ASAP before racing any races this year so that your points from that race will help you get a better call up to the start line at future races. When you purchase a license, **make sure to enter Avout Racing as your team**. If you already have licenses, please log in to USAC and **verify/update your team to Avout Racing**.

Categories

You will start racing CX as a Cat 5 racer (or a junior by age group) and you can move up in the categories as outlined [here](#). Your CX race age is how old you will be at the end of next year (2024). Crazy, but true. When looking at a specific race schedule, make sure you carefully verify the time of your category's race and make sure you sign up for the correct category (and age).

Call Ups

When you go to a CX race, they will have call ups to the start line which will be based on your USAC points. If you are racing on a 1-day license or haven't raced before, expect to be at the end. If you are licensed and get some successful races under your belt, you will improve your points (your points will get LOWER -- lower is better) and thus improve your order of being called up to the start line. The point system is a complicated thing -- if you are curious of how it all works, you can read about it [here](#).

Good Race Options

Racing is what makes CX so much fun, and the race season kicks off with the Back 2 Basics series. Sign up for the entire series [here](#). (The director is threatening to cancel if people don't sign up soon.) There are no junior categories for this race. Advanced juniors should sign up for Men A, Men B, or Women A. Intermediate juniors should sign up for Men C or Women B.

Beginner juniors who are ready to race should sign up for Men C or Women C. (Newbie Women/Women C are FREE!) We encourage our beginners and youngest juniors NOT to race the first several of these races until they get more experience, as they will be on the course with a lot of adults at the same time.

The [Cyclo X](#) series is a great option for riders of all ages and abilities. This series will have a series winner, with some races weighted more than others.

While it's further away in Fort Collins, Cross of the North is always a favorite weekend race. Schoolyard Cross is another favorite, with free entry for juniors, and other fun festival activities. Plan on State CX Championships for sure... and for those excited to experience a national race, CX Nationals is in Louisville, Kentucky, at the beginning of December.

If this sounds crazy and complicated, you aren't alone. When we first started racing CX, it felt confusing and overwhelming at first, but thanks to a team of helpful people who know what's up, we navigated it just fine. So, please reach out if you have any questions!

#crossiscoming

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