

Greetings Juniors!

We are getting excited to start practices in a couple of weeks. Our first practice is on Tuesday, March 26, and the first race is on Saturday, March 30th. This email is FULL of stuff you need to know, so please read it carefully and flag it for easy reference later. I will also upload it to the [Team Resources](#) webpage. Mike Durner will be the Head Coach of the Colorado Springs Academy program, with support and curriculum from Matt McNamara, the Director of the Academy Program

WANTED: Team Parent – Do you want to get more involved in a non-cycling way? We need someone who is organized, good at communicating, and has a positive attitude. Please reply to this email or email me at Kenzie@AvoutRacing.com if you are interested getting more involved with the team in this role. The Team Parent will help with jersey and bell distribution at the beginning of the first practices, remind people to RSVP, bring celebratory snacks occasionally (first or last practice or some other time), help assemble a few families to help with the team oasis for races.

Schedule and much more is coming soon in TeamSnap (likely by the end of this week).

Download the TeamSnap app to your phone if you haven't already. Practices are not mandatory. If you can't make a practice, that's ok! Just indicate your 'no' RSVP in TeamSnap. Practices will be Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:30pm – 7:30pm.

Timing, be punctual! – Our start time is 5:30pm, so please arrive about 15 minutes beforehand so that kids are ready to ride at 5:30pm. (Make sure you check TeamSnap so you know where you are going!) Our end time is a little flexible but will generally end at 7:30pm. The coach will let you know if it is going to be different.

Practice Cancellations – Weather in Colorado can be volatile! We will cancel practice if it will be 45 degrees or below at start; if there is an active storm/precipitation; or if there is lightning proximity (within 5 miles). We will notify via TeamSnap – please check for last minute cancellations especially when weather is iffy.

Team clothing/kit – You should hopefully get your order from Castelli before the first practice so that you will have some awesome team bike clothing to wear for practice (if you want). We will also hand out the jerseys included with registration at the first practice (or once they arrive).

Equipment needed for practices –

- Bike in good working order
- Properly fitted helmet in good condition and less than 5 years old
- Sunglasses and/or clear/amber glasses (some form of eye protection is required)

- Bike gloves (preferably full finger)
- Closed-toe shoes
- Water
- Tube to fit your bike
- Pump or 2 cartridges + inflator
- Multi tool
- Tire levers
- Jacket/layers (*it gets cold quickly in the evening!*)
- Small snack (but be sure to eat before coming to practice so you aren't starving!)
- Bike bell (see Bells note below)
- Needed medications (epipens, inhaler)
- A way to carry it all – in jersey pockets, bike bag, and/or small camelbak/hip pack

Allergies/Medical Issues – Be sure to inform me and your kid's coach of any allergies or medical issues that might impact them during our practices.

Bike in Good Working Order – This is huge. In next week, be sure to **clean and lube** bikes and make sure tires are pumped up and holding air. (Tubeless tires – add fresh sealant!) Then have your kid get on their bike and test out all the gears and the brakes and make sure everything is working properly. If it isn't, be sure to get those issues fixed before practice. Bike shops will get backlogged as spring approaches, so don't wait until the last minute. Check that the wheels are well attached, and the quick releases are well tightened – sometimes they will rattle loose on bike racks. You don't want your kid's wheel falling off while they ride. We are hosting a bike check on March 27, 4-6pm, at Mike's Bikes if you want to have your bike checked out – See TeamSnap for details.

Parent volunteers – We love when parents want to be involved, and we will use parent volunteers to help us have a second adult in each group in addition to a coach. If you are interested in riding along with the juniors, please indicate that when you RSVP in TeamSnap by going to Assignments and signing up as a parent rider. (Note: it will show up as your junior's name and that's okay.) We need to be sensitive to group sizes when we ride and can only have 2 adults per group, so please sign up ahead of time. If you are riding with the team, consider riding with a different group than your kid. Or, if you are riding in your kid's group, we encourage you to not ride right near them. Kids generally ride better without a parent nearby.

Bells – Our returning juniors should have their Timber bells from last year. Please be sure they are properly attached to your bike for practices. For our new juniors, please put a bell on your bike if you have one. We have bells to give out to anyone without a bell. You can choose from the bolt-on or quick release model. If possible, we ask that you pay \$15 for them (MSRP is \$25 <https://www.mtbbell.com/>) via Zelle (303-378-6417) or Venmo (@AvoutRacing, last 4 digits of cell are 8242), with purchase protection turned OFF.

Code of Conduct & 5 Respects – We task ourselves with not just creating great cyclists but also great human beings! With this, we take the Code of Conduct and our 5 Respects seriously and teach these to the juniors throughout our sessions. When you wear the Avout Racing kit, you are an ambassador of Avout Racing. Please be sure to yield properly (hikers and horses always have right of way, followed up uphill riders). When you are on the trail, spread sunshine and rainbows to all the users you encounter with kind words and proper trail etiquette. It is essential to represent Avout Racing and all mountain bikers well! You signed the Code of Conduct at registration, and I encourage you to go over with your junior again here:

<http://avoutracing.com/team-resources/>

Picture in TeamSnap – It would be helpful to the coaches if your kid's profile had a good recent picture of them. Go to the TeamSnap roster, click on their name, click edit and take a picture of your child to add to their profile.

Races – While the Academy program is a race-focused program, races are not mandatory. Signing up for races is separate from our organization. You can sign up for the races that interest you and work in your schedule. Click [HERE](#) for a list of recommended local races to check out (also on the TeamSnap calendar). The yellow races are highly recommended. The blue races are team supported travel races. If you plan to attend any of these races, reach out to Kenzie@avoutracing.com to find out more information and get tapped into team support (and bike transport if needed). We encourage you to map out the races you plan to do, and identify them as A, B, or C races. A Race - FOCUS races, the ones you most care about. You get up to 3 of these per year! B Race - Target race, used as part of the build to your "A" races. C Race - Third tier importance. Weekly races are often "C" level as we train through them vs resting and getting "A Race Ready". Many juniors will have MTB Nationals and Colorado MTB States as A races. Also see attached for a handy Perfecting your Race Process pdf to help you get race ready!

USA Cycling License – All juniors will need a USAC junior race license/membership. Use code TEAM24 for \$10 off a license. You should get a license ASAP before racing any USAC sanctioned races this year (like The Bear on March 30th) so that your points from that race will help you get a better call up to the start line of future races.

<https://memberships.usacycling.org/products/junior>

Strava – If you have a way to track your riding with a bike computer, GPS watch, or phone, you should consider signing up for a free Strava account. Strava is a GPS based training interface that is great keeping track of your riding progress and knowing what your friends are up to also. Be sure to request to join our “club” on Strava.

Phew! I know that was a lot of information. Be sure to read it a couple of times, maybe print it, and share it with your whole family. Also see the pre-season checklist attached to help you get prepared. (Be sure your junior is part of this process at an age-appropriate level. Kids 12+ can

do this on their own! We are teaching some self-sufficiency with their bikes.) As always, please reach out if you have any questions.

Let's ride!

Kenzie Frye

Keep Reading on the Next Page for a Preseason Checklist

Preseason Checklist

- Buy USAC Junior Race License/Membership
- Download TeamSnap to phone
- Clean bike
- Lube bike
- Check that tires are holding air (tubeless tires – add fresh sealant!)
- Tighten bolts, especially wheels
- Go on a ride and make sure bike is shifting and braking properly
- If needed, take bike to a mechanic to fix any of the above issues
- Check fit and condition of helmet, buying a new helmet if necessary
- Accumulate all needed gear:
 - Properly fitted helmet in good condition and less than 5 years old
 - Sunglasses and/or clear/amber glasses (some form of eye protection is required)
 - Bike gloves (preferably full finger)
 - Closed-toe shoes
 - Way to carry water (water bottle or camelbak) + snack (be sure to eat before practice)
 - Tube to fit your bike
 - Pump or 2 cartridges + inflator
 - Multi tool
 - Tire levers
 - Jacket/layers (it gets cold quickly in the evening!)
 - Bike bell (see Bells note below)
 - Needed medications (epipens, inhaler)
 - A way to carry it all – in jersey pockets, bike bag, and/or small camelbak/hip pack
- Contact me with any allergies or medical issues
- Add picture in TeamSnap roster profile
- Ken-Caryl Residents – put tag on bike for Ken-Caryl practices