

TONS OF HOW-TO'S: STARTS, JUMPS & TURNS • STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS: HOW TO RACE BMX!

# NEW RIDER MANUAL



SPECIAL EDITION OF

**PULL**

Your Official Membership Magazine

American Bicycle Association 1645 West Sunrise Blvd. Gilbert, Arizona 85233



# 5 EASY STEPS TO START RACING

by gOrk

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## STEP 1: FIND A TRACK

First things first - you'll need to know where to race. For the majority of kids around America, there's a BMX track within 50 miles of them. With nearly 380 venues all over North America, there's a good chance you'll find one close by.

Click the QR Code here to find out where your nearest track is - or just go to [USABMX.com](http://USABMX.com) or [BMXcanada.org](http://BMXcanada.org) to find one. On pages 10 and 11 we explain all about your typical BMX tracks, and the jumps and obstacles you will encounter.



\* For those unfortunate few, who have to travel further to get to a BMX venue, you can always try getting one started in your city!

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## STEP 2: HAVE BIKE

Obviously, the most important thing you need in order to race is a BMX bike ... yet, sometimes at some tracks, *you won't even need THAT.*

Many tracks these days have their own fleet of loaner bikes - to help first-time riders give the sport a try. This way, you can give BMX Racing a try without the investment on a bike.

When it comes to a bike to race with, there are tons of options out there - from buying a used one from Craigslist, borrowing a bike from your buddy or buying a new or used one from your nearest bike dealer.

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## STEP 3: GEAR UP

There are three basic essentials that you'll need to be wearing before hopping on a BMX track for the first time:

- 1) a helmet,
- 2) long pants, and
- 3) a long-sleeved shirt.

Gloves and goggles are not required, but highly recommended. Other riders also prefer to wear extra padding on their knees and elbows, or a body-armor suit. All of that is up to you or your parent's discretion.

No helmet? Depending on what track you are at, that might not be a problem. The majority of tracks these days have spare "loaner" helmets for brand new riders.



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## STEP 4: PRACTICE

Practice makes perfect, right? That saying has been tested time and time again in BMX racing and it keeps on proving true.

The best way to excel at BMX Racing is to practice. In fact, there are more tracks today running practice sessions than actual races during weekdays.

Some racing techniques can also be practiced at home.



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## STEP 5: GET COACHED

Since BMX is now an Olympic sport, the training and prep aspect of racing has been fine-tuned over the past decade. USA BMX and BMX Canada now have a Coach Certification process and most BMX venues now have their own Home-Track Coach who instructs new riders through the "First 10 Weeks" program.

# BECOME A MEMBER

## FIRST THINGS FIRST - YOU'LL NEED TO BECOME A USA BMX/BMX CANADA MEMBER.

You've probably heard the phrase "Membership has its privileges" - right? Well, that also stands true in the sport of BMX Racing. To race at any of the 380+ BMX tracks all over the USA, Canada and Puerto Rico, you'll need to become a card-carrying member. Those "privileges" we mentioned? Upon joining as a full member, you'll begin to receive the full-color PULL Magazine 10-times a year, you'll get a plastic Membership card, and from your first-race on, you'll begin to tally up points toward a District ranking in your State.

**JOINING:** You can sign up today for your membership card - either online or at your local track. By doing so, you'll join a huge family of over 70,000 BMX riders and racers across North America who have already discovered the thrill of USA BMX and BMX Canada!

**TRIAL MEMBERSHIP:** Are you a little unsure? No problem. We have a "Try it before you buy it" policy. No membership is required for your first day on the track (although you will need a parent or guardian to sign a One-Day Membership granting permission for you to ride). Or you can choose a 30-day Temporary Membership that, once you've fallen helmet-over-heels for this exciting sport, you can easily convert into a Full Membership and experience all the associated benefits and privileges. Until your new membership card arrives from USA BMX/BMX Canada, you will be given a temporary receipt as proof of membership and number plate. This is your license to ride and race at any one of the 380-plus sanctioned racetracks in the USA, Canada and Puerto Rico. Learn that 8-digit number. It'll stick with you throughout your entire BMX career.

**YOUR MEMBERSHIP CARD:** Your serial number is located on the bottom left hand corner of your card. The last three digits of the serial number will be the number you run on your bike's number plate during the first calendar year of your racing career. For example - if your membership

number is 12345678 - then you would run #678 until you earn a new ranking. How do you do earn a new ranking? You race, of course!

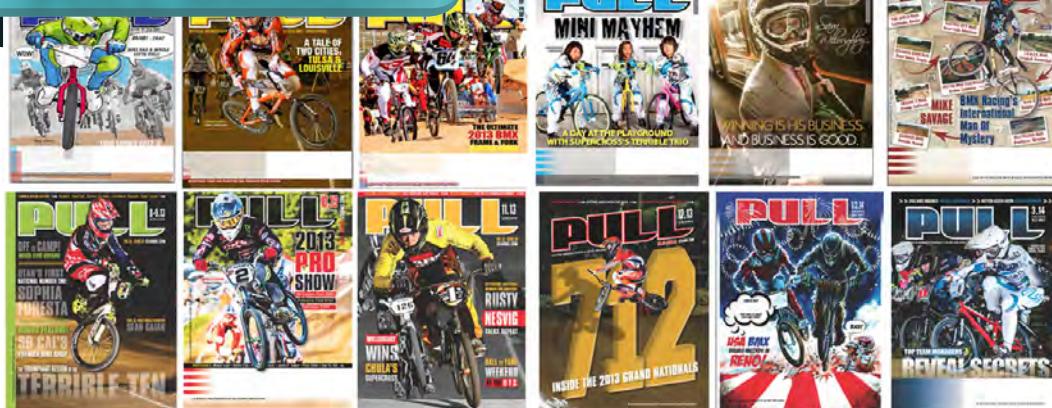
As a full member, you earn points for every race in which you compete. The better you finish, the more often you race, the more points you earn. Points are tallied throughout the year and, at the end of the season, you'll be ranked according to how you finish—in your district, in your state or even in the nation! This ranking will proudly be displayed as your bike number the following season. Of course, it's everyone's goal to be ranked No.1.



Excited yet? We bet you are! Because like our members and race fans around the World, we were kids who also loved to ride and race BMX! We know what it's like to feel the speed down the first straight, the freedom of skying that double-jump and the thrill of crossing the finish line first. To start experiencing it all for yourself, keep on reading.

Allow us to be the first to welcome you to the original action sport, the hot-test Olympic action sport and the world's largest sanctioning body for BMX in the World - USA BMX and BMX Canada!

## MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT #1: PULL MAGAZINE



As a full member of USA BMX or BMX Canada, you will receive an issue of PULL magazine 10 times a year.

Each edition includes amazing photos, race coverage, interviews with the fastest BMX racers on the planet, and all of the info you need to know about upcoming races - plus current District and National point standings!

# Chapter 1

# BE EQUIPPED

## BMX BIKE TERMINOLOGY:

### THE WHEELSET

1. Front Hub
2. Rear Hub
3. Rims
4. Spokes
5. Tires
6. Valve Stems

### THE CHASIS

1. Head Tube
2. Front Triangle
3. Top Tube
4. Down Tube
5. Seat Tube
6. Rear Triangle
7. Seat Stays
8. Chain Stays
9. Rear Dropouts
10. Fork

### THE COCKPIT

1. Handlebar
2. Grips
3. Brake Lever
4. Brake
5. Brake Cable
6. Stem
7. Headset
8. Seat
9. Seat Post
10. Seat Clamp
11. Number Plate



# THE BIKE

BMX bikes come in two wheel sizes - 20" and 24", and have a wide range of frame sizes to fit everybody - from little toddlers up to adults.

While it may have a single gear, it's still plenty FAST! It's a race bike, after all, and it'll haul as fast as your legs and lungs can crank it!

What started with the Schwinn Stingray back in 1963, was soon modified by kids in the early 70's - adding raised handlebars and knobby tires, and dumping the stock banana seat. Over the past four decades, those heavy, chopped-up Stingrays evolved into today's BMX race bikes; which are now engineered to be quicker out of the gate, faster to accelerate and more nimble over the obstacles and jumps.

For a complete history of the BMX bike and of the many BMX brands that have come and gone, or still live to this day, check out **THE BIKE** at USABMX.com or BMXCanada.org. What you'll discover is a classic story of garage innovation and invention—from the first lightweight chromoly frames to today's most advanced frames, with their CNC'ed extrusions and composites of aluminum, titanium and carbon fiber.



What is it that really makes a BMX bike a "race bike"? It's all in the frame geometry, materials and wheel size. BMX bikes are classified as either 20-inch wheeled "class" bikes or 24-inch wheeled "cruiser" bikes. There's also a big difference between "freestyle" bikes and "race" bikes - even though both are generically referred to as a "BMX" bike. Race bikes are much lighter than their heavy-duty brothers who are ridden on dirt trails, ramps and skateparks. But don't get us wrong - you can race ANY bike you have. To race a freestyle bike, you'll just need to remove the axle-pegs and ensure that it meets all safety requirements.

Of course, BMX racers come in all ages and sizes - thus, you'll find a variety of different sized race bikes. From the length of the frame to the width of the tires, from the

height of the handlebars to the length of the cranks, a BMX race bike should be sized according to each individual's height and weight.

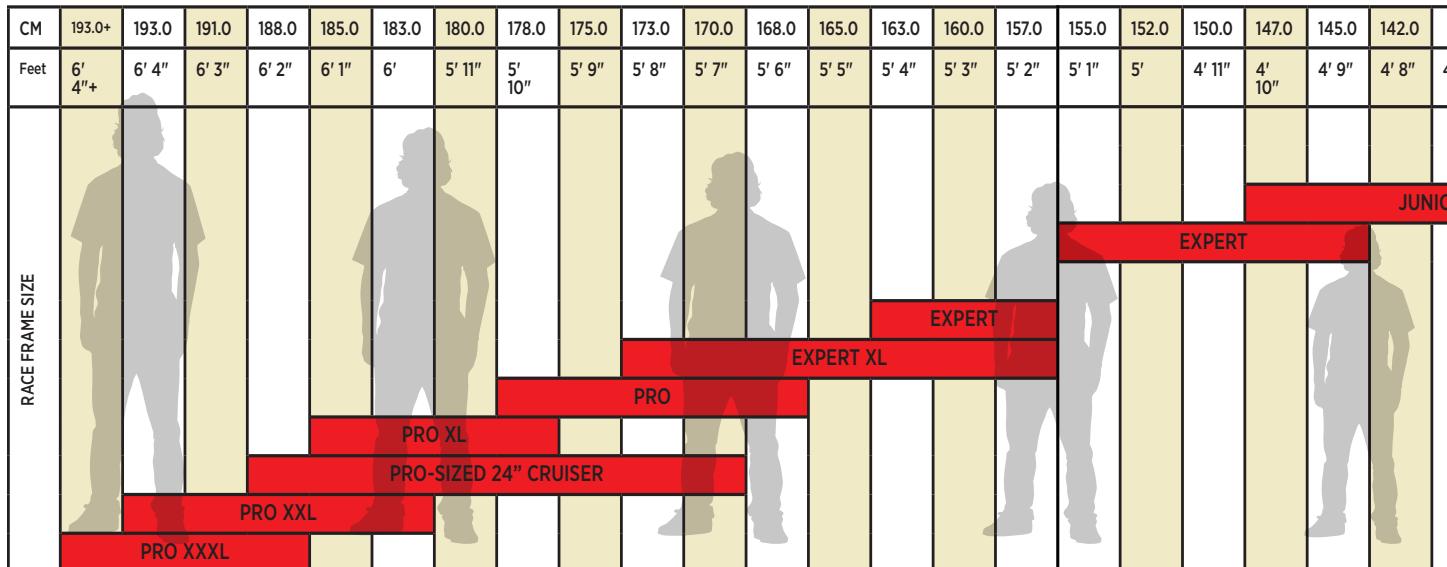
The size specifications for BMX race bikes can be so exacting, in fact, that the most dedicated BMX bike builders offer a complete line-up of frames and/or complete bikes - from Micros, Minis, Juniors and Experts to Pros, Pro XL's, XXL's and even XXXL's! With frame geometry and component mix driving both performance and cost, your local bike shop can help you find the perfect bike that'll fit you and your pocketbook. Complete BMX race bikes will vary in price - all depending on the quality, material and level of equipment. As your skills improve, you may want to upgrade the parts on your bike accordingly.

The fact is: it's always best to start on the bike you're most used to riding, with a possible few safety modifications. Perhaps after you've won a few races, or even advanced from the Novice to the Intermediate class, then it might be time to start dreaming of that gleaming new race bike.

Your bike should pass "Bike Inspection" before going on the track. Make sure all bolts as well as your chain are tight. If your bike has a kickstand, chain guard, reflector brackets, fenders or freestyle pegs, they will need to be removed for on-track safety purposes. Also check your grips and make sure that the handlebar ends are covered. Three pads covering the cross bar, stem and frame top tube are recommended.

## WHICH SIZE OF BIKE DO I NEED?

FIND YOUR HEIGHT: This chart - courtesy of Redline Bicycles, is intended as a rough guideline only. We strongly recommend getting fitted by your local Bicycle dealer.



# THE GEAR

**FACT: BMX racing is NOT any more dangerous than other "traditional" youth sports.**

In fact, statistics have shown that kids in traditional (less “extreme”) sports such as basketball, football, baseball and soccer actually suffer more injuries on average than kids who race BMX. The reason why, perhaps, is that USA BMX / BMX Canada requires protective gear—head to toe.

Now this doesn't mean you need to look like a factory racer in pro riding gear or have a big-name sponsor with a cool looking uniform to try BMX racing for the first time. (That will come later.) To start racing, all that is required are the basics—long pants, a long sleeve shirt, enclosed shoes, and any approved bicycle helmet. A full-face helmet and gloves are recommended but not mandatory—but by all means, wear 'em if you have 'em.

*“What if I don’t have a helmet?”* Don’t let that stop you from trying BMX. Many tracks have helmets to loan for new riders. If not, most everybody knows someone who has a helmet you can borrow. To purchase one, check out your local bike shop or neighborhood garage sales, or check out THE GEAR page on [USABMX.com](http://USABMX.com) / [BMXCanada.org](http://BMXCanada.org).

# PUSH BIKES

**EVEN 2, 3, 4 AND 5 YEAR OLDS CAN RACE!** You've seen

the two-wheel "balance" bicycles with no pedals, right? They are made by all bike brands and sold in shops or online. As long as it has a maximum 12" tire diameter, USA BMX / BMX Canada tracks will race 'em - for the youngest BMX riders: ages 2 thru 5.



## THE BASICS:

**HELMET:** Any half-shell, open face or full-face helmet with a permanent strap attached will do. But obviously you will want a quality skid-lid to protect the most important part of your body—your brain. It's been said that you should buy a cheap helmet, if you think you've got a \$30 brain.



#### **LONG PANTS:**

**LONG PANTS**  
It is recommended that riders wear long pants, jeans or racing pants (although loose fitting shorts are permitted when used in conjunction with a one-piece knee and shin guard with a rigid surface).



**LONG SLEEVED SHIRT:** You can get

away with wearing a short sleeve shirt with elbow pads, but most BMX racers prefer long sleeve shirts or a sweatshirt. Hoodies are OK.



**SHOES:** Any type of enclosed soft sole, gym shoe that covers the toes will do. Boots are not recommended, but flat and grippy Skater-type soles - like Vans, are. Clipless shoes and pedals can be used by riders once they turn Intermediate.



Today's BMX tracks are nothing like the rough and rocky tracks your dad or grandfather rode "back in the day."

# Chapter 2

# Tracks

No matter what your age, when you get to the top of any BMX starting hill, you can't help but feel a huge surge of adrenaline!

There's something ultra cool about a BMX track. Something that will thrill everyone who rolls through staging, stands atop the start hill and slides in to one of the eight lanes in the gate. Because it is here, on the BMX track, where YOU take the controls.

While in football, basketball, baseball or soccer - every field of play is identical, you'll soon discover that BMX is very different. While every course has a starting gate and a finish line, that's where any similarity begins and ends.

## No two BMX tracks will ever be identical.

The lengths of tracks will vary as much as the size and arrangement of its obstacles. Even the height and size of the starting hill will vary. Some tracks are fairly flat while others have faster down-hill sections. Some shorter tracks can be only 900 feet long while others may be as long as 1,300 feet. Racing on a variety of courses can become one of the most fun aspects in BMX competition.

Today's BMX tracks are thoughtfully designed and meticulously groomed race courses.

Let's take a lap:



## TRACK TERMINOLOGY:

# OBSTACLES

No two BMX tracks are alike, but many of the obstacles are similar to each other. Here are some features and jumps that you might encounter:

### TRACK TERMS:

There are tracks in the shape of an "M" and tracks in the shape of a "W". There are tracks in the shape of an "S" inside another "S" and tracks in the shape of a "U" inside a "U".

No matter how you spell it, different BMX tracks always keep the ride fresh, fun and exciting!



**STAGING:** aka the "back of the hill." Where racers line up in their "moto" waiting for their shot at a little BMX glory.



**THE GATE:** 24 feet and 8 lanes wide. Racers start from their assigned gate slot, get ready and watch for the green light to go!



**START HILL:** Some are big and tall, while others may be short and flat. No matter what the size or height, each hill will get you up to speed in a hurry. The flat starts favor the strength riders, while the steeper starting hills are preferred by the more-skilled gate-snappers.



**THE STRAIGHTS:** It's everything between the turns. It would be a straight line to the winner's circle if it weren't for all of the following obstacles along the way.



**BERM:** The banked turns in BMX are called "berms." And like everything else in this sport, they come in all shapes, sizes and degrees. Some are big 180's, others are quick 90's, while some may be long, wide sweepers. Taking the fastest line around can move you from almost last to fast, and get you out front with extra momentum.



**DOUBLE:** This is the classic BMX jump. Two hills spaced just enough apart, slightly filled in the middle, leaving you the option to "air it out" or manual/roll through it. You can decide the fastest line to success.



**STEP-UP:** A short hill followed immediately by a taller hill is called a "step." Jump up to jump out front!



**STEP-DOWN:** A tall hill followed immediately by a smaller hill. Push down to push your speed!



**ROLLER:** A small hill. But they can come at you one, two, three, four at a time or more.



**RHYTHM SECTION:** Like the name says. This combination of jumps isn't about size but rather all about timing and "flow".



**TABLE TOP:** It's flat on the top - like a table. Get it? Table top jumps are a safe obstacle for those first learning to catch air. Unlike jumping the doubles, the table top obstacle provides a bit more safety cushion, in case you come up short. Once you learn how to really fly, catchin' air on these can be a BLAST! Go ahead - get stylish.



**FINISH LINE:** Where the fast times and fun ends. ...that is, until you do it again. Don't stop now; get back up to the top of the hill!

# GLOSSARY: HOW TO SPEAK BMX



**A-PRO:** Entry level of Professional competition. You stay “single-A” until you’ve earned enough money to move up to...

**AA-PRO:** The highest level of Professional BMX competition.

**AMATEUR:** Any non-Pro rider. An amateur rider may not compete for a cash award.

**BALANCE BICYCLE:** A very small 2-wheeled bicycle with no pedals.

**BONUS POINTS:** District points available at national events from quarter and semi-main events.

**CHUTES:** At bigger races and some tracks, there are 10 chutes in staging. The last number of your moto determines what Chute you go in to (example: Motos No.3, 13 and 23 go in to Chute 3).

**CLASSIFICATION:** Skill level at which a rider competes.

**CRUISER:** Any bicycle with at least 24" wheel diameters.

**DQ'd (DISQUALIFIED):** To officially move a rider to last as a result of any rule infraction.

**DISTRICT:** Geographic region where riders reside and compete locally for ranking.

**DISTRICT POINTS:** Earned at all races with the purpose of ranking riders in each district.

**DNR:** Designation on a motsheet that a rider “did not race” in any particular event.

**DNS:** Designation on a motsheet that a rider “did not start” in any particular moto or main.

**EARNED NUMBER:** The ranking within a given class and/or district at the end of the points season.

**ENTRY FEE:** Paid to register for any sanctioned USA BMX race.

**EXPERT:** Highest level of amateur competition.

**FINISH POINTS:** District or national points earned for respective finishes in any main event.

**FOUL:** Any flagrant or malicious move during competition resulting in a disqualification.

**GIRL:** The highest level of amateur female competition.

**GIRL CRUISER:** Girl racers competing on cruiser bicycles.

**GRAND NATIONAL (aka “GRANDS”):** Finale to the national series held every year on Thanksgiving weekend.

**HELMET:** Important item necessary for head protection.

**HOLESHT:** Term used to describe rider that jumps to an early lead at the beginning of a race.

**INTERMEDIATE:** Class for riders to hone their skills before turning expert.

**LANE:** Position 1 thru 8 on the starting gate.

**LOCAL RACE:** Any single points race at any sanctioned track.

**MAIN EVENT:** Final class race, after all qualifying has taken place, to determine class placing.

**MANUAL:** The skill of riding the bike on the back wheel (like a coasting wheelie).

**MEMBERSHIP RECEIPT:** Returned portion of a membership form providing proof of membership.

**MIXED OPEN:** An open class that will consist of only Novice, Intermediate and Girl riders.

**MOTO:** a) One complete round of qualifiers. b) Any rider's specific race.

**MOTO NUMBER:** Number corresponding with any specific race (moto).

**MOTO SHEET:** Paperwork displaying the day's races in moto number order.

**MOTO BOARD:** Where the moto sheets are posted for viewing by the racers.

**MULTI-POINT RACE:** Any race offering more than single district points.

**NAG (aka NATIONAL AGE GROUP):** National points ranking by a specific age only.

**NATIONAL EVENT:** Any of the 30 events held across the country from January to November. These events offer both national ranking points and triple district points. Refer to 2015 USA BMX National Schedule for locations and dates.

**NATIONAL POINTS:** Earned at nationals towards national rankings in age and overall categories.

**NATIONAL STANDING:** National points ranking of all ages together.

**NOVICE:** New rider to the sport - boy or girl.

**NUMBER PLATE:** Displays riders earned or temporary number for identification purposes.

**OPEN:** An open class that will consist of only Expert riders.

**OUT OF CLASS:** Any rider not competing in his/her correct class.

**PRO-AM OPEN:** An open class combining Pro riders and amateurs.

**PRO (short for “PROFESSIONAL”):** Any rider who competes for a cash prize.

**PRO PURSE:** Pro prize money for the day.

**PROTEST:** Complaint lodged with any official regarding an alleged violation in a specific race.

**PULL:** a) Having a lot of power - as in “pulling” away from the pack. b) The official member magazine of USA BMX.

**QUALIFYING SYSTEM:** The method by which riders are transferred from motos into the main event.

**QUARTER MAIN:** An additional qualifying race for classes with multiple groups.

**RANDOM START:** The modern type of starting cadence that will drop the gate randomly each time; at any time between 1 to 5 seconds.

**RECLASSIFICATION:** Moving a rider back in classification (such as from Expert down to Intermediate, or Pro down to Expert).

**SANDBAGGER:** Nickname for a rider who is obviously holding back from winning, in order to not move up to the next skill class.

**SANDBAGGING:** Intentionally allowing other rider(s) to pass during a main event or within any round of a total points race so as not to gain wins towards classification advancement.

**SAVER STAMPS:** Alternative track award having cash value towards items at redemption centers.

**SEMI MAIN:** An additional qualifying race for classes with multiple groups, (follows quarters.)

**SERIAL NUMBER:** Located at the bottom left of a membership card and is that rider's official identification.

**SINGLE POINTS RACE:** Local race in which single points are awarded.

**STAGING AREA:** Where motos (races) are called to the starting hill.

**STARTING GATE:** Platformed area with a hinged portion, which drops to begin each race.

**STATE/PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIP RACE (SCR):** Required event within each State/Provincial Championship Series.

**STATE/PROVINCIAL POINTS:** Points earned towards an overall state/provincial championship series title.

**TABLE TOP:** a) A type of obstacle on the track, which is flat on the top.  
b) A jumping style, where you lay the bike flat in the air. c) Surface of a table.

**TOTAL POINTS:** The type of race system where riders compete in all three rounds and add up their finishes to determine the overall results.

**TRACK DIRECTOR:** Fulltime USA BMX/ BMX Canada staff member who is the contact for track operators and agents.

**TRACK OFFICIAL:** The designated Official at the races who watches for rules infractions and has the power to DQ riders for illegal action on the track.

**TRACK OPERATOR:** Independent owner or co-owner/operator of a USA BMX/ BMX Canada sanctioned racetrack.

**TRANSFER:** The type of race system where riders qualify out straight to the main.

# Chapter 3

# PRACTICE

## FIRST UP: FUN

YOUR FIRST TIME at the track can be a little bit intimidating. ...sort of like *the first day of school.* But with the following tips, your first BMX experience should be a good one! Enjoy.



Most tracks hold regular “practice only” sessions (no racing). This is open to riders of all ages and abilities who want to develop their skills and “dial in” the track. For first-timers, Practice Day can be the easiest to get into the swing of things. Many tracks will pair you up with a “tutor” - who will take you around and explain the way things work, until you are comfortable to go around on your own.

If practice is crowded, some tracks will split their practice into age groups (such as 12 & Under and 13 & Over). Race day practice is usually held 1 to 2 hours before the day’s event and as such, this practice/registration time is known the BMX world over as “sign-ups”. When a track advertises “5:00pm - 7:00pm sign-ups, racing ASAP,” that translates to, “we will be open for practice and registration for racing between 5 and 7pm, with racing to begin as soon as possible, (upon the posting of the day’s races), after 7:00pm.

In addition to your USA BMX/BMX Canada membership fee, every track charges a daily fee for practice and racing. While some tracks must charge more and others can charge less, the average is around \$5.00 for practice and \$10.00 for racing. It’s also important to know that on a race day most tracks do not require you to sign-up to race in order to practice. Should you decide to race, however, (something many first timers do), you can usually do so by paying the practice/race fee difference before the close of sign-ups and posting of the day’s races.



# FIRST LOOK

So, now you're ready for your first lap! You've got your bike dialed, your gear buckled and your membership signed. We've even talked BMX track basics. But before you head up to the start hill, let's first take a moment to scope out the track.

**GOOD ADVICE:** *Watch a few practice laps before going around, and pay close attention to the more advanced riders, to see what they do. Take mental notes of how they handle the turns, when they pedal and when they don't. Understand that you probably won't be jumping like they do - that will come in time.*  
Every BMX racer can remember his or her first day at the track and many will be happy and enthusiastic to share their knowledge. All you really need to know are these few basic safety rules:

- **Don't ride the wrong way!**
- **Don't stop on the track!**
- **Don't cut (ride across) the track!**
- **Always wear a helmet when on the track!**

And parents—this is a big one—should your rider fall down, DO NOT run onto the track, (as much as your instincts tell you to)! A track official will assist them and call to you if you are needed.

Although they are all part of the USA BMX/BMX Canada family of tracks, just as every track design is different, every track operation is also a little different and has their own set of do's and don'ts. Still, all are built and maintained for your enjoyment and safety and the number one rule they all have in common is to HAVE FUN! So, NOW that you're really ready. Let's ride!

Sure, the starting gate can be loud and intimidating to some, but up here on the gate, with your front wheel pressed against it, there's very little to worry about. It drops and you go. As well, a track official or gate starter will always be on hand to direct you while the gate is in operation. Still, if you're initially uncomfortable on the starting gate, simply alert the gate starter that you wish to roll the gate after it drops by calling out, "ROLLING!"



Your first few laps around the track should be slow. Take it easy. By all means, don't go all-out on your first lap! Take time to familiarize yourself with the course so that you know what jumps are coming up and what it feels like to go over them. It will be totally different once you take the track at faster speeds. Coming up, we'll give you helpful hints and race tips on how to do gate starts, how to take turns and what to do over jumps and rhythm sections. As you'll soon find out, a good start can be the difference between first and eighth, so we'd suggest working on your gates as much as possible. And remember that all-so-true saying, "Practice makes perfect."

## Practice, practice, and practice!

### BMX 101: Attend a BMX Clinic

Another smart idea for any BMX rider - whether they are brand new or a seasoned Expert, is to take advantage of the many BMX Clinics and camps that are available.

Many USA BMX/ BMX Canada tracks now offer the FIRST 10 WEEKS (F10W) coaching

program, which focuses on brand new riders. Through these classes, a certified BMX coach will systematically guide riders through setting goals, learning new skills, and giving them the guidance and confidence to progress in BMX. It is designed to help navigate Novices and Intermediates.

In addition to the F10W program, there are pros and teams who travel from track to track all year long, teaching riders everything they need to know in order to improve their BMX racing skills.

Many USA BMX / BMX Canada tracks have a local coach who puts on beginner or advanced classes throughout the week, while other tracks rely on the traveling teams or pros to stop by during their Summer Tour.

During the summer, there are also a number of BMX Summer Camps that you can attend from Supercamp's or Ohio Dreams. Check USABMX.com / BMXCanada.org or PULL Magazine for details, dates and locations.

**IMPORTANT SAFETY TIP:** Always be sure to establish eye contact with the gate starter before rolling out of the gate - making sure that your intention to roll out of the gate, before it is lifted, has been heard.



# HIGH-LOW HIGH-LOW

## PRO ADVICE FOR NEW RIDERS

**"BMX can take years to master. Don't be disheartened or upset if you struggle with it on your first few times out. Just keep at it and you'll get the hang of it!"**

--Connor Fields - member of the 2012 U.S. Olympic team



**"When jumping - start out small and work on table tops, then just keep trying bigger and more complicated jumps. I started off slow and had to work extremely hard to get where I am now."**

--Two-time No.1 Amateur in USA BMX,  
Josh Klatman - from Washington.

**"When just starting out I'd say get in a lot of track time. You can never have too much practice. Don't be that guy crashing in first place. Get the basic bike handling skills first. I'm STILL working hard to become faster and I've been racing for 15 years. You are never too fast! Always train hard."**

--AA-pro and Olympic hopeful Barry Nobles, from Alabama.



**"BMX will teach you many life lessons. It will teach you to work hard and never give up. You will be surprised how many new things you will learn about yourself as an athlete and also as a person. But let's not forget to have fun because there is no better way to learn while having fun!"**

--Two-time Olympic Gold medalist, Maris Strombergs

**"A typical week for me usually consists of going to school, coming home and doing whatever training I have on my schedule next is homework and then finally bed."**

--Three-time National No.1 Girl Kelsey VanOgle, who also has won 14 NAG No.1 plates and four World Championships.



**"Leave your emotions at the door - it's more fun that way."**

--Former No.1 Pro Marc Willers, from New Zealand.



**"Ride as much as you can, and watch others ride as much as you ride. Remember a BMX track is full of opportunities and challenges so explore as many as you can ...and enjoy the ride!"**

--Three-time AA Pro and 2012 Olympic silver medalist Sam Willoughby

**"Know your limits and always have fun!"**

--Former World Champion Dale Holmes.



**"This is a 'go-at-your-own-pace' kind of sport, so you'll never be forced to do something you're not ready for, or don't want to do. It's all about having fun on the track, and being part of a positive community environment with your family."**

--Alise Post, member of the 2012 U.S. Olympic team and multi-time Elite Women Champion

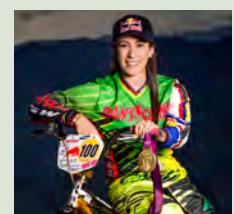
**"Before getting out on the track, watch other riders to see exactly how they are attacking the jumps. I practiced a long time before I actually started racing. However, only by racing faster riders will you become better."**

--former World Champion and U.S. Olympic bronze medalist from 2008 - Donny Robinson.



**"Riding trails helps me a lot with racing because it teaches me how to pump down back sides and flow with my bike better. That is definitely the most fun part of my training."**

--2013 No.1 Girl Cruiser rider Jordie Scott, from Las Vegas.



**"Always remember how much fun it is riding your bike. ...and try to never lose that feeling."**

--Super stylish pro racer Riley Stair, from Northern California

**"Take it slow at first, let it come to you. Don't expect to be super fast on your first lap - that comes with time."**

--Colorado's Collin Hudson, a multi-time World Champion.

**"Just enjoy it, give more than your 100% and follow your dreams even if they call you crazy ...have huge dreams, believe that you can achieve them, work hard, enjoy the process and then it will be easy."**

--2012 Olympic Gold medalist Mariana Pajon

# Chapter 4

# A SPORT FOR ALL AGES

Riding a BMX track is super fun, no doubt. But racing BMX will get you PUMPED!

While at first you may just want to ride for fun, at some point—likely sooner, than later—you will feel the urge to race. Because let's face it—there's nothing more fun than winning! And that's because winning doesn't come easy, especially in a sport as challenging as BMX racing. It takes skill. Real skill. Which is why it's not unusual to see a younger expert rider racing away from an older novice rider. Don't be discouraged if this happens to you. Just keep working at it and you, too, will soon be schooling the older "novices"!

Until then, the good news is that you won't have to race that expert kid; since the USA BMX/BMX Canada competition structure fairly matches riders of the same age and proficiency level. From two years old to the over-60 set, from Novice to Intermediate to Expert, there's an age and classification for everyone!

In short, USA BMX/BMX Canada uses four criteria to determine a racer's classification for competition—age, gender, proficiency or skill level, and wheel size. Times may exist, however, when there aren't enough entrants to form your class. To address this, USA BMX/BMX Canada rules for race or "moto" building are very specific to ensure as fair a match up as possible of riders at a given event. And as every USA BMX and BMX Canada sanctioned racetrack utilizes the same software to build motos, we can ensure fair competition across the "moto-board" and across the country—wherever you may choose to race.



**30+**

Number of National events held all around the country - beginning in January and concluding at the Grandnationals in Tulsa, OK over Thanksgiving's 4-Day weekend.

**380+**

Approximate number of BMX tracks all over the Country. Every year, more tracks are built and open up. USA BMX and BMX Canada are always looking to open new facilities in North America.

**10**

Number of issues for PULL magazine that you will receive with your membership each year. The January/February and November/December issues are combined.

**70,000**

Approximate number of BMX racers in the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico. As new riders discover the sport and old riders retire, the average number will always fluctuate.

**4**

Number of skill levels in BMX Racing. You first start off as a Novice, work your way up to Intermediate - and then move up to Expert, before going Pro.

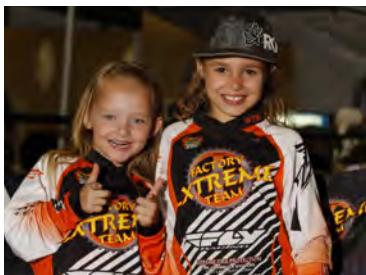
# CLASSIFICATIONS

Let's start where everyone begins - as a brand-new Novice racer:



**NOVICE:** Everyone—male and female—begins here. In other words—this is the class for beginners. True beginners. We're so strongly committed to protecting the Novice class, in fact, a rider can never reclassify to Novice

upon advancement. What's it take to advance? Check the latest rulebook (available in print or online) for the specific number of wins it takes to move up to Intermediate or Girl.



**GIRL:** This is the highest proficiency level in the sport for amateur girls - and is essentially the "Expert" class for the ladies. Recently

due to BMX becoming an Olympic Sport, the growth of the Girls classes has grown phenomenally.

**INTERMEDIATE:** This is the mid-level of competition for the boys where riders really begin to develop their skills. The "Inter"

classes are also usually big classes, and for good reason—while it's not too difficult to progress up and into the class, it's much harder to progress up and out of the class. Check the Rulebook for the number of wins it takes to get bumped up to Expert.



**EXPERT:** This is the ultimate amateur ranking for amateur boys racing BMX. Plain and simple, when you achieve this classification you've proven yourself on the race track, demonstrating through your speed and skill that you are truly an Expert BMX racer!



**CRUISER:** Remember us saying

there were two bike categories - based on wheel size/diameter? The larger 24" wheeled BMX bikes are called cruisers. The standard 20" bikes are the required size for all Novice, Intermediate, Girl and Expert competition, while the 24" or larger bikes are the required size for all Cruiser competition. While the cruiser classes, like the 20" classes, are age and gender based, they are not divided into the novice, intermediate or expert proficiency levels. All for one, one for all!



In the 24" Cruiser classes, there are age divisions for kids, as well as their moms and dads! Heck, even some

grandparents are doing it. It's very common these days to see original BMX racers from the 70's and 80's bringing their families to the races to enjoy the same sport they did as a kid. And, after watching their son or daughter race, it doesn't take long before the parents "get the itch" to try BMX racing again.

**PRO:** Want to be THE BEST in BMX Racing?

Once you are 17 years old, and hold an expert ranking, boys and girls have the option to turn Professional. When you first turn pro, men are called A-pros (also referred to as "single-A"). Refer to the rulebook on the how to turn from A pro to AA pro. Becoming the National No.1 Pro in USA BMX is the ultimate of all Championships - and being a Top-10 AA-pro can earn you a pretty decent living, between winnings and sponsorship salaries.



6

To earn a National or NAG number, USA BMX will count your best 6 scores from any National event - plus your Grands finish.

70+

Approximate number of Gold Cup races held every year. Get in that first "best score" at a Gold Cup to chase down that No.1 plate and custom Gold Cup Champion jacket. Plates are also awarded to No.2 & 3.

2

In order to become a Gold Cup Champion, you need to race at least 2 local Gold Cup events. Your 2 best finishes will be counted, along with your finishes from Saturday and Sunday at the Gold Cup Finals, to determine who earns the No.1 plate.

20&24

There are two wheel sizes in BMX Racing - the standard 20-inch wheel, and then the larger 24-inch "Cruisers." Your USA BMX membership license allows you to race either size of bike - or both, if you prefer.

#1

Becoming No.1 in BMX is the dream of all riders - whether it be No.1 District, Gold Cup, State, ROC, National or NAG No.1. Everybody wants to hang that No.1 plate on their bars.

# Chapter 5

# SIGN UPS



It's race day - and one of the first things you'll want to do before practicing is Sign Up to race!

Signing up for a BMX race is easy. Earlier, we described the "sign ups" period as that practice time before the day's race begins. "sign ups" also refers to the track office where you need to check in upon arrival. It's here where you can become a USA BMX/BMX Canada member or renew your membership, as well as register to practice and/or race.

**GOOD ADVICE:** Always sign-in before riding onto the track; either for practice and/or race. If you hear the announcer say "Last Call" for sign ups, or worse yet - "sign ups are closed" - and you haven't taken care of business yet, you might not be able to compete!

While many USA BMX or BMX Canada tracks these days will register you directly on their computer, some still use this simple sign up form - on which you will need to fill out the following:

**AGE:** How old are you this day?

USA BMX  
THE AMERICAN CYCLE ASSOCIATION

**SIGN-UP FORM**  
Please Print

Fill this form out completely and take it and your USA BMX card to the cashier. It must be validated by the cashier.  
You must fill out one form for each class, such as one for 14x and one for 12-14 open.

Age: 13 Class: Novice Hometown: Mesa, AZ.

Serial Number: AZ-01-1234

Number on number plate: 434

Name: NOAH FOOTER

Date of birth: 11-14-99 Card expiration: 1-1-19

Sponsor: MOM & DAD

**NAME:** Simply write your name in the slot. Feel free to include a cool "nickname" if you have one. If not, don't worry—you'll likely be given one soon by the announcer.

**BIRTHDATE:**

When were you born?



## Registration



**CLASS:** If you're a beginner, write in "Novice." Otherwise, you'll write in "Intermediate", "Expert", "Girls", "Cruiser" or "Girl Cruiser"

**HOMETOWN:**  
Where are you from?

**SERIAL NUMBER:**  
This is the eight digit number assigned to you when you purchase a membership.

**EXPIRATION:**  
You can find this info on your USA BMX card. If you don't have it, don't fret.

**SPONSOR:** Don't worry if you don't have a sponsor yet. Almost everybody starts off riding for "Mom & Dad."

# Chapter 6

# MOTO SHEETS

When they announce "Motos are posted!" get ready for the BMX stampede.

It's the call from the announcer that everyone is waiting for: "**Motos are posted!**" Suddenly, everyone drops what they are doing and crowds around the moto boards to see when and who they will be racing. The moto sheets will also tell you how many riders are transferring to the main, and what gate positions you have.

All of this is vital information that you'll need to know - and we're going to break it down for you, so you can read a moto sheet.

Once you've shuffled your way to the moto boards and elbowed your way to the front, let us explain what everything means on the Moto Sheet:

USA BMX		
Local Race - BMXVille, AZ		
USA BMX National Race		
TRACK	1918	CLASS 19-27 Expert
GROUPS	2	QUALIFIERS 2 Combine 4 To Main
Moto #	7	DATE 07/13/2015 TIME 7:00 PM RIDERS 9 Posting/Stage
PLATE #	TYPE	RIDER NAME
110	CA10	MARQUISE MONTGOMERY (CA101935)
392	CA04	BRANDON CATO (CA044921)
17	NV01	TAS SLAVIN (NV011017)
834	UT01	ROBERT PATTERSON (UT013709)
9	SC01	MATT CALVIN (SC011645)
Moto #	8	
PLATE #	TYPE	RIDER NAME
787	TX13	CHRIS LUNA (TX132789B)
533	GA01	CHANDLER DENTON (GA012767)
49	WA01	ANTHONY PATE (WA011537)
494	OH01	JARRED (DOC) JOHNSON (OH013899)

**BIKE #:** Make sure the number on your bike matches the plate number on the moto sheet. This is important for 2 reasons: 1. If your number is wrong, you might not get scored at the finishline (they won't know who you are), and 2. The announcers use this number to ID you when announcing. ...and everybody wants to hear their name announced correctly, right?



**AGE-CLASS & GROUPS:** The first thing you'll need to find in this long row of Moto sheets, is YOUR race. Finding your age and class is easy - it is located at the top center of each moto sheet.

**NAME & COMPETITION:** Next step will be finding your name among the list. Those riders listed above or below your name are who you'll be racing today.

## MOTO NUMBER:

**QUALIFIERS:** This tells you how many riders will be going to the main, and how many will qualify out in each round. In this case, first round is "taking 2" and then these two motos will combine, and transfer the top 4 to the final.

**SERIAL #:** This column is where your membership number is listed. To ensure you get your earned points, always make sure this membership number is correct.

## LANE ASSIGNMENT:

**TOTAL RIDERS:** These 3 numbers represent which lane you will start from in each of your qualifying rounds.

**LANES IN THE MAIN:** Want to know what lane you'll get if you make the main? This column will be the lanes for the 8 main makers - filled out in order, as each rider transfers out. The first person to transfer out of moto #7 will get lane 6, so on and so forth.

# YOU'VE GOT QUESTIONS. WE'VE GOT THE ANSWERS RIGHT HERE.

"If I win, why don't I get to race my 2nd moto?"

"How do I trophy?"

"What's the Transfer System?"

"How do I make the main?"

"Total Points? What does that mean?"

## TRANSFER SYSTEM

In BMX racing, the goal is to make it to the main event. That's where the trophies are awarded and points earned. To get to the main event, you've got two or three chances to qualify. These rounds of qualifying are called "motos." In sanctioned races, the method used in qualifying is called the "Transfer System."

It is designed to reward the winner, (by transferring him/her to the main event), while giving the remaining racers an equal chance at winning the next moto.

The simplest way to describe the Transfer System is that "one rider will not transfer." (NOTE: In the case of 10 or more riders, more than one rider will not transfer.) Simply put, if there are 5 riders in the motos, one will not transfer and 4 will make it to the big show.

When your race is posted, the "transfer" will be marked at the top of the moto sheet. Depending on how many kids you are racing, this could be anything from a 1-1-1 transfer to a 1-1-2, or 2-2-2. These numbers stand for **"How many riders from each qualifying round will go to the main."**

Remember 1-1-2: In the first round, one rider (the winner) will go straight to the main and not have to race any more qualifying rounds. You now have four riders that race in the second round of motos. Again, one rider (the winner of the second round) will go straight to the main. In the third and final round of qualifying, two riders will transfer. Whoever gets first and second qualifies and will meet the winners of the first and second rounds in the main event.

UP TO 8



AS FEW AS 3



In a BMX race - there may be as many as 8 riders in a race, and 3 at the least.

TRANSFER



As an example, let's go with a 4-rider race, under the Transfer System.

### 1st MOTO

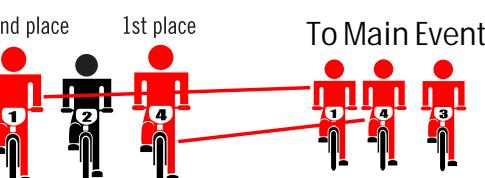
With 4 riders, it will be a 1-2 transfer. In the first moto, the winner (Bike #3) goes straight to the main. He won't race in the 2nd round.



### To Main Event

### 2nd MOTO

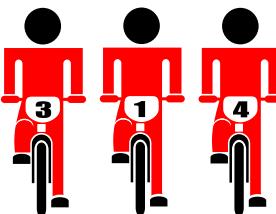
With 3 riders left, whoever gets 1st and 2nd place will move on to the main. 3rd place (Bike #2) is done for the day.



### To Main Event

### MAIN EVENT

Riders #3, #1 and #4 are all in the final. How they cross the finishline in the main event will determine what place trophy they will get. This is where it all counts!



We started with 5 riders, and after 3 races, narrowed it down to the fastest 4 for the final.

## TOTAL POINTS

When there are only three riders in your moto, you'll be racing under the "Total Points" system. While a number of tracks can and do run all of their races under the Total Points System, most tracks only utilize this system for a three-rider race—which at the same time is the fewest number of racers allowed to form a legal class.

The way this works is; all three of your races count toward your overall finish. First place counts as one point, second place counts as two points and third counts as three points. After three rounds of motos, the rider with the least amount of points will get the overall win for the day.

The first place trophy would go to Noah and you took second overall. In the case of a tie, the rider who did better in the third moto would get the better finish.

At the majority of tracks and at all nationals, when you are racing under the "Total Points" system, you'll race with the 1st and 2nd rounds of motos, skip the 3rd round (if there is one), and race your third time during the main events.

It may seem like a lot to keep track of but don't worry, you'll pick it up in no time. An official "Stager" will always be there to guide you or your rider into their assigned race and starting lane on the gate.

### Final Results



	MOTO 1	MOTO 2	MOTO 3	OVERALL
YOU	3	2	1	= 6 2ND
JUAN	1	3	3	= 7 3RD
NOAH	2	1	2	= 5 1ST

## Chapter 7

# RACING TECHNIQUES

**Learning how to ride a bike was easy. Learning how to race takes skill!**

While you can pick up a lot by simply riding and watching others, learning the proper techniques will help you in your quest to succeed. As previously discussed, there are many clinics and camp opportunities to help you along the way, but in hopes of getting you out of the gate with a little bit of a head

start, here are a few key tips that will get you down the first straight in a hurry, over the jumps like a pro, and around your competition without them seeing you coming!



### COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS:

The fastest way around the track is not always catching big air over every obstacle. Most new riders think that skying every jump makes you the quickest; but reality is - staying low and often rolling (or "manualing") through a set of jumps will actually get you to the finishline faster.

### #1 MOST IMPORTANT SECRET:

About 90% of the time, a BMX race is won or lost at the start. Getting the "snap" or "holeshot" out of the gate is vital. Sure, there are plenty of races that see moves being made in the turns, or passes in the rhythm section - but if you get a great gate, then your chances of winning that race just improved drastically!

## One-Footed Start:

Balancing in the gate like an Expert isn't too hard, and you'll likely get the hang of it in a week or two. Meanwhile, until you do - most first-timers will start off by doing the basic one-footed start.

Here's how to do it: Position your front wheel against the gate with your cranks a little above level. Place a foot on the forward pedal and your other foot on the ground near your rear wheel to balance the bike.

**TIP:** When the starting cadence begins, rock your weight toward the back of the bike, and then lunge forward as the gate is about to fall. As the gate is dropping, bring your back foot to the top pedal as quickly as possible and crank

your brains out down the hill.

## Two-Footed Start:

You'll notice right away that most racers are balancing on both pedals in the starting gate. This is what we call a "two-footed start" and you can try to do it right away if you feel like you can. Eventually, everyone learns how to do two-footed starts—the act of balancing on the gate with both feet on the pedals.

The secret to balancing is keeping your cranks level and applying a bit more pressure on your forward foot. Also, use your arms to help keep your balance. You can practice balancing for two-footed starts by putting your front wheel up against a wall or planter. Soon, you'll be

able to relax and balance like a BMX pro.

**Here's how to do it:** Balance in the gate with both feet on the pedals. Set your cranks with the forward pedal one or two clicks of the freewheel up from the chainstay.

**TIP #1:** Use your arms to balance side-to-side and lean your weight over the seat while you apply pressure on your forward foot. Timing is key. As the gate falls, throw your hips toward your bars while pushing down on your forward pedal.



The majority of the time, a race is won or lost by a good or bad start. Snapping out of the gate ahead of everybody is called "getting the holeshot" - and it'll definitely increases your chances of winning. You won't have anybody in your way when you're out front and as long as you can hold off the charge of your comp behind you, and race your own race - the sweet taste of victory can be all yours!



**TIP #2:** During the forward thrust, your front wheel may leave the ground. You want to push forward and not pull up on the bars. A perfect start is when your front wheel is hovering over the gate as it hits the ground. Crank, crank, crank! Continue to lay down the power to grab the “holeshot” and sprint to the lead.



### SPEED JUMPING:

You've seen BMX on YouTube, right? You're probably thinking every jump is there to catch huge air over. WRONG! The object in BMX racing is to get from point-A (the start) to point-B (the finishline) the fastest. And often, catching huge air over the jumps actually slows you down. Not always - but most often.

Believe it or not, pedaling over a jump takes just as much skill as skyin' over it. Start off speed-jumping the small jumps and build your way up to the larger obstacles - crankin' the whole way, non-stop.

Start off speed jumping the smaller jumps and as you improve, build up to the big ones.

**Here's how to do it:** The idea is to never stop pedaling and keep the rubber to the ground. Coming up to the jump, pull up on the bars—getting your front wheel off the ground and over the first peak of the jump.

**TIP #3:** As soon as your front wheel clears the peak of the jump, shift your weight back towards the rear wheel to absorb the jump. Body and arm position is key. Use them like a shock absorber as the bike comes up to your stomach, and keep on crankin'!

### MANUALING:

A “manual” looks similar to doing a wheelie in between a set of obstacles; keeping the back wheel attached to the ground the whole way while your front wheel is in the air. The objective is to keep the same momentum, or better yet - build up more, while you whiz thru a section of the course without pedaling.

When done properly, it can be a thing of beauty - and the better riders can manual thru entire rhythm sections or straightaways.

The secret to manualing like a pro is finding that right balance point. It takes a LOT of time and practice to dial in manualing. Once you've mastered it, then you'll have a huge advantage over your competition.

## PASSING IN CORNERS:

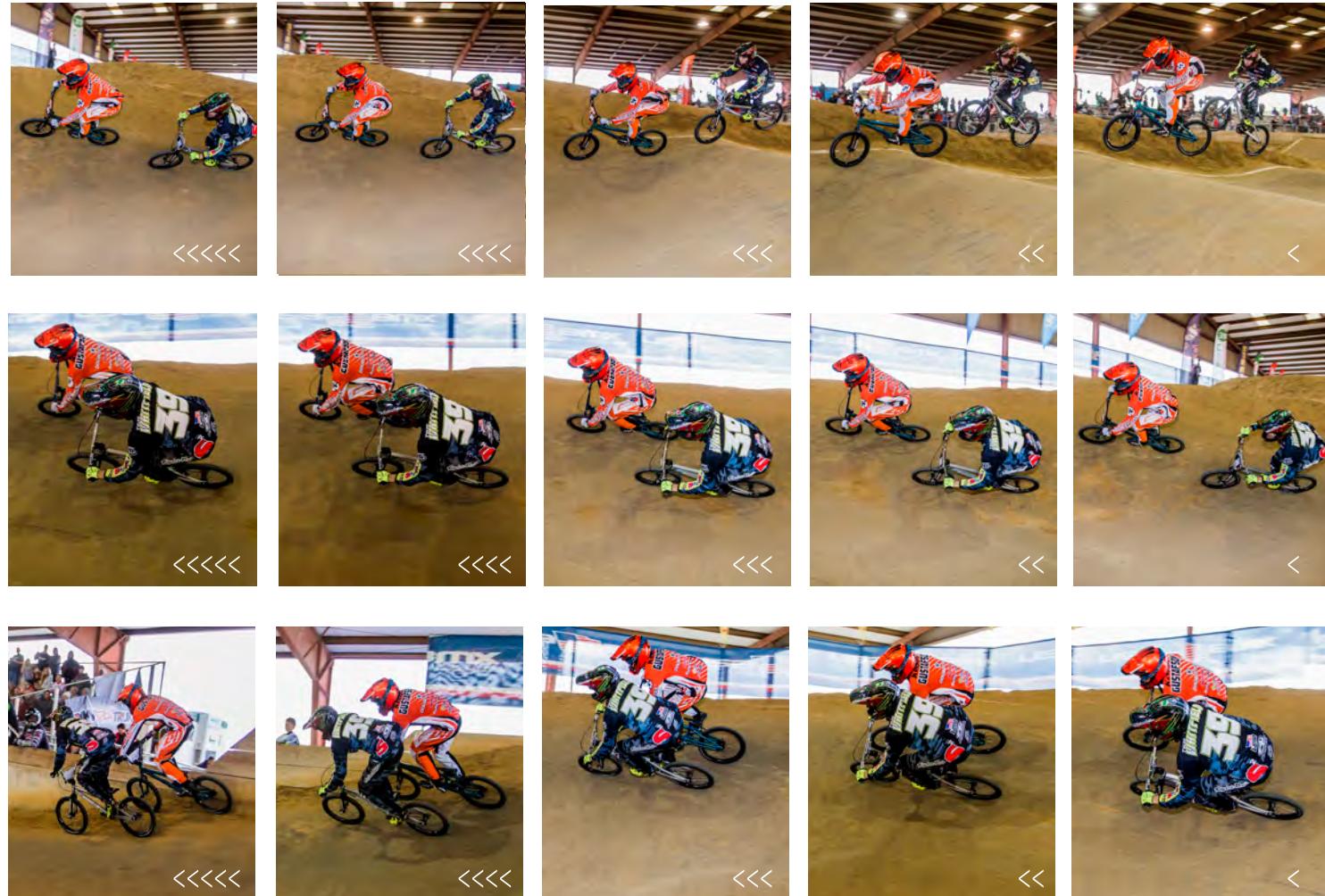
Put it this way: Turns were created to make you go in a different direction. But BERMS were created to help you pass riders. The majority of good moves in BMX racing are

made in the big, banked turns. Just don't shut down too soon!

Often, the difference between passing somebody in a turn is cranking all the way into it. Riders who shut down and coast too early, or

stop pedaling too soon, risk getting passed by a rider who takes those extra one or two more cranks when entering the turn.

Here are some basic passing moves to help you get the hang of modern-day Berm warfare:



### HIGH-LOW DIVE:

When you are right on the back knobbies of the rider in front of you, you can sometimes set them up for a high-low pass. Enter the berm high on the outside. If the rider knows you are there, he/she will likely go high as well to avoid getting passed. As soon as they do, make the pass by carving the turn sharply and diving low to the inside. If done right, they won't even know what happened.

This is usually performed in wide-open turns. The secret to railing the outside line is keeping your momentum. When possible, keep cranking around the outside line of the turn. When done properly, you'll exit the turn out front.

### INSIDE SWOOP:

#### THE GOOD OL' DEPENDABLE

**LOW-HIGH:** Depending on the situation, if you're close enough to a rider when entering the corner, you have a few choices. Sometimes a rider will "leave the door open"—which refers to taking the turn wide (or high); leaving a big opening for you to make a pass. When you see the "open door" opportunity, take advantage of the other rider's mistake. Enter the turn on the inside and the other rider will be "hung out" on the outside / top of the turn. Upon exiting, don't leave an opening for the guy to pass you back (see "HIGH-LOW DIVE"). Shut down their line by riding to the outside, stopping any chance of them passing you back.

### OUTSIDE RAIL:

This is usually performed in wide-open turns - most frequently in the first turn, where traffic is still tight. The secret to railing the outside (high) line in the turn is keeping up your momentum. When possible, keep cranking around the turn, up high on the berm. When done properly, you'll exit the turn with more speed than those who cut to the inside or were banging bars with each other. You might not be in the lead at the end of the turn, but you'll quickly slingshot to the front on the next straightaway because you've kept up more speed.

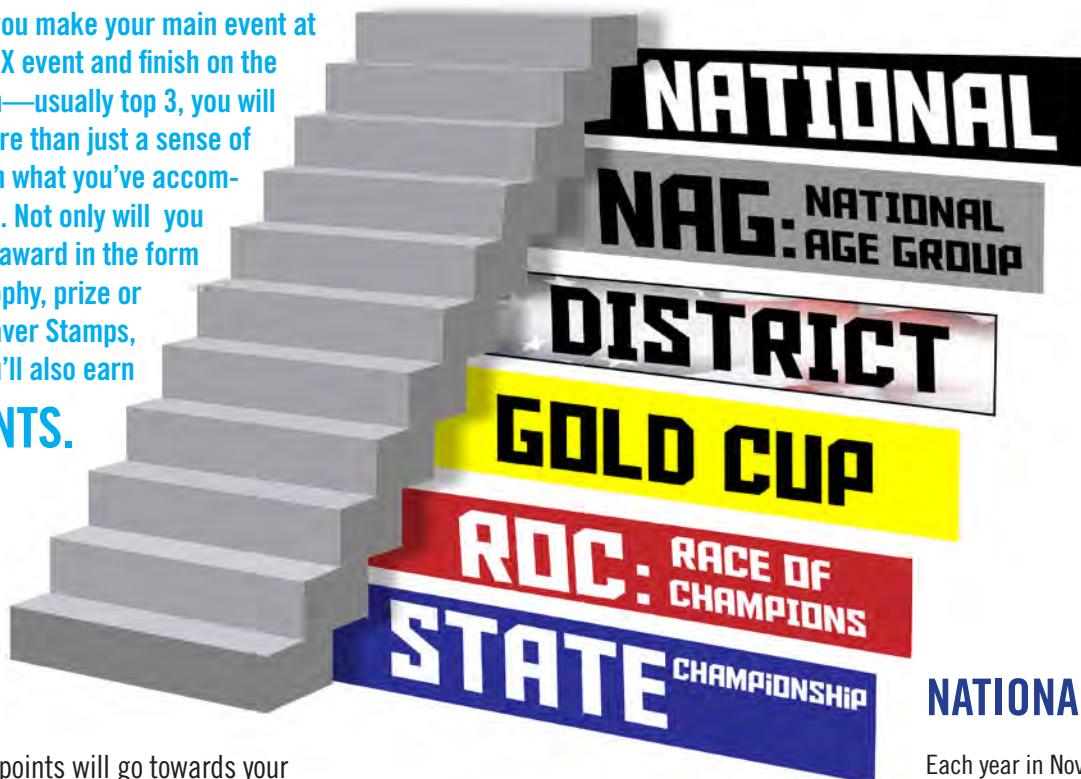
## Chapter 8

# STAIRWAY TO SUCCESS

THE STAIRWAY TO SUCCESS IN BMX RACING - IT'S A LONG WAY TO THE TOP.

When you make your main event at any BMX event and finish on the podium—usually top 3, you will win more than just a sense of pride in what you've accomplished. Not only will you win an award in the form of a trophy, prize or BMX Saver Stamps, but you'll also earn

POINTS.



Earned points will go towards your year-end ranking and determine your “earned number” for the next BMX racing season. Because in BMX racing, the ultimate achievement isn’t the bike you ride or the uniform you wear, it’s honor and prestige of running the No.1 plate.

You can be No.1 in many levels – your district, your state, your national age group (NAG), or even No.1 in the entire nation!

As you can imagine, becoming a No.1 rider is an incredibly tough climb, one that only a handful of BMX racers will eventually make. But for those who do, they began their journey like everyone else—running their USA BMX/BMX Canada assigned number. One of the easiest ways to put the levels of competition into perspective is to imagine a 6-step staircase.

We call it the *Stairway to Success*:

## NATIONAL NO.1

Each year in November, USA BMX hands out seven individual National No.1 Titles. They are:

- No.1 AMATEUR BOYS
- No.1 AMATEUR GIRLS
- No.1 AMATEUR CRUISER
- No.1 AMATEUR GIRLS CRUISER
- No.1 AA PRO
- No.1 WOMAN PRO
- No.1 VET PRO

Additionally, USA BMX awards three National No.1 Team Titles for the following levels:

- No.1 FACTORY TEAM
- No.1 BIKE SHOP TEAM
- No.1 TROPHY TEAM



When you first begin racing BMX, you start out at the very bottom step of that BMX stairway. Yet, with a lot of hard work, practice and eventual wins, anybody can climb (well, actually RACE) their way to the top!

But we've got to warn you--it may be a very long and difficult climb. Each year, only eight BMX racers make it all the way to the top - being crowned the very BEST in the entire Nation. Then, about 65 riders make it to rung five, while hundreds manage to reach the fourth step. Thousands of kids make it to rungs 1, 2 or 3. *How high can you climb?*



## 1. STATE/PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONS

Every track in your state/province will hold a State/Provincial Championship Race (SCR or PCR). To become a State Champion, the sanction counts up to your top specified SCR or PCR finishes, plus the State/Provincial Championship Final. Finish ahead of the competition and you could call yourself State/Provincial Champ! The green background is for Novice and Intermediates, while blue distinguishes the Girls and Expert State Champions.

## 2. RACE OF CHAMPIONS No.1

The coveted red background of a ROC



plate is won in Oklahoma - in November, during the pre-race to the USA BMX Grands. But this race is not open to all - you must first qualify for the Race of Champions (ROC) by competing in the State/Provincial Championship Series. Once invited, you must win your ROC main to earn the honor of running the red No.1 plate. ROC plates are awarded to the winner of every age group and proficiency.



## 3. GOLD CUP CHAMPIONSHIP

Except for a brief decade where it went by another name, the Gold Cup is one of the longest lasting series in BMX. To win a Gold Cup plate, you must race at least two Gold Cup events. You can race as many as you want - but only your best 2 scores will be counted. Next, you've got to attend any of the three regional Gold Cup Finals (East, Central or West) and race both days of competition. The famous yellow-background plates are awarded to the top 3 riders in each age group and proficiency. For the Novice and Intermediate rider, this regional series is one of your best shots at winning a No.1 or series plate!



## 4. DISTRICT CHAMPION

The next step up the "Stairway to Success" is to earn a low District Number. Becoming "District No.1" in your area is a major accomplishment. District No.1 plates are awarded to the rider in each District with the most points at season end on December 15th—including the District No.1 Boy, Girl, Cruiser and Girl Cruiser.



## 5. NATIONAL AGE GROUP CHAMPION

If you're not able to get National No.1 Amateur, you might still be able to nab No.1 out of all the kids your same age, in the entire nation. "NAG" plates are awarded annually to the top 10 riders in the girls and cruiser classes and top 20 in boys.



## 6. NATIONAL No.1 CHAMPION

These are the most prestigious titles in BMX racing; awarded to seven champion riders each year both in the U.S. and Canada. They are the National No.1 Amateur Boy, Girl, Cruiser, Girl Cruiser, AA Pro, Womens Pro and Vet Pro. Taking home one of these championships ensures your name will be forever etched in the history of the sport!

A good example of how good you need to be to win this plate, three of the five members of the 2012 U.S. Olympic Team held one or two National No.1 titles as Amateurs.



# Chapter 9

# BMX NATIONALS

## COMPETING AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF BMX RACING



Now that you're hooked on this great sport called BMX, are you ready for the ultimate road trip?! Imagine the BMX version of the Daytona 500. The BMX equivalent of the World Series, or Super Bowl ... it's a National Event!

Simply put, a BMX National is the ultimate racing experience. These events draw the largest turnout—anywhere from 150 to 300 motos or more (compared to the average 20 or 30 motos at the local level, single-point races). You'll not only compete against the best riders in the Country, but occasionally get to race against some super fast International riders. Just to make it out of your moto at a national is an awesome accomplishment, while getting to the main event is the ultimate bragging right to take back home to your local track. Best of all, if you win your class at a national, you'll take home the largest trophy you've ever seen! But the "experience" doesn't stop there. The arena atmosphere of a national makes it even greater. Some are held indoors and are built just for that weekend, while the outdoor nationals are chosen for their incredible tracks and facilities. Along with rows and rows of motor homes, trucks and trailers, there are bike shop vendors with all of the latest products for sale. At most nationals there is "Factory Row"—with lines of factory rigs, box vans and team tents. Practically every major BMX manufacturer sets up displays and hands out catalogs and stickers, while their star pros sign autographs on posters, t-shirts or number plates. The pit area at a BMX national is pretty incredible as well. Thousands of bikes are all lined up, while hundreds of races are

going on throughout the day.

On average, there are 29 nationals held each year in the U.S. and 7 nationals in Canada, which are held between January and November. There are age/classes for all three divisions: Novice, Intermediate and Expert, as well as Girls, Cruiser and Girl Cruiser divisions. You'll also get a chance to see some of the fastest riders on the planet in the Pro Class - many of them Olympic hopefuls or finalists.

Just think - these Elite superstars were once in your shoes attending their first national. You just never know where BMX will take you!

## NATIONAL PRACTICE

Practice time at nationals are different from local practices. While practice at your local track usually takes place one or two hours before racing begins, National practice schedules are determined by the size of the race.

Depending on the size of the race, there will be either an "A" or "B" practice schedule. "A" practice schedules are for the bigger events and can be found on the website or in Pull magazine. Printed practice schedules are also handed out at the race and will be posted around the race venue for your convenience.

## SIGN-UPS

If you're already a USA BMX/BMX Canada member but new to the national circuit, bring

your membership card to the sign-up truck or the event's registration office. Once there, you can register for the weekend's national event. ...but we've got to warn you: big races like these usually have a LONG sign-up line. If you don't want to waste time standing in a Disney-like line, we highly recommend that you Pre-Register over the USA BMX or BMX Canada websites.

If you are a brand new rider, the sign up truck is where you can become a full USA BMX/BMX Canada member and then register for the day's race. You'll need mom or dad's signature for the membership application if you're a minor and you'll have to fill everything out before putting two wheels on the track. Once you join, the friendly person at sign ups will give you a temporary slip as proof that you are a member. Hold on to that piece of paper until your USA BMX/BMX Canada card comes in the mail. They'll also give you a bike number to run.

## BIKE INSPECTION

Practice at a national race requires a "bike inspection sticker". The bike inspection station is usually located at the bottom of the starting hill. Once you reach bike inspection, they will check for required safety features. Your BMX bike (either 20" or 24" cruiser) must be working in a proper and safe manner. All nuts and bolts tight, axles not sticking out more than a  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch, proper bar ends (grip plugs) and working brakes. Three pads (crossbar, stem and frame top tube) are recommended. Once your BMX bike has passed inspection, an inspec-



## INDOORS:

Nearly half of the USA BMX / BMX Canada series are held Indoors - in various arenas around the country. Every year, the season kicks off indoors, in January. Come November, the National Series comes to a close for USA BMX, indoors in Tulsa, Oklahoma, while the Canadian series usually wraps up in Chilliwack, BC - inside the same arena it starts off in.

The other half of each years' National circuit is held at various top of the line BMX tracks - from Florida to California, Kentucky to Texas, Pennsylvania to Arizona, Illinois to Oregon ... and don't forget Canada, eh?! The local tracks who get the honor of hosting a USA BMX or BMX Canada national are among the best around!

## :OUTDOORS



tion sticker will be applied to your brake cable for all track officials to see. The inspection stickers are also color coordinated for each age group. If your bike has a kickstand, chain guard or reflector brackets, they will need to be removed for on-track safety purposes.

## MOTOS ARE POSTED!

What moto are you in? What gate do you have? Who are you racing? These are the same questions you have at your local race and they are not any different here at the nationals. The only difference may be that there are a lot more racers and a lot more motos. *A LOT!* You remember the moto sheet and how to read it. There are, however, a few important differences between the way races are run at the nationals versus what you may have experienced at the local level.

Be aware of the run-order at the nationals - as it may be different than what you are used to. You've come a long way to test yourself against the best in BMX. Be sure to be on time for your race and be ready. At the nationals, the races are ran very quickly. We repeat - *VERY QUICKLY!*

## 1/8ths, 1/4's & SEMIS

Because of the potential for a large number of riders in your class—not just your moto—at the national level, you might be faced with the challenge of racing eighths, quarters or semis. This is, after all, what you came to the nationals for—to have more competition and more fun!

The breakdown is pretty simple: If your class has five groups or more you will have a quarter or possibly an eighth. If your class has three groups you will have a semi. If your class has two groups or less you will qualify straight to a main. Check your moto sheet for all the particulars!

## CORRECTIONS

Immediately check your moto once they have been posted. If you notice that there is a problem with your moto (i.e. your bike number is wrong, serial number incorrect or you're not listed on the sheet at all), go back to sign ups and make a USA BMX/BMX Canada staff member aware of the situation. If there is a valid problem, the moto will be corrected and announced during the "riders meeting" over the microphone. Corrections will not be written on the moto sheets.

## MAIN EVENT

A few key things to know about how the Main Event is run at the nationals:

- Main sheets are not posted at Nationals (with the exception of the Grands).
- All main events are run in the same order as the qualifying motos
- Main lanes are given in staging as well as what chute number you go in, prior to your moto.

## FINISH LINE

- The announcer will call out the riders who have qualified by last name or by plate

number.

- If you feel you have qualified and did not hear your name or number announced, go back to the finish line and double-check with the scorer to verify your finish.
- Video review. USA BMX/BMX Canada uses a video camera to capture all finishes. You may go back and dispute a finish within 10 motos of your race.
- Trophy slips – If you qualify through the motos or through a semi to the main event you will receive an award. When you cross the line in the main event you will be handed a trophy slip that has your finish on it. Take this trophy slip to the appropriate location to either receive a trophy or USA BMX/BMX Canada Saver Stamps.

## PROTESTS

- USA BMX/BMX Canada Officials call fouls as they happen. Officials will have the authority to call fouls and levy a disqualification without the need for a protest being lodged by any rider.
- Officials look for the intention of any circumstance on the track. Situations deemed under malicious intent may result in disqualification.
- Any rider lodging a protest about a particular race must present his/her case to the head official within 10 motos after the race in question. After this time frame, a protest may not be lodged.

That about does it! We wish you the best of luck at your first National event. Enjoy!

# Open Letter To BMX Parents: HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOUR KIDS - NOT DISCOURAGE

Studies have shown that children of supportive parents will stick with a sport longer.

Along with telling you riders how awesome BMX racing is - we'd also like to speak for a moment with your parents. Please hand this page over to your mom or dad and go out and do some sprints while we have a talk.

Are they gone?

Ok, parents. It's just us now - and we'd like to speak with you about what it's like being a great BMX mom or BMX dad. We recently read an article by Kathleen Noonan, on why kids these days don't stick with sports for very long. In it, they asked the eternal question: "What is one of the main reasons most kids quit sport?" It's something we here at USA BMX and our many track operators, ask often and are constantly trying to solve.

Before you answer, take a moment to think about this quick stat: Each year 20 million children in the U.S. register for baseball, soccer, football, hockey and other competitive sports. Of those 20 million, nearly 70 percent of them will quit by age 13. Even more staggering is that, according to the National Alliance for Sports, these kids will never play those sports again. Never. Ever.

Surely, it's our job at USA BMX to encourage you, to encourage your kids, to race BMX - which we believe is the greatest action sport in America. In these modern times of child obesity and lack of participation in most any athletic activity, USA BMX honestly just wants to see kids put the game-controller down, get up off of that couch and get outside to do ANY type of exercise or activity. If baseball, football, running or swimming or whatever is their choice over BMX - that's still one less kid on the couch.

And we're good with that.

So - once they are participating in a sport, do you think your kid will be among that 30 percent who stick with it?

According to research, if you are a yeller, probably not. Studies show that children hate it when their mothers and fathers behave aggressively on the sidelines of junior sports events. While the seemingly "psycho" parent is more common at the traditional stick and ball sports, we'll admit they are no stranger to the BMX World as well.

Often, the fanatical parent can see the errors of their way after taking a lap around the BMX track themselves. Suddenly, the screams of "Pedal, pedal, pedal!" as they're pumping thru a rhythm section seem a lot harder than it looked from the bleachers.

If you go to any of the 380 BMX tracks all over North America, chances are good that you'd find all of these stereotypical types of BMX parents:

- THE SUPPORTIVE, MODEL PARENT
- THE COMPETITIVE PARENT
- THE UN-INVOLVED, BLASE' PARENT
- THE "LIVING-VICARIOUSLY-THRU-YOUR-KIDS" PARENT
- THE "COACH" PARENT
- THE HYPER-CRITICAL, SUPER NEGATIVE PARENT
- THE "MY KID IS A SUPERSTAR" PARENT

As you may have guessed, the top of the list could be considered the "good" types, while the worst parents are toward the bottom of this



list. Many parents even show traits in multiple categories - which, depending on which types they are, could be a really good thing, or bad.

What is a cause of the overexuberant BMX parent? Often, it's ego. Not the kids', but the parents' ego. If we look inside our deep-down motives, what starts off as wanting our children to be active and learn to love physical activity can sometimes morph into something else. Often, something worse.

Sure, it's admirable to strive for excellence - in any type of sport, but there is always room to look in the mirror and see what kind of parent you are, or are becoming. Much of this has to do with what your expectations are of your child. Do you want to see them having fun and being athletic, or do your dreams for them include turning Pro someday and making it to

Based from "The real reason why our Kids Quit Sport" by Kathleen Noonan

the Olympics?

Fun needs to be at the very heart of sport. Even at the Elite level. Research now shows all athletes need a fun activity in their training session.

"BMX Racing is SOOOOO much more fun and rad than the usual ball sports," describes former racer and BMX dad, Bob Morales. "I do believe that us parents can do a better job of keeping the kids interested, and ENCOURAGE rather than DISCOURAGE them. I have learned that BMX is not for every kid. The kids who do dig it, need to be encouraged to keep doing it!"

"So why do so many kids quit a sport?", asks Kathleen Noonan. One of the main reasons, she states (apart from the obvious ones - such as don't like the track, not enough time, too much pressure, hate losing), is one thing many parents don't often think about: "The car ride home."

The car ride home after playing sport can be a game-changer. Whether your kid is 5 or 16 years old, the journey from the track to home can be a non-stop parent teaching moment. Whether they raced well or not, parents often let their kids know what they should have done better. They become one of those shoulda-coulda-woulda dads, Noonan sums up. That car ride home can be pure joy - or not. The car ride home is when a child just wants to quietly let the activity sink in - whether the result was a win or a loss.

They know if they've raced good or bad. You don't need to tell them. They can sense your every thought, disappointment, anger, even a bit too much pride. It's all there, crowding in. Every sigh, every shrug is amplified.

So, we ask, what do you say on the car ride home?

How about a high-five and a hug, for doing their best - no matter what the result was. How about saying - "I love watching you ride out there." That, folks, is an everlasting impression that will keep them racing BMX (or whatever sport they pick) for years to come.

# The Greatest Race on Earth! THE GRANDS

## How do BMXers spend their Thanksgiving Weekend?

It's HUGE. The building itself is 1/4 mile long and the track is built with more dirt than any other BMX track on Earth. The moto count ranges right around the 700 mark - making it the largest BMX race on the planet. The event takes place over four days - beginning Thanksgiving Thursday, with racing on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.



On the final day, the Grands main events decide the No.1 title holders for the year - almost always in climactic, edge-of-your-seat action.

Grands winners in all classes cart home a seven-foot tall trophy, the largest prize in all of BMX Racing.

Along with some of the most spectacular racing you'll ever see, the Grands is more than just a race. It's an experience. The Grands is to BMX Racing, what the Superbowl is to football fans, what the World Series is to baseball fanatics, or what the Daytona 500 is to Nascar fans. You get the point - if you really get in to BMX, everybody knows that the Grands is THE ONE race you have to attend at least once in your lifetime.

If you want to compete against the best BMX racers on the planet, or have a shot at winning a National or NAG (Age Group) ranking, or just be at the biggest and best BMX race of the year, then The Grands is where you need to be.

Mark your calendar for Thanksgiving weekend, in Tulsa, OK - and we'll see YOU at the Greatest Race on Earth!



## No.1 PRO

To become No.1 Pro in USA BMX is the crown achievement in BMX. It's not a one-lap win like the Olympics or World Champs. It's accumulated over 11 months, with consistency in main events and multiple wins counting toward your best 10 scores.

It's no wonder riders from all over the World come to America to chase the Cup.



## No.1 AMATEUR

Take all of the fastest BMX racers in the entire country - from five year-old novices up to

20-something experts; and who do you think is THE BEST? Since 1977, every Amateur Boy in America has been chasing the illustrious No.1 Amateur Cup. Based on points earned throughout the year - getting additional points for having the most competition in your class,

the No.1 Am title is the most prestigious accomplishment in amateur racing. Many top Pros, past and present, got their first taste of fame by becoming No.1 Amateur.

## No.1 GIRL

If you were to take every single Girl BMX racer of all ages, and add up their best 10 National finishes against the most riders in their classes, it'd determine who the No.1 Girl is. To be National No.1 Girl is by far the biggest accomplishment an amateur girl racer can get!



## No.1 GIRL PRO

Part of what helped get BMX Racing into the Olympics was that it truly is, a sport of Boys and Girls, Men and Women. Along with the Mens No.1 pro title, is the same for the Woman Pro plate and championship.



# Chapter 10

# First 10 Weeks COACHING Program

Learning about BMX all by yourself is hard to do - and we realize riders need to do more than just read a "New Rider Manual" to grasp this sport. That is exactly why we created the USA BMX / BMX CANADA Coaches Certification and more specifically, designed the "First 10 Weeks Program."

Nearly every BMX track around the country has a certified coach whose job is to work with beginner racers during their first 10 weeks of racing. The "F10W" Program has two main goals:

## SAFETY

It is our goal that parents are comfortable with and confident in our coaches character and ability to coach their children and look out for their well-being. All USA BMX coaching candidates must pass three levels of prerequisites before they are allowed to even start the program.

For the safety of our children, all coaching candidates must:

- Receive a character reference from a Track Operator, known as the Track Operator Letter of Recommendation
- Be certified in Adult and Pediatric First Aid and CPR
- Pass a Background Check

Any person teaching a clinic at a USA BMX or BMX Canada-sanctioned track must be a USA BMX Certified Coach.



## RIDER RETENTION

The Coaching Course and First 10 Weeks Program is focused on brand new riders and how to systematically guide them through setting goals, learning new skills, and giving them the guidance and confidence to stay in BMX and navigate the Novice and Intermediate Classes. Within the first two years of this program, tracks that have held a F10W classes with a certified coach have seen a major improvement with their ridership - racers are more confident, more knowledgeable and better prepared to hit the track and compete.

### Interested in becoming a USA BMX Certified Coach?

What is a USA BMX Certified Coach, you ask? And how is one different than the local pro at my track who teaches weekly clinics? The answer to that question may surprise you, so let's break it down a little:

Anywhere there is competition, people will seek out those with knowledge and experience to show them ways they can improve. In team sports coaches play the important role of managing players, practice, plays, and games. Beyond this, coaches are mentors, leaders and role models whose very behavior and attitude can create better players.

In its infancy, BMX fueled the individual spirit, and riders made their own individual path to the top. Riders of the next generation

began to look at those on top and seek out their advice. These top pros of the past became the very first coaches in BMX racing. As riders have continued to develop, so has coaching. The first major coaching movement came when pros and teams would travel the country and schedule clinics at various tracks on summer tours - which is still alive and well today and plays a very important role in our BMX culture.

Many track operators saw how well these traveling coaches helped their local riders and they began to look for ways to help their riders even more. This created the first generation of local coaches - which is our current generation. They consist of pros, parents and track operators, doing their best to pass on knowledge to new, young racers. Though helpful, these programs vary widely from track to track. With uniform training and direction, good coaches can become great coaches and local BMX programs around the country will slowly begin to flourish as a new level of rider support is offered.

As BMX has matured, now having been held at two Olympic Games, we have realized that coaching is the glue that can hold a program together. A coach can ease a rider's nerves, explain the ins and outs of racing to confused parents, inspire confidence when a racer doesn't always win and be a role model for the next generation of BMX racers.

There are three levels to being a USA BMX Coach:

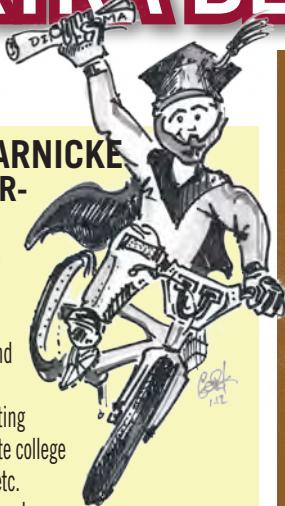
- USA BMX Local Coach (anyone may receive this certification, with T.O. approval)
- Local Assistant Coach (appointed by Track Operator or Head Coach)

- Local Head Coach (appointed by Track Operator) Most tracks will start out with only a head coach and as the program grows, they will likely bring in assistant coaches to aid the head coach.

Being a USA BMX or BMX Canada Certified Coach means that person has passed all safety prerequisites, taken the coaches course, passed the coaches test and paid the license fee. The goal of the USA BMX Coaching Program is to provide new riders and parents with a clear and uniform path for both learning and advancement. Becoming a certified BMX coach is a great way to give back to the sport - and to make an impact at your local track with brand new riders. Our ultimate goal is to keep new racers involved in BMX racing for years to come.

# Chapter 11

# EXTRA BENEFITS TO BMX



## THE BOB WARNICKE BMX SCHOLARSHIP

The Warnicke Scholarship Race was created to help fund The Bob Warnicke Memorial Scholarship Fund which assists students and their families in meeting the costs of undergraduate college education, trade school, etc.

USA BMX/BMX Canada members who have a current USA BMX/BMX Canada membership or Track Operators/Officials who participate in BMX racing events sanctioned by USA BMX/BMX Canada are eligible to apply. A formal application can be found on the USABMX.com website (scroll to "Events" and click on Bob Warnicke race). This Scholarship Program preserves Bob Warnicke's legacy by contributing to the futures of deserving USA BMX/BMX Canada members in their quest for a better education. In 2014, over \$45,000 in scholarships were awarded to 31 BMX applicants.

## NEW TRACKS/OPERATORS ALWAYS WELCOMED & WANTED!

The majority of BMX track operators all got into doing what they do the same way - they were BMX parents or riders who answered the call. When you get bit by the BMX bug, sometimes you REALLY get bit hard. With a newfound love for BMX, many parents decide to get involved with their local track - either helping officiate, or pitching in at sign ups. Others will go the distance, and look in to opening their own track closer to home. USA BMX / BMX Canada welcomes these excited BMX enthusiasts - and is always looking for new track operators and facilities. If you feel the urge to heed the call - contact Nick Adams (head of New Track Development) for more information: nick@usabmx.com



## ANNUAL DISTRICT AWARDS

In BMX racing, every state has been divided into Districts, and as you race, points are kept track of by USA BMX. At the end of the race season, December 15th, points are finalized and Awards for District riders are given to the top 10%, (with a maximum of 10 riders), in each District. Riders in each classification receiving a custom District Jacket. District ranking are based on all ages combined in Boys, Girls, Cruiser and Girl Cruiser categories. The No.1 rider in each age and proficiency, (Boys, Girls, Cruiser and Girl Cruiser), also receives a District No.1 plate.



## OPEN JACKETS

As you may have read earlier - there is an "OPEN" class in BMX racing. It's called that because it is "open" to multiple ages. For example 9-10 Open would consist of both 9 and 10 year olds, racing against each other. At the Nationals, they even hold a "Mixed Open," which is open to Novices, Intermediates and Girls. Other than giving a racer one more chance to race, it's often used to judge a younger rider's skills and speeds against his older rivals, in preparation for an upcoming birthday.

At USA BMX Nationals, there is another good reason to race Opens - and that is making your Open main seven times throughout a season, to earn yourself the prestigious OPEN Jacket! Another cool bonus of earning an Open jacket is earning the discounted-fee / scholarship to attend the fun-packed extreme Summer Camp at OHIO DREAMS (in Ohio, of course).



## TOP GUN JACKETS

As the name implies - to be a "Top Gun" in BMX, is like being an ace fighter pilot. It takes some serious speed, a ton of dedication and some heavy duty dog-fighting out there on the USA BMX National circuit. To become a TOP GUN jacket, a rider must win the following:

- four main events in (20") Class,
- four main events in (24") Cruiser, and
- four main events in Opens. It's no easy task ...and these "Bomber-like" jackets are, for obvious reasons, worn with a whole LOT of pride.



## 20,000 CLUB

To earn 20k or more in USA BMX points is quite a feat - and only 10 to 25 riders a year are able to accomplish this - which is why USA BMX recognizes those individuals with a limited edition "20,000 CLUB" jacket. All 20k members are also featured on our website and in PULL magazine.

## THE GOLDEN CRANK AWARDS

The annual GOLDEN CRANK AWARDS are voted on by YOU; the USA BMX membership. Any member can vote for their favorites in four categories:

- PRO of the YEAR
- ROOKIE PRO of the YEAR
- BIKE of the YEAR
- TEAM of the YEAR

Online voting begins each summer and the Golden Cranks are awarded in Tulsa, OK during the USA BMX Grand National.

