

What can I Expect at a typical Cyclocross Race?

Cyclocross is a bicycle road racing discipline, traditionally held in the fall months (or in winter in Europe). Racers do laps on a closed course and compete against each other for finishing position; the rider who crosses the finish line first at end of the race is the winner. Cross races and are typically run in parks and involve a variety of surfaces: grass, paths, dirt, gravel, mud, sand, and pavement. At least once a lap a racer can expect to dismount, carry their bikes over a barrier or obstacle and possibly run up a hill, stairs or other obstacles and remount their bikes to continue the race. You will need to check your speed and bike handling skills depending on the sections. These are the aspects that make cyclocross fun and challenging.

Manitoba Cyclocross Race Categories

Kids

U11, and U9; male and female

Cat 4

Beginners in all age groups U15 and up, male and female

All U13, male and female

MCA Citizen license; male and female

Cat 3

Cat 3/4/5 female in the Road category

Elite, Expert, Comp, Sport female in the Mountain Bike category.

Cat 5 and lower ranked Cat 4 male in Road

Sport and lower ranked Comp in Mountain Bike

All U15 and U17, male and female

Cat 1/2

Cat 2 female in the Road category

Higher ranked Cat 4 male in Road

Cat 3/2/1 male in Road

Higher ranked Comp, all Expert and Elite male in Mountain Bike

This is my first Race, what Category should I Choose?

Finding the right category to race will make your race experience much more enjoyable. The trick is to not bite off more than you can chew or pick a category that is too easy. The cyclocross committee will help you determine the category you belong in, but here is a general guideline that will help you decide:

Adults

At most races, adults participate in numbered categories based on ability – In Manitoba, most cyclocross races have 3 adult categories: Category 1/2, Category 3, and Category 4.

Adults, 19 years of age and older, who have NEVER raced before should start in the Citizen category (which is often run as part of the Category 4 race). We ask that ALL first time Adult racers do at least 1 race in Citizen to ensure they are able to compete and finish their first event.

Youth

Youth must be moved based on the committee's approval, usually with a recommendation from the provincial coach, particularly with the provincial program athletes. This will be done to ensure they are in the appropriate age and ability category.

The Citizen race license costs only \$70 for all first time racers and is good for the current calendar year. Once you move up to the next category you will be required to pay the additional (incremental) cost for a full race license. If you find your first race too easy, then for your next race you can move up to the next category. See the category descriptions more details/options. Information about the citizen racing license can be found at www.mbcycling.ca/

All others will race in the category they raced in the previous year, except for those who request or have been asked to move up or down a category.

Kids & Juniors

Kids U11 and under race in the kids category. Juniors (age 12-18) should all start in race category that gives them the best challenge. See the race categories below for more descriptions and details.

Note: Because in many parts of the world cyclocross is a winter discipline that spans calendar years, your "racing age" for the purposes of determining which category you are in is your age at the end of the following year (so, for races held in the fall of 2015, your "racing age" is your age as of December 31, 2016).

How to change categories

The intention of the category system is to create better competition for ALL racers. Racers who feel they can no longer compete at their current level are **encouraged** to make a formal written request to move down a category. **They must do at least two races in their current category before they can move down.**

To request to change categories (either to move up or to move down), please email your request to the current Cross Coordinator or call the Executive Director at the MCA office.

Please include your previous 3 race results and a brief explanation of why you wish to change categories. Your request will be reviewed and if it is approved, the MCA office will issue you a new MCA license if necessary.

You **cannot** change categories at a race. You must make a formal written request.

How Long is My Race?

Each race category has a target time for how long that race should last. In your category you will complete as many laps as you can in that time, the winner being the one who crosses the finish line first. Here are the target times for each category:

Kids – 20 minutes on a modified kid's course

Cat 4 or "C RACE" – 20 minutes +1 lap (male and female)

Cat 3 or "B RACE" – 30 minutes + 1 lap (male and female)

Cat 1 / 2 or "A RACE" – 45 minutes + 2 laps (male and female)

A lap on a typical cross races take place on a course that takes between 7 and 10 minutes to complete (courses will have lap lengths of 2.5-3.5km). Prior to the start of the race the race organizers and officials (commissaries) will calculate how much time it takes to complete a lap, this will tell the commissaire at what time in the race he/she will need to ring the bell to indicate there are only one (B and C races) or two (A race) laps remaining in the race – this tells you it is time to make your move to charge for the lead, catch the person ahead of you, and to work to stay ahead of the person chasing you. Before you start your race you will be told at what time the bell will be rung and how many laps they must complete after the ringing of the bell.

Most of the time the length of the races for the lead riders are just shy of the target time for the category but sometimes the races are longer, it all depends on how the race is going that day. Here is a scenario where it may take longer than the target time to complete a race.

In this 40 minute race it has been determined that the “bell lap” will be signaled at the 30 minute mark. In this race the race lead rider passes the finish line at 29:37, since this is prior to the designated 30 minute point for the “bell lap” the commissaire will not ring the bell because the designated time for the race leader has not been met. The race leader and the entire field must complete another lap (this would be at 36:37 if laps are taking 7 minutes to complete) before the bell is rung indicating there is one lap remaining. It is important to note that the bell can only be rung when the race leader has passed the finish line **after** the designated time for ringing the bell has passed. This would put the first finisher of the race in at 43:37, past the designated time for the race, thereby making the race longer than the 40 minutes called for.

Bike Specifications

Cat 1/2 or “A race”

Tires

Maximum 33mm width for 700c

No spikes or studs allowed

Wheels

Wheels shall have a minimum of 12 metal spokes

Saddles

Horizontal. This angle must be less than 2.5 degrees with an error tolerance of 0.5 degree. This means that if the measurement taken during the check exceeds ± 3 degrees (positive or negative inclines), the saddle must be adjusted.

Handlebars

Must be road style

Max width 50cm

Brakes

Must have functional front and rear brakes

Disc brakes allowed

Gears

No fixed geared bikes

Bike

Must weigh greater than 6.8kg (15lbs)

Bike Style

No mountain bikes allowed

Cat 3 or “B race”

Tires

Maximum 33mm width for 700c

No spikes or studs allowed

Wheels

Wheels shall have a minimum of 12 metal spokes

Saddles

Horizontal. This angle must be less than 2.5 degrees with an error tolerance of 0.5 degree. This means that if the measurement taken during the check exceeds ± 3 degrees (positive or negative inclines), the saddle must be adjusted.

Handlebars

Must be road style

Max width 50cm

Brakes

Must have functional front and rear brakes

Disc brakes allowed

Gears

No fixed geared bikes

Bike

Must weigh greater than 6.8kg (15lbs)

Bike Style

No mountain bikes allowed

Cat 4 or “C race”

Tires

Maximum 35mm width for 700c, 26” Mountain Bike style wheels are permitted in this category

No spikes or studs allowed

Wheels

Wheels shall have a minimum of 12 metal spokes

Saddles

Horizontal. This angle must be less than 2.5 degrees with an error tolerance of 0.5 degree. This means that if the measurement taken during the check exceeds ± 3 degrees (positive or negative inclines), the saddle must be adjusted.

Handlebars

May be either mountain bike or road style

Max width 50cm

Brakes

Must have functional front and rear brakes

Disc brakes allowed

Gears

No fixed geared bikes

Bike

Must weigh greater than 6.8kg (15lbs)

Bike Style

Mountain bikes are allowed

Race Day Arrival and Registration

The schedule for most races is similar; here is what you can expect:

- All racers must sign-in at the registration table (located at the event) at least 90 mins before their category is to start on the day of the race. Registration closes 30 minutes before the start of each race.
- If you have not pre-registered, please arrive no later than 120 minutes prior to your event to register.
- You must have your current licence with you at sign-in and present it to the commissaires.
- You will wear race numbers (provided by the Manitoba Cycling Association) pinned to the back of your jersey (usually on the right hand side, but it is always good to check with side).
- You will have a designated time to ride the course prior to the race, before the start of the first race and a short time before the start of your race. You **MAY NOT** ride the course while another race is in progress, this may result in your disqualification from your race.
- Due to insurance regulation, you may be turned away at registration without proof of a current valid licence.
- If you arrive late, there is no guarantee you will be allowed to start in the race. Permission to race may be granted by the commissaires or race organizer and they may exercise the right to penalize the racer at the start line. This is typically in the form of being seeded at the back of the seeded racers.
- If you choose to register online please see the organizer race bible for pre-registration cut off.
- Most organizers will need you to pay by cash or cheque at races if you choose to register the day of the race.
- **All who have not pre-registered online MUST complete the appropriate Registration Form and Waiver for every race or race series they enter.**
- Remember helmet use is MANDATORY (this means on your head and fastened). You must wear your helmet at all times at MCA races, even during warm up/cool down and in the parking lot.
- Costs are dependent on the organizer. See each organizer's Race Bible for full details.

Sample Race Day Schedule of Events:

8:30 Registration opens for all categories

EVENT 1

9:45 – 10:15 Course is open for pre-ride

10:15 Open event staging

10:30 Open event begins

EVENT 2

11:00 – 11:30 Course is open for pre-ride

11:30 C Race (men/women/citizen) staging

11:15 C Race (men/women/citizen) event begins

EVENT 3

12:30 – 1:15 Course is open for pre-ride

1:15 B Race (men/women) staging

1:15 B Race (men/women) event begins

EVENT 4

2:30 – 3:30 Course is open for pre-ride

3:30 A Race (men/women) staging

3:45 A Race (men/women) event begins

5:30 results and awards for all categories

What Will Be Provided at the Races?

There will be washroom facilities on-site (often out houses). Cup races and Provincials must also provide snacks for racers after the race (but not always for spectators). Most races provide prizes after the race for most categories except Citizen. See Prizing for more details.

What You Need to Bring

- Your race licence
- Your MCA number plate – this will be given to you at your first race
- Tools, a pump, and spare inner tubes (if you don't have many tools don't hesitate to ask your fellow racer, they're often willing to lend you a hand). With this being said, you cannot borrow or lend tools during the race, as the race is considered a self-supported event.
- Water & nutrition for both the race and after
- Clean/dry clothes for after the race
- Bug-spray and sunscreen
- Extra cycling clothes if the weather changes
- A lawn chair is a good idea so you have a place to sit as you wait for your race to start
- A good attitude
- Food & drinks for your friends and family who are there to watch
- Extra Zip Ties
- Eye protection (suggested)
- Proper cycling shoes (no sandals or open faced shoes)

You Will be Provided...

- Your race numbers, with a few pins and zip ties, if you are a new racer
- A fun time racing with others
- There will always be a medical official present during the race

Need help - just ask

New racers sometimes find the pre-race time a little intimidating with the pre-race nerves. If you are not sure about something, feel free to ask fellow racers. Most are very friendly and willing to help.

Racing Rules:

These are the general rules for racing in Manitoba. To see the full rules of racing, please visit the UCI (<http://www.uci.ch/>) CCA (<http://www.canadian-cycling.com/>) for full explanations.

1. Pre-riding may only be done during the designated times for your category.
2. Everyone riding on the course during the scheduled pre-ride/training times MUST have a current MCA general membership (or Race Licence). Non-members are not permitted to operate a bicycle on the course during scheduled event times.
3. All races must operate a bicycle with both front and rear working brakes.

4. All races must wear an approved cycling helmet, with a current best before date.
5. Racers shall act with caution and respect and be responsible for accidents they may cause.
6. Races must present their licence at the registration table; technically the licence is to remain on your person throughout the race.
7. It is a racer's responsibility to know the race course and the race duration before race start.
8. A racer must act in a sporting manner and allow a faster rider to overtake her/him without obstructing.
9. If a rider exits a course for any reason, he/she must re-enter the course at the exact location of exit. You may not travel in any manner in the opposite direction of the race. If you have a mechanical issue during a race, you must continue in the direction of the race on the course until you reach the designated service pit area where you can deal with the mechanical issue. If you decide to abandon the race at any point, you must leave the course immediately and notify the race commissaire immediately.
10. Music players and recording devices are not allowed during an event on the racers.
11. Sleeveless jerseys are not permitted.
12. You may only wear a jersey of a club which you currently belong to. Do not wear a pro team jersey, unless you are a member of the said team.
13. The current defending Manitoba Cup winner should wear their Cup Jersey at Cup races the following year; however it is not required.
14. Handlebars must have end caps and water bottle holders must be secured in the frame.

Event & Spectator Rules:

Only registered racers are allowed on the course during the race. All spectators must remain on the sides of the course during the race. Spectators must not assist or interfere with racers in any way during the race. Please remember that the feed and technical zones are NOT intended for spectators and all dogs must remain on a leash at ALL TIMES at race events.

Categories for Provincial Championships:

The Provincial Championship race uses the standard CCA set of Categories for adults shown below. All Novice & Comp racers will race in their age appropriate category.

Adult / Kid Categories

Male and Female

- 60+ race in the 40 minute race
- 50+ race in the 40 minute race
- 40+ race in the 40 minute race
- 30+ female race in the 40 minute race
- 30+ male race in the 60 minute race
- Elite (24-29) female race in the 40 minute race
- Elite (24-29) male race in the 60 minute race
- U23 female race in the 40 minute race
- U23 male race in the 60 minute race
- U17 race in the 40 minute race
- U 15 race in the 30 minute race
- U13 race in the 30 minute race
- U11 race in the 20 minute race

Seeding (Start Line Placement)

In the A and B races the race participants will be seeded 16 deep (men, first two rows) and 8 deep (women, in the third row) lined up according to their seeding. If you are late for the call up you will lose your seeding position and you will be moved to the back of the pack.

The commissaire will go over some details regarding your race and will tell you the time for the bell lap and how many laps need to be completed after the bell is rung.

The commissaire will then prepare the field for the start of the race, tell you how many minutes and then seconds remain before the race will begin, and then they will start the race.

If you have a mechanical problem with your bike during the race (including a flat tire), the only place you are allowed to make repairs is in the pit area. The pit area will be marked with flags and/or a sign.

Sometimes you will pass the pits twice on each lap. You can leave tools, spare wheels, or a spare bike in the pit area if you want. If you need to make a repair or change a wheel, you can only do this in the pit, and you can't leave the course (i.e. take a shortcut) to get there – so you may need to get off your bike and run on the course to get there.

Typically, you can't receive any outside assistance during your race, including being handed water or food as sometimes happens in cross races. Exceptions for taking water may be made by the commissaire in especially hot weather.

After the Race:

Posting of Results

Results will be posted on the race organizers or MCA website within 48 hours of the end of the race, often earlier.

Prizing Structure

Race organizers will often supply prizes for the top performers in each category. Prizes can vary from cash to bike related prizes to gift certificates. The depth and type of prizing is dependent on the number of racers in a category and level of category being prized. If there are a large number of racers in a category the prizing can sometimes go five deep, if there are only a few racers it may only go one or two deep – it is dependent on the organizer.

Because Citizen racers do not typically pay an entry fee for entering a race they often do not receive prizes for their events – again this up to the organizer.

All organizers will prize equally regardless of sex. Individual value of prizing is up to the organizer.

Manitoba Cup Series Criteria

The Manitoba Cup is comprised of a series of 5 races in which points are awarded to the top twenty finishers in each category. The winner in each category is determined by the highest accumulated points in the racers best 4 of 5 race results. A racer must start at least 3 races to be eligible for the overall.

CUP POINTS (All Races):

1 st – 25 points	6 th – 17 points	11 th – 12 points	16 th – 7 points
2 nd – 22 points	7 th – 16 points	12 th – 11 points	17 th – 6 points
3 rd – 20 points	8 th – 15 points	13 th – 10 points	18 th – 5 points
4 th – 19 points	9 th – 14 points	14 th – 9 points	19 th – 4 points
5 th – 18 points	10 th – 13 points	15 th – 8 points	20 th – 3 points

Also, all racers who commissaire a cup race will receive their “average” points from other cup races within that season. So if a racer does 3 other cup races, averaging 15 points per race, that racer will receive 15 points for commissairing a cup race. Limited to 1 race per season.

Eligibility

Athletes must be members of the MCA in good standing and must hold a valid MCA/CCA racing licence in order to be eligible for MB Cup points.

Reviewing Results

It is the athlete’s responsibility to review the results as soon as they are posted on-site and to immediately inform the Chief Commissaire for Cross events of any discrepancy in regards to results. Results will be posted on-site and athletes/coaches will have 15 minutes in which to lodge an appeal. After 15 minutes with no appeals the results become official and will be posted on the MCA website for the remainder of the calendar year.

Tie-Breaker

If two or more athletes receive the same time for a particular race the athletes will share the points allocated to that shared position. If two or more athletes receive the same amount of total points as calculated at the end of the season the athletes’ times in the same races they competed in will be used to determine a final score for each athlete.

Racers who move up a Category

All points earned in a lower category during the season are carried forward and are worth 70% in the next higher category.

Organizers Requirements

An organizer must be an individual who is a member of an MCA-affiliated club in good standing. The individual and/or the Club must display a proven ability to conduct a race to the requirements of the Manitoba Cup Series as defined in this document. They also should indicate they are an organizer on their MCA licence.

Designation

Cup races are designated by the MCA Cyclocross Committee. The decision is based upon the race venue the organizer’s proven ability to meet requirements, and the date of the event. The event calendar, including Cup Series events, is confirmed by January 31st each year. An organizer wishing to submit a bid to host a MB Cup event must inform the MCA Cyclocross Committee of this intention no later than January 1st.

The Race Course

A Manitoba Cup course must be at a venue that provides sufficient challenge to ALL categories of racers, with all sections of the course being rideable in all weather conditions.

The course must be marked and available for pre-riding by the time registration opens the day of the race. If possible a GPS map should be made available and be included in the Race Notice that will be posted on the MCA website for the purpose of advertising the event and informing the general membership. Events shall be posted no less than one month prior to event date.

The course must pass the Commissaire's inspection and be clearly marked. Marshals shall be posted periodically at strategic points to record race events, lap count, and provide communication to medical personnel if and when necessary. Failure of the organizer to provide adequate marshaling of the course, effective communication devices and an emergency action plan may result in the cancellation of the event at the Commissaire's discretion.

The techzone shall be located in such a manner so as not to impede the progress of lapping riders or interfere with the finish line.

Organizers should refer to the UCI Rulebook and Cycling Canada Companion Guide for guidance and clarification on standards and procedures governing Mountain Bike events, particularly the sections on course layout, course marking, marshaling, communications and medical personnel.

The Organizer and the assigned Commissaires should be in contact with each other well before the event to confirm event logistics.

Commissaires

Manitoba Cup races recommends three but a minimum of two Commissaires are required at each race, who will be remunerated \$60/each and \$80/chief for each event by the event organizer on the day of the event. To help offset event costs, 2 of the 3 Commissaires may be members of the organizing club, these club officials must be indicated to the Chief Commissaire no later than February 28th of the racing season.

The Chief Provincial Road Commissaire assigns Commissaires to each event.

Organizers are responsible to ensure the course is safe and well marked. **Commissaires are responsible to ensure the race distance is appropriate to fulfill the Cup race time requirements. Commissaires should inspect the course in person the day of the race event to ensure the organizer has met the requirements.** Commissaires have the authority to change lap times, course distance, or any condition including postponement or cancellation of the event to ensure rider safety. Commissaires will assist with conduct the race start, race timing, verify finish times and positions, rider ranking, and posting of results on-site. The Organizer is responsible for providing appropriate signage and course marking for the Start/Finish area including staging areas for multiple race starts and a well-marked finish line area. The Finish lane must be distinctly separate from the Lap lane if applicable. Please refer to the CCA Rulebook or contact an MCA Commissaire for clarification.

The organizer is responsible for ensuring the results are sent to the MCA director for posting on the MCA website within 48 hours of the event.

Medical

The organizer is responsible for providing medical personnel to provide medical aid as required. The organizer must also provide a mode of transport for removing an injured rider from the race course and emergency medical transport from the site to the nearest medical facility. Remuneration for the medical staff is agreed upon by the organizer and the medical personnel. A first aid kit can be obtained from the MCA office and the organizer will be responsible for restocking it. Please contact your current CycloCross Coordinator for medical service contacts.

Food

The organizer must provide food and a beverage to each registered racer (ie. burgers, sandwiches, bagels, fruit, water, juice etc.). The organizer may also choose to sell food and beverages to non-racers for profit.

Scheduling

Race dates are scheduled by the Mountain Bike Committee in January. Cup races are not to be scheduled on long weekends. Alternate race dates (2) will be available for any unforeseen circumstances that may postpone a race and will be approved by the MCA Mountain Bike Committee. Races will be rescheduled by the MTB Committee exclusively.