



COURSE SETTING GUIDELINES

National Interscholastic Cycling Association
2414 Sixth Street
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www.nationalmtb.org

GENERAL OVERVIEW

As a course setter you will be marking the course for NICA student athletes pre-riding and racing. With the direction of the Chief Course Setter or League Director, you will be placing markings to alert riders to turns, dangers and confirm they are on course. This involves you or your assigned course marking partner to you're your mountain bike with a backpack full of course-setting supplies: course tape, signs, zipties and small wooden stakes. You'll have fun getting out on course with some fellow League supporters. Come well prepared with your mountain biking gear and bring clothing for a range of weather, as well as sunscreen, snacks and drinks.

GOALS

- Mark the directions riders need to go as they ride on single track, double track, fire roads and in some rare cases, closed off pavement.
- Make riders aware of upcoming turns, obstacles and other course features of increased danger.
- **Give riders confidence** they're on course.
- Let riders know if they ride off course.
- NICA's goal is simple: no riders getting off course and lost. And let's not forget these young riders can become fatigued, hypoglycemic and disoriented under those circumstances.

PREPARATION

- Prepare for this volunteer position as if you were going to go for a 3-4 hour ride
- Be sure to check weather conditions to confirm what you're going to wear
- Please arrive ontime. There is a brief orientation and then the group hits the trail for 3-4 hours

PROCEDURE OVERVIEW

- Course Setting Volunteering starts with a brief orientation on equipment, the procedure, general marking guidelines and safety
- Pair up- Course setting is best done in pairs for two reasons
 - Most efficient- one person keeps pack on and other person takes tools and supplies out
 - Is best practices on judgement. No two heads think alike, so varying views on how to mark a section is helpful
- Physical procedure
 - All placed signs and course tapes should not be attached to an existing feature near the trail ie fenceposts, trees, etc.
 - Course tape and signage should be attached to wooden stakes 3-4 feet off the trail
 - Angle stakes away from the course and the direction of the race 10-15 degrees. Angle them more if they are located outside a turn

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- NICA races generally use dozens of markings per mile of its 4-7 mile courses
- Signs should be placed on the right hand side of the trail whenever possible
- Turns generally require three arrows
 - 20-50 feet before the turn

- a few feet before apex of the turn (be sure it is out the way)
- confirmation arrow 50 feet after the turn
- Triple Redundancy is the general rule for all intersections (Ex: arrows plus course tape)
- Course Course tape
 - When there are multiple trails to chose from, mark off the off course trails with course tape out off the course 3–4 plus feet
 - Course tape should be wrapped around stakes placed every 6-8 feet with with sponsor logo face up and towards the course
 - Course tape can also be used to mark off-limits lines
- Arrow Signs
 - Arrow signs are mounted straight ahead, left, or right
 - For a long section of trail without intersections, post a straight ahead sign at least once every half mile
- Caution Signs
 - These are usally marked by the chief course setter, but here are general guidelines
 - Mark areas that require more caution to give plenty of braking time
 - Use more signs for areas where more caution should be used
- Wrong Way Signs
 - Use for obvious wrong turns, in case course tape comes down, especially if the wrong way means riding off into the wilderness
 - Should be mounted “just out of sight” unless *racers actually go the wrong way*
- Race in Progress Signs
 - Mount these opposite the Wrong Way Signs, especially on trails that come from “outside the loop”

SAFETY GUIDELINES

- Prevent injuries from tools
 - Wear eye protection and gloves when hammering stakes
 - Do not ride with tools in hands
- Prevent injury on the trail
 - Be ready for other trail users to be coming full speed down either way of the trail
 - If steep and around a blind feature, have your partner or other course setters alert possible riders coming down the trail
- Exposure
 - Be sure you’re hydrating and eating as if you’re on a ride

EQUIPMENT LIST

- 2 lb mini sledge hammer
- zip ties
- course tape
- wooden stakes
- 4 different styles of signs
 - Arrows Signs
 - Danger Signs
 - Wrong Way Signs
 - Race in Progress Signs

- Folding saw
- Small hedge clippers

VOLUNTEER LOCATIONS AND HOURS

Check in with your volunteer coordinator for specific races and times.

OTHER REFERENCES

Videos of volunteer positions are available online using the following link:

<http://www.nationalmtb.org/nica-race-volunteer-guidelines/>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!