



Georgia Interscholastic Cycling League Middle School Program Policy

To address the growing interest from our constituents to provide guidance and leadership for a middle school cycling program, the Georgia Interscholastic Cycling League (the “Georgia League”) has developed and adopted the following Middle School Program Policy.

The Georgia League Middle School Program Policy is based on the following premises:

1. High school students and middle school students are unique age groups with specific needs and interests that deserve a program of their own.
2. The Georgia League Middle School Program Policy is locally driven and may differ from other leagues in the NICA framework.
3. NICA licensed high school coaches are given the ultimate decision whether or not to include middle school students in their practices.
4. Middle school is defined as 6th, 7th and 8th grades.

While the Georgia League does hold a race series, our philosophy is to balance competitive and non-competitive mountain biking pursuits. At the middle school level, we want to de-emphasize the competitive aspects of the sport even more. We prefer to introduce the younger riders to competition slowly. Though some kids relish competition, many do not. We prefer that kids get excited about cycling before being expected to compete. Our middle school programs will focus on fun, fitness, skills, responsible trail etiquette and sportsmanship.

In light of the preceding philosophy, we want our middle school program team structure to be more flexible than at the high school level.

Each Georgia League high school team will make their own choice with respect to whether or not to include middle school athletes in their program. There is no requirement for high school teams to accept middle school students. Middle school aged groups may start their own programs if there is not a high school program in the area, or if the area high school team does not allow middle school athletes.

Middle School Program Policy Rules:

- KEEPING IT FUN! WE NEED TO RETAIN THESE BOYS AND GIRLS IN OUR PROGRAMS BY ENSURING A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE FOR THEM AT THE EVENTS.
- 3 MS categories for both the boys and girls based on their grade (6th, 7th and 8th grades).
- All categories will have individual race podiums (1st-5th place), but only the 8th grade category (boys and girls) will have series points/overalls and leaders' jersey's.
- MS points will not apply to team points, however if a MS racer is granted an upgrade into a HS category (Freshman category ONLY), then their individual points will apply to their respective team.
- There is no moving between MS grade categories.
- 1st Race staging will be done via a random draw, but subsequent races will have call up's as follows:
 - 8th = Current point standings
 - 6th and 7th = Results from previous race will determine call-ups and the remaining field will be staged via a random draw.

Middle School Category Upgrades

- Middle school athletes in 8th grade will be allowed to petition for a category upgrade (subject to the same rules and deadlines as high school students) to race in the freshman high school category as follows:
 - 8th Grade middle school students who have extensive outside race experience.
 - All petitions must follow the same rules and deadlines as high school petition requests.
 - Middle School students in the 8th grade with extensive outside race experience and at least 5 non-NICA podium finishes may petition to upgrade to the Freshman category.

- All petitions must be submitted through the Team Director to the League Director and a committee will review all petitions and either grant or deny the request based on the information provided
- Any middle school student racing in a high school category will be allowed to compete for both the individual awards (race and series) as well as contributing points to their team's total.