

BMX Racing Rules

A Quick Guide



Who is this for?

This short manual is primarily designed for new regional-level riders. However, even those with more experience might find that there is something here that they didn't previously know. It is not intended as an in-depth guide to the technical regulations (see [link](#)) but to highlight some of the principal rules that govern bmx racing.

The Regulations.

This guide refers to British Cycling (BC) regulations that apply to all regional and national events in the UK. Racing in the territory of another federation (e.g. France or Belgium) means that you race under their regulations. The regulations will be similar but worth checking. If you are lucky enough to attend the World Championships as a challenge rider then the Union Cyclists Internationale (UCI) regulations apply. They may also apply at other international events, depending on your age. As the world governing body, UCI regulations form the basis of the regulations in this country.

The Commissaires.

Remember: the referees, known as Commissaires, are there to ensure that the regulations are correctly applied. If you enter a race it is assumed that you know the regulations that apply. However, don't be afraid to ask for their advice if you are unsure of anything. The final decision rests with the Chief Commissaire. All being well you'll rarely, if ever, meet the Chief Commissaire.

Check Your Entry.

Check your entry when you arrive at the event. Speak to the registration team who will be at the event at least 2 hours before the start of racing. Are you registered in the right class (gender, age group, bike type) and on the right number? It's a simple task, but forgetting to do it can be costly.

The following sections of the regulations are worth noting:

5.3.3 The Pre-Race sheets must be displayed for a period of not less than 15 minutes during which time riders must check their accuracy and inform race administration of any errors.

5.3.4 After the allotted period, the race schedule and order shall be posted on the information board on Moto sheets. No changes will be made after these sheets are published and any rider found to be in the wrong class will not be allowed to compete.

Moto Timing.

Make sure you are on time for your race. It is each rider's responsibility to arrive for their race on time. Most regional events will have ten staging lanes, one race in each (it could be twice this number for national level events), so assuming the gate drops once per minute you need to be in staging at least 10 minutes before your race. The staging officials are not required to wait for missing riders. Anyone arriving late may lose their gate pick (if relevant) or miss their race altogether.

Jerseys.

Is your race clothing designed to be used in bmx events? If so, then you'll be fine. The jersey regulations state:

9.2.1 The jersey shall be a loose fitted long-sleeved shirt whose sleeves extend down to the rider's wrists. Jerseys used in BMX events should be of a type specifically sold for use in BMX, Moto-Cross or downhill mountain biking. Custom produced jerseys of this type and matching these requirements are permitted.

9.2.2 Road style jerseys, skinsuits, or one-piece suits comprising the jersey and the pants/shorts are not permitted for use in BMX events, nor are jerseys with zippers, other than a very short (less than 10cm long) zipper at the collar.

Pants and Shorts.

It's a similar story with race pants. Jeans used to be allowed but are no longer accepted. Tracksuit bottoms are also not permitted. The regulations state:

9.3.1 The aim of BMX leg wear is to provide protection and reduce the risk of injury. This can be achieved with either long pants, or with shorts combined with suitable knee and shin protection. Such long pants or shorts must be of a type that is specifically designed, and sold to provide protection in BMX, Moto-Cross or downhill mountain biking. Custom produced pants or shorts of this type and matching the requirements outlined above are permitted.

9.3.2 Long pants of the type described above must be loose fitting, of one-piece construction and made of tear resistant material. They must cover the entire length of both legs until just above the shoe or ankle.

If you prefer to wear shorts, that's fine (if they are designed for bmx), but you must also wear suitable knee and shin protection.

9.3.3 Shorts of the type described above must be loose fitting, of one-piece construction and made of tear resistant material. They must be worn together with suitable leg protection that covers the entire knee and the entire shin until just above the shoe or ankle. Protection that is designed to only cover the knee or only cover the upper part of the shin shall not be accepted. Such protection must be of a type that is specifically designed, constructed and sold to protect the knee and entire shin for BMX, Motocross or downhill mountain biking, and shall extend until just above the shoe or ankle.



These are not acceptable; they don't cover the shin down to the ankle.



These pads cover the knees and shins and are perfectly acceptable.

Helmets and Cameras.

Don't forget your full-face (with a peak) helmet—which must be worn at all times when on the track—and full-finger gloves. Goggles are optional. Cameras are not permitted during racing. They may be used during practice but must be attached to the bike and not the person.



Preparing Your Bike.

There is detailed guidance on bikes in Part 10 of the regulations. The highlights:

- * Remove chain guards, reflectors or other sharp or protruding items.
- * Handlebar grips that cover the ends of the handlebars are mandatory.
- * A working rear brake is a minimum requirement.
- * Multiple gear systems are unusual but are permitted.
- * Check that the bike has the correct front number plate. Side plates are not required unless finish line cameras are used, which is not the case in the East region currently.



The only thing this bike is missing is its number plate and its rider!

It is the responsibility of the rider, or their parents, to ensure that the bike is in condition to race. The Commissaire is under no obligation to delay racing to allow a bike to be fixed, except if the problem is outside the rider's control. For example, if they have picked up a puncture in the staging area.

Racing Incidents.

There are many potential infringements. Here are some of the most common. Note the importance of the word 'deliberate'.

Bike position on the gate.

The front wheel must remain stationary and in contact with the gate right up until the end of the voice command "Riders Ready - Watch the Gate".

Deliberate Interference.

If necessary, the commissaires will determine whether an infringement was caused deliberately or not. An infringement is considered to be caused deliberately, in the event that it could have been avoided.

Deliberate Force Off The Track.

This is a specific type of deliberate interference. It involves direct action by the offending rider, such as making deliberate, secondary contact with an elbow, or by deliberately riding into a rider so as to cause him or her to crash.

Track Re-Entrance.

This offence is judged to have occurred when a rider cuts out a significant section of the track (e.g. the rider cuts across the inside line of a corner or exits the track on one of the straights, passing one or more obstacles, and in so doing gains an advantage).

This may also result in a rider being judged as not finishing the track, even if the action was not deliberate but an advantage was gained. For example: an elite or junior male rider rides on the challenge side of a split straight, missing all or part of a “pro” section.

Gaining an advantage does not necessarily mean gaining a position. The advantage could be in remaining in the same position, whereas had the rider completed the track as required, he or she may have dropped back a place or more.

Contact Between Riders.

While BMX is a contact sport, any deliberate contact that is judged to have the intent of impeding a competitor’s progress may be penalised by the Commissaires.

Obstruction In The Final Straight.

This form of interference refers to a deliberate act to prevent a rider from overtaking in the final straight. This does not mean riders have to ride in a straight line.

Third-Party Interference.

No outside parties may interfere with a race that is in progress. This may cause the race to be re-run.

It is worth mentioning here the importance of not running onto the track during racing. Although it can be distressing to see someone take a heavy fall, the medical team should be left to deal with the situation. You should only enter the track if invited by a Commissaire.

Racing Penalties.

An Official Warning.

This carries no penalty as such but two warnings at an event results in automatic disqualification. These are normally handed out for things like ignoring the instructions of a Commissaire or minor behaviour problems (swearing, kicking your bike after crashing).

Relegation.

A more severe penalty than an official warning. Normally given for deliberate infractions like cutting the track to gain an advantage or deliberate interference. A Relegation results in the rider being placed last and given two more points than the number of riders in the race. [Remember it is your aim to get the lowest score; 1 for 1st, 2 for 2nd etc.]

Disqualification.

This is the most severe penalty that a Commissaire can apply. Disqualification means that the rider is eliminated from the event and loses any ranking points and prizes. Disqualification would apply in situations of violent, or other unacceptable, behaviour or because of a second warning.

Fines do exist but these are usually issued by BC, rather than the the Commissaires, for serious disciplinary issues.

Making A Protest.

Decisions made by the Commissaires concerning track incidents cannot be protested.

There are only two possible areas of protest:

Classification: if you believe a rider is riding in the wrong class. For example, a rider who was riding in the 15 year old class in one event but now riding in a 13 year old class.

Finish Position: if you believe that your finish position has been incorrectly scored. If finish line cameras are not used this will be based on the majority opinion of the finish line scorers. You must make this protest as soon as possible. If the next round of racing has started then it's too late. You have 15 mins to protest a result in the final.

In all protests the decision of the Chief Commissaire is final.

Video footage will not be accepted as evidence in any protest; it won't be viewed by the Chief Commissaire.

Finally...

If you have any questions regarding the regulations feel free to ask any of the Commissaire team. If you are considering competing above regional level they can offer advice on how to prepare for national and international events.

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