

**Orange County Carolina Crushers
Mountain Bike Team:
2019-2020 Season**



Who are the Orange County Carolina Crushers?

The Orange County Carolina Crushers is a composite co-ed mountain bike race team that races in the North Carolina Interscholastic Cycling League (NCICL). The team is comprised of both middle and high school student athletes that live in Orange County as well as students living in Chapel Hill/Carrboro but NOT attending a CHCCS school. As the league grows and new teams continue to form, please contact us to see if we are the appropriate team for you.

What are the other teams in area if I do not meet the above criteria?

The other local teams that you may contact directly for more information are:

Durham County: Eric Briet, Head Coach -- loba_breit@yahoo.com

Chatham County Composite: Stephanie Orlando, Team Director -- steph76orlando@hotmail.com and Alicia Landis, Head Coach -- aslandis@gmail.com

Phillips Middle School: Adam Searing, Head Coach -- adamsearing@icloud.com

Culbreth Middle School: Bryan Engle, Head Coach -- bryanaengle@gmail.com

Smith Middle School:

McDougle Middle School:

Chapel Hill High School: Ben Reed, Head Coach -- breed@chccs.k12.nc.us

East Chapel Hill High School: Don Rose, Head Coach -- donrose@email.unc.edu

Carrboro High School: Steve Rogers, Head Coach -- sfr1224@gmail.com

What is the NCICL? <http://www.northcarolinamtb.org/>

The North Carolina Interscholastic Cycling League (NCICL) is a non-profit organization that is governed by the National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA). NCICL was chartered in 2015, and the League's first official season was 2016-2017. During the League's first season, we had over 300 registered student athletes across the state and over 30 official teams. By year 3, the League had grown to 738 student athletes and 45 teams. The NCICL mission is to enable every North Carolina middle and high school student to develop a strong mind, a strong body and strong character through lifelong participation in cycling. We:

- Fill a niche for students whose needs may not met by traditional interscholastic sports
- Get kids outside
- Welcome and support diversity in ability, ethnicity, gender, orientation, and skill level
- Promote trail-building efforts and environmental awareness
- Improve focus and academic performance in our student-athletes
- Promote health & fitness in teens & their families

What is NICA? <http://www.nationalmtb.org/>

The National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) is a character building organization focused on:

- Fun
- Inclusivity
- Equity
- Respect
- Community

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NICA has been around since 2009, when it was originally established in northern California. NICA's sole purpose is to develop mountain biking as an interscholastic club sport for high school and middle school students in every state. As of the 2018-2019 season, there are 28 leagues in 27 different states, with more than 18,000 student-athletes, almost 800 teams, and more than 9,000 coaches. This represents an average annual growth in student athletes of 48% since 2009 and an average annual growth in coaches of 75%!

Who is eligible to join?

- All students districted to an Orange County school, provided the school they attend does not have a school-based team.
- Middle and high school students districted to a CHCCS school who do NOT attend their districted school.
- Homeschooled students living in Orange County or within the CHCCS school district

When does the season start?

Although the official season starts December 1st and runs through the end of May, pre-season begins October 15 and we will be holding several trail rides, as well as a trail building opportunity and education event at a local bike shop. All pre-season events are open to returning and new/potential/interested student athletes. Attending a pre-season does not obligate you to join the team – just come try us out! Registration for athletes also begins October 15th. A full list of preseason events may be found here: **(TBD - Will add link)**

In addition to the pre-season events themselves, we will hold 2 parent/athlete interest meetings: 10/15/19 and 11/6/19. Both meetings will be held at the Chapel Hill Public Library and begin at 6:00. While it is not necessary for returning athletes and their families to attend, we encourage new and/or interested families to attend one of these sessions.

What equipment is needed for the season?

A mountain bike and helmet. The mountain bike needs to have knobby tires (vs slick tires like a road bike), and cannot have bar ends. We also require each student athlete to carry a tube and pump in case of a flat. It is also important to have a water bottle and water bottle cage on the bike and/or hydration pack so the student athlete can stay hydrated. Lastly, we require a strong front light and rear red light for winter practices. We require that the light be a **minimum** of 500 lumens, although most athletes prefer stronger. A full equipment list of required and optional equipment may be found here: http://carolinacrushersmtb.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Equipment-List_2018-2019_Season.pdf

What are the cost associated with the season?

NICA's Student athlete registration fee: \$65.

Crushers' team fees: \$75.

Equipment (\$0-\$1000+, one-time) – mostly for a bike, if you do not already have one

If racing, the following is also required:

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Race Registration fees: \$40/race (5 races/season but you do not have to race in them all), plus travel costs for races (e.g. gas, lodging/camping, food)

Team Jersey: \$60 estimate

The costs may be an issue for my family, are there resources to help?

Absolutely. We (and the league) never want fees and/or the cost of equipment to be barrier to participating with the team. There is always a way for your child to participate. Just contact one of the primary coaches (Tonya or Marissa) to confidentially discuss.

Who are the coaches?

The Crushers have many fantastic coaches that volunteer their time and skills to the team – but we always welcome newcomers! All coaches, even Level 1, are registered with the league, pass a background check, and take on-line courses in concussion training, risk management, coaching philosophy and athlete abuse awareness. The two primary coaches/leads are:

Tonya Miltier, Head Coach

Marissa Elk, Team Director and Asst Head Coach

When / where are practices?

Weekday practices are Tuesday and Thursday from 5:30-7:00 PM at Cedar Falls Park in Chapel Hill, although we will be working on alternate locations as well this year. Our weekend practices are on alternating Saturday and Sundays and are held at Carolina North Forest (CNF) (Locust Lot off of Municipal Drive) and also at other local trails. The basic weekend schedule is as follows:

- 1st Weekend Sat 10:00 AM CNF
- 2nd Weekend Sun 1:00 PM Away
- 3rd Weekend Sat 10:00 AM Away
- 4th Weekend Sun 1:00 PM CNF
- 5th Weekend Sat 10:00 AM CNF

The coaching staff reserves the right to change the schedule and we will notify all student athletes of the same. For both weekday practices and trail rides, we ask student athletes to arrive approximately :15 early to get ride ready.

Does my student athlete have to attend every practice?

No. We do request that every student athlete attend practices as regularly as possible. We recognize student athletes may have conflicts with other sporting/personal activities. The more regular a student athlete attends Crushers' practices, however, the quicker the student athlete will learn skills taught, gain confidence on the bike, obtain needed fitness for races – and also bond with other teammates

My student athlete is new to MTB biking or does not have a lot of trail experience. Is that okay?

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No problem. We have athletes ranging from those that are brand new to trail riding to those that race competitively. While we often introduce / work on skills in groups, we also break up by ability whenever necessary so that all athletes are coached to their skill level and endurance. This is particularly true on the weekend trail rides.

My child wants to ride, but does not want to race or is not sure. Can he/she still be on the team?

Yes! Everyone is welcome on the team, regardless of whether they race or not. The primary focus of the organization is youth development, not winning. While the majority of our athletes raced at least once last year, we had several who chose not to or were not able to race. Everyone is valued as a team member, whether they race or not.

My student athlete is interested in racing. What does that entail?

NICA races are held throughout the state and are essentially weekend events with pre-riding of the course and other events taking place on Saturday of race weekend and the actual race taking place on Sunday. The races this year are as follows:

- TBD

In addition to the dates above, the league has reserved TBD as rain dates should inclement weather force a race cancellation.

Who will my student athlete race against?

In general, your student athlete will race against same grade/same gender/same skill level student athletes. There are opportunities for the more advanced athletes to race in a more competitive group, if they wish - the A groups below for middle schoolers or via a petitioning process to race above your grade level.

The categories for 2019-2020 are:

High School

- Freshman
- JV1
- JV2
- Varsity

Middle School

- 6, 7B, 8B – less competitive, less laps
- 7A, 8A – more advanced, competitive field

My student athlete (or I) would like to try it out before committing. Is that possible?

Yes. During the preseason all you need to do is fill out the waiver for all participants (parents and athletes) and join the events. If the season has already begun, the waiver may be used for one-time participation after which formal registration is required to continue. The waiver may be found here: <http://www.nationalmtb.org/blog/wp-content/uploads/AgreementtoParticipateandReleaseofLiability.pdf>

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I am interested in coaching. Can I join the coaching staff?

Absolutely. The more coaches we have available, the more individualized attention we can provide our student athletes. Volunteering as a coach also gives you something to do while your athlete is on the trails and gives you a workout too! All coaches are required to register with the league (\$25), obtain a background check (\$38 Year 1, \$11 subsequent years) and take on-line courses in concussion training, risk management, coaching philosophy, and athlete abuse awareness (free).

Please be aware that NICA is now using Verified Volunteers as their background verification service, so if you have already have an account with Verified Volunteers through another organization, you may share your account with NICA and not have to pay an additional fee. The reverse is also true - if you sign up with NICA and later volunteer with another Verified Volunteer organization, you may share your background check with that organization.

What if I would like to coach, but do not have much experience or am not a very fast rider?

No problem. Just as we have student athletes of varying abilities and strengths, so too do the coaches. There are also many on-line and hard copy resources we can direct you to if you want to read up on coaching mountain bike skills and/or coaching the teenage athlete.

I would like to volunteer, but am not a rider. Is there a place for me?

Of course! We have many places you can help from managing social media to developing and managing our sponsors to being the team photographer. We also try to plan at least one off the bike session each month, so if you are interested in leading a yoga class, teaching first aid, doing a talk on sports nutrition for young athletes or anything of benefit to the athletes, just let us know. Tell us what you are interested in doing – or ask us what we need!

I would like to sponsor the team or an athlete in need. How do I do that?

That is great news! Just contact Tonya or Marissa to discuss how you would like to be involved. We have various levels of team sponsorship available with corresponding recognition and we gratefully accept offers to sponsor students in need of help with fees and/or equipment. You may also find information on team sponsorship on our website:
<http://carolinacrushersmtb.org/sponsorship-info/>

We're in! What do we need to do to get started?

First off, let us know! Send an email to Marissa with your primary email letting her know you would like to join the team. She will send you out invitations to 2 different systems. The first is PitZone, the league's management software. There you will register your athlete, sign all waivers and pay all league fees (team fees are separate). That is also where you will register and pay for races, although there is no need to do that until shortly before each race if you prefer as you only pay for those in which your athlete races. The second system is TeamSnap, our team communication system. There you will find the team schedule, roster and other important items of information. It is also where you will indicate your athlete's availability for practices, races and other events. Lastly – *and this is important* – please take your athlete's bike and our safety form to one of our sponsor bike shops (Back Alley Bikes or Clean Machine/Bicycle Chain) for a free safety inspection. Simply identify yourself as a NICA/Crusher student athlete. Then, scan or

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take a picture and send the completed form to Marissa or just bring it to your first practice. We ask that this safety inspection be performed prior to your athlete's first official practice. Safety forms may be downloaded here: [\(will add link\)](#)

Still have questions? Want to sign up? Please feel free to reach out to us...

Tonya Miltier tonyamiltier@yahoo.com

Marissa Elk marissa@theelks.net