



Velo NB Cyclo-Cross Guidelines

The guidelines below aim to outline best practice when devising a course and holding an event. Not every element may be feasible at every venue, nor will every element be necessary, especially at small local events. Cyclo-cross is not the same as mountain biking, and requires different skills. Mountain bikes are welcome at the events but a primary objective must be to construct a cyclo-cross course not a mountain bike trail. A good rule of thumb is to examine a proposed section of course and ask the question: "Would it be an advantage to use a mountain bike here?" If the answer is "yes", try to look for an alternative.

Course

A cyclo-cross course should include road, country and forest paths and meadowland alternating in such a way as to ensure changes in the pace of the race and allowing riders to recuperate after difficult sections. Courses should be sufficiently wide to allow overtaking at all points. The international regulations stipulate a minimum width of 3 meters, and this should be the goal for as much of the course as possible, including technical sections. "Single Track" should be avoided.

The course length should be such that senior riders lap times are between 6 and 8 minutes.

The course may pass over bridges or footbridges as long as they are at least 3 meters wide and have protective barriers on both sides. Bridges or footbridges should be covered with an anti-slip surface.

Course Marking

Plastic tape attached to wooden or plastic stakes is the norm for course marking (metal stakes should be avoided). Obvious straightforward sections, which connect one technical feature to another, can be left unmarked, with course marking restricted to indicating changes of direction.

Start / Finish

The start section must be on firm ground, and preferably on surfaced road. It should have a length of at least 150 meters and a width of at least 6 meters. It must be as straight as possible and not include any descent. The first narrowing or obstacle after the start section may not be abrupt; it must be such as to allow all the riders to pass easily

The finish section must run straight for at least 100 meters. This is to allow the officials and recorders to clearly view the riders as they approach. The section must be flat or uphill. There should in any case be sufficient braking space after the finish line to allow for a sprint finish.

Ascents and Descents

The distribution of ascents and descents around a course can be the key to staging a good event. Try to mix these with technical sections and less demanding flat sections of the. Cyclo-cross courses do not require a huge variation in elevation. Generally, uphill sections should be short but challenging.

Care should be taken when devising descents to ensure that they are not excessively dangerous. "Extreme" features such as drop-offs should be avoided. Consideration must be given to providing safe "run-outs" at the immediate foot of steep descents, without sharp bends or potential hazards such as buildings or trees.

Obstacles

The course may include no more than six man made obstacles. Obstacle shall mean any part of the course which is likely to require riders to dismount. The length of an obstacle may not exceed 80 meters.

Wooden planks The planks must be solid for their entire height and not made of metal. They must have a **maximum height of 40 cm** and extend the entire width of the course. The course may include a single section of multiple planks. This obstacle consists of two planks placed a minimum 4 meters and maximum 6 meters apart.

Steps The ascent of steps may be used as an obstacle. Descents of flights of steps may not be used.

Sand Sand pits if incorporated should be located on a straight section and have a level entrance and exit.

Stream Crossings Deep water crossings such as streams should be avoided.

Ditches Shallow ditches are acceptable where it is possible to ride in and out (and taking into account the provisions for water crossings if water is present) or for narrower ditches be obliged to dismount.

Duration

The race itself should be between 40 and 60 minutes including the last lap.

Competitors

Competitors will be divided into categories based on their ability. Riders who do not hold a valid racing license will ride in the "D category." Categories will be as follows:

Category A Male
Women's Category A
Category B
Women's Category B
Category C
Category D (unlicensed riders)