



Early Spring 2024 Orientation Document

Welcome to the Indiana BMX League - created specifically for new BMX families!

The purpose of this document is to brief you on what to expect during our League sessions, and also how to prepare for the big day.

What Is BMX Racing?

The fastest-growing family-centered sport in America, BMX Racing has been around since the late 1960s, giving kids the chance to express their competitive side in a safe environment, as they race their bicycle against peers, over obstacles on a dirt course. Parents, grandparents, siblings and other family members are encouraged to come to the races to cheer-on their rider. When your friends ask what you guys are doing, and you say "BMX," it's always a good idea to say "BMX Racing," since most people may assume it is "flips and tricks" instead.

About Indiana BMX League

BMX Racing has many levels of proficiency, and is one of the rare sports where those with little experience compete on the same day as those at the expert or even professional level. The Indiana BMX League is designed for beginning riders. It is designed to bring families into the sport slowly and help riders learn the ropes gradually, with an emphasis on fun, before bringing them in to the next-level "Open Racing" program here at Steel Wheels BMX. BMX Racing is about much more than winning; it's about how the riders' character, integrity and self-confidence develop through their time at the track.

League Session Dates and Times

The League's regularly scheduled days are Saturdays, for five sessions. Session times are Noon-3PM, unless total enrollment is less than 30 riders, in which case it will be 12:30-3PM. We will let you know, in the week two briefing. Here are the exact dates:

Saturday February 24 (Noon-3PM)

Saturday March 2 (Noon-3PM or 12:30-3PM, depending on enrollment)

Saturday March 9* (Noon-3PM or 12:30-3PM, depending on enrollment)

Saturday March 16 (Noon-3PM or 12:30-3PM, depending on enrollment)

(Skip March 23)

March 30 (Noon-3PM or 12:30-3PM, depending on enrollment)

*Photo Day

Sessions Meet At:

Steel Wheels Indoor BMX

709 N Hobart Rd (Behind Burger King)

Hobart, IN 46342

Contact Phone/Text: 312-919-3637 (Mike Cell)

-continued-



-Page 2-

League Session Timeline (may be revised on week two)

12:00PM-12:10PM - Check-in and get-ready

12:10PM-1:30PM - Instruction

1:30PM-1:45PM - Snack/Water Break

1:45PM - Report to Staging

1:55PM - Racing!

After Racing - "Open Ride" (if time permits)

** The first 30 mins of the first session are slightly different than the other sessions.*

First Session Stuff

Please arrive 15-mins early on the first day to handle paperwork and bike/helmet sizing (if needed)

When you arrive at the track for the first session, here is what to expect:

- 1). The PAPERWORK TABLE is directly ahead, inside the entry door. ALL riders must stop at this table, to pick up your Paperwork. Please read and sign both sides/pages of the USA BMX paperwork, as well as the League Parent Agreement
- 2). The CHECK-IN table will be to the right of the paperwork table. Please hand your signed paperwork to one of the volunteers at the table. They will hand you your RIDER PACKET in return (Jersey, Number Plate and Loaner helmet tag, if any).
- 3). If you are using a loaner helmet, please proceed to the HELMET room to pick up and be fitted for a helmet (inside the registration building, next to concessions. Your loaner helmet card will have your rider number on it. The volunteer will place this card on the helmet, so you are using the same helmet each week.
- 4). If you requested a LOANER BIKE when you signed up, you can proceed to the bike sizing station. You can then attach your number plate to the handlebars, using the paper punchers and "fuzzy ties" provided. Please leave your number plate on the loaner bike until the last session, at which point you can take it home as a keepsake of your time in League, in the Early Spring of 2024.

****Loaner Equipment is not to be removed from the premises****

- 5). After you have your loaner equipment (or if you do not require loaner equipment), please park your bikes and find a seat in the bleachers until we start the session. The first order of business is to walk the track without bikes and helmets.

-continued-



-Page 3-

First Order of Business...

First thing we do on day one is a TRACK WALK--so parents and riders can become familiar with the layout of the course, and ask any questions they may have. This is done WITHOUT bikes and helmets. Once the track walk is complete, the coach will ask riders to grab their bikes and helmets, and meet in the STAGING AREA (you will find out where this is on day-one).

As We Begin the Session...

After the track walk, riders will strap-up their helmet, grab their bikes and, in an orderly fashion (as much-as can be expected from a bunch of excited new BMXers), proceed to the "staging area" on the right side of the building. Then, our INSTRUCTION session will begin, with our League coach, and the on-track volunteers. This is a great time for photos and video of the riders, taking their first laps on the track.

Just before the mid-session break, a League volunteer will gather parents to brief you on the format of the racing portion of the day.

You may feel like a "fish out of water" at first, but remember that this is a BEGINNERS-ONLY program-- every question is welcomed and encouraged. By week two, families will know exactly what to do, and what is happening on the track.

After Day-One

Weekly Email Briefing

Sometime on the day before League, you will receive an email with that week's "briefing." The weekly briefing contains information specific to that week's session. Please read it carefully, and in full, as it often has information on schedule changes (when necessary), and other critical info. If you are one who does not check email often, we would recommend checking it at 5:00PM the day before, and again at 10:00AM on the morning-of. If you do not receive a briefing, please let us know immediately.

We can also add a second email address to your rider's profile, if needed.

"Regular" Evening Practice and Racing (aka "Open Racing")

During the five weeks the League is in session, League riders participate only in League instruction and racing, and are not-yet eligible to participate in non-league events at the track. This is a foundational and firm rule of participating in the League, and spelled out clearly in the parental agreement.

The reason is that the League program is structured differently than Open Racing, and we do not want to confuse the riders (and parents) with two formats. At the end of the five weeks, riders will get an introduction to open racing; that is the next step in your racer's progression, unless you want to participate in another League season.

-continued-



-Page 4-

What to Wear To the Sessions

After your rider receives their League jersey, be sure your they wear it to the remaining sessions. If it gets lost or damaged, a replacement can be purchased at check-in for \$25. Also, riders should wear jeans and flat shoes with a soft, "grippy" sole.

Special racing pants and jerseys are for "Open Racing," after the league program. Gloves are strongly recommended. "Grippy Gloves" will be available at check-in for \$3.00 (cash only, please).

Your League rider should be dressed, more or less, like this for all League sessions:



What Riders Should Wear

- ✓ **Long-sleeve League shirt (supplied on day one)**
- ✓ **Jeans (No warmups or sweats. Positively no Shorts)**
- ✓ **Athletic Shoes (no Crocs, slides or flip-flops)**

** Some families do not have jeans for their riders, and that is fine. It isn't necessary to go buy new pants or withdraw from the league. Wear what you have, but if you have them, jeans are strongly recommended. We may have some jeans your rider's size in the "donation" box.*

Riders will not be permitted to participate in short pants or short sleeves.

What to Bring To the Sessions

We recommend you bring a gallon jug of water (or whatever you deem appropriate for your rider), labeled with his/her name on it. Also, bring a snack for them to enjoy during our 15-minute break at the mid-point. Nothing too heavy--Fig Newtons, Fruit, Animal Crackers, PB&J sandwich, etc.

Our concession stand serves light snacks (hot dogs, nachos, etc), as well as cold beverages. Please bring small bills!

And, yes, if you're riding your own bike and/or using your own helmet, be sure to bring those too :)

-continued-



-Page 5-

Photo Day

Professional-quality photos are an important keepsake for your family's time at the BMX track. Trust us when we say that you will be looking at these images in 20 or 30 years and reliving the great times you had racing BMX. We do it all the time with our photos from the 80s and 90s!

On week THREE of this season, our League Photographer will be in the house for photo day.

Packages are \$45 and include high resolution digital downloads of your images, so you can make unlimited prints of your images; or \$65 for families who have multiple riders. The package includes a rider racing/action shot, an individual shot of the rider and their bike, a photo of the rider and their family.

RIDER PHOTO PACKAGE (DIGITAL) - \$45



ACTION



FAMILY



RIDER

There will be more info on Photo Day, including a sign-up link, in a special mid-week briefing.

“What’s Next After League?”

It's a natural, and understandable, question to ask “what's next?” Trust us when we say that we have all the next steps in your BMX journey well-in-mind. We will start to bring you up-to-speed on that with the week FOUR briefing. At this point, it should be all about fun, family and new friends, so enjoy the Beginners-only experience that League provides for these-few weeks.

End-Of-Season Awards

At the end of the five-week season, the top three riders in each age class (based on their finishes in the five race days) will receive “podium” awards for their accomplishment. All others with racing points on the board will receive a “Personal Progression Award” to recognize their efforts and individual achievement over the five weeks. It is NOT a “participation trophy,” because it requires the rider to race at least one lap, in order to earn the necessary points to earn a trophy.

The awards will be handed out at a season-end “Pizza Party” which will immediately follow the last race of the season, at the track.

-continued-



-Page 6-

Frequently Asked Questions

What if we have to miss a session?

We recommend not missing sessions, if at all possible, since your rider accrues points for every lap they race, in every session. But if it is necessary, just pick back up where you left off and come back to the next scheduled session. No "make up" sessions can be provided.

I have a friend who wants to join the League, can s/he join after the season starts?

Yes! We take "late season" enrollments up to Weds, after the first session (if there are spots available). The tuition is the same, at \$149, but so's the fun.

They can sign up at <http://indianabmxleague.com>

I want to buy a bike for my rider. Can you recommend one, and where to get it?

Yes, we can give you advice and point you in the right direction on which size bike would be best for your rider. See Mike Carruth or Jackie Altizer for information on League-specific discounts.

What if I have a question or concern between sessions? Who can I contact?

Contact Indiana BMX League coordinator, Mike Carruth at 312-919-3637 or via email at info@indianabmxleague.com.

-end-