

# Yearlong Calendar

Being a coach means thoughtful preparation, communication, and planning to pull off a successful race season! We've put together this outline to help new and returning coaches get a sense of what a typical Oregon League year looks like.

## OFF SEASON (January – March)

- January-February – Teams host informational meetings in their town to share info about their team, the Oregon League, and NICA. Teams volunteer with local trail alliance groups.  
\*\*NICA will be hosting a series of virtual Leaders' Summits. This is required for Level 3 Coaches and is free to attend. Email [heather@oregonmtb.org](mailto:heather@oregonmtb.org) for more info.
- March – Continue trail work and informational meetings. Get together with other coaches and interested adults in your area to confirm who is in to start/support your team.

## PRESEASON (April – June)

- April – Establish team leadership roles. Plan preseason calendar (up to 6 approved team events).
- May – Host informational meetings for interested families in your area. Host preseason recruiting rides before school gets out.
- June – Confirm practice schedule and ensure riders/coaches are registered

## IN SEASON (July – November)

- July – Practices begin! Design and order kits.
- August – Practices continue. Work with parents to plan race weekends. Race 1.
- September – Races 2 and 3. Practices continue.
- October – Races 4 and 5 (State Champs). Work with parents to plan an end-of-year party. Host “bring a friend” ride with your team. Meet with coaches to discuss plans for next season.



- November – Confirm head coach for next season. Team wrap-up and party (announce any coaching changes?). Consider fundraising for the following season.

## Strategic Planning

If you're transitioning between seasons, here's a guide to help you think through the next steps:

Step 1 – Work with other team leadership to create a vision for your team longer term. This can be super fun and inspiring.

Step 2 – Based on what you wrote in step 1, describe what you'd like your team to look like next year. Keep in mind that teams mature incrementally!

Step 3 – Take stock of where you are now, in terms that relate to where you'd like to be next year.

Step 4 – List the main tasks that need to be accomplished to get you “from here to there”.

Step 5 – Get someone to “own” each of the tasks you laid out in step 3.

Step 6 – Using the calendar below as a guide, work with “owners” from step 4 to put target completion dates on their tasks.

Step 7 – Set a date for everyone to check in on progress. Remember to give yourselves some time off after this season wraps up!

Here's summary of a make-believe team going through the above process:

*In preparation for the end of our first season, we got together as a crew of coaches for a happy hour planning session. We started by talking about what inspired us to start the*



team in the first place, and what we hope this team can grow into. We shared stories from this season that illustrate why this is worth all the work!

We agreed that our favorite aspects of coaching are forming quality relationships with student-athletes and their families, introducing youth to mountain biking, and exploring new riding areas together during weekends. We also agreed that it's realistic to remain a composite team for another year, but to use next season to start forming relationships at local schools. We see the team as the catalyst to get school-based teams going over time, and also as the community's go-to entry point for kids who want to start mountain biking but aren't sure how.

For next year, we want to grow from 8 riders (6 boys, 2 girls) to about 15 riders, with ideally half boys/half girls. We think that's completely manageable with one more coach (there are three of us now) and a bit of parental support. We also want to make sure that 2-3 of those riders come from programs in town that work with underserved youth. Though we didn't do any fundraising this year, we think we can get between \$1,000-\$2,000 from donations and local sponsors to help offset costs and pay for coach training.

We're planning to split these tasks up in the following way: I will work with a parent to host an end-of-season party and fundraiser. We'll do a potluck and ask for a donation at the door, and also invite a few friends who own businesses and might want to sponsor us next year. We'll have a few student-athletes and a coach speak about what this experience has meant to each of them. We'll ask the attendees to help us spread the word to other youth in town—especially girls, and explain that we are seeking donations and sponsorship to set us up for next year. We'll host this party the first week of December.

Jerry will own recruitment, and organize a "bring a friend" ride as one of our last practices. He'll communicate with student-athletes about how to invite their friends, get signed waivers, etc. Over the winter, Jerry will approach an alternative school and the local foster care organization to share information about the team and see if the coordinators know of anyone who would like to learn more. In April, Jerry will plan another one of these rides as a pre-season activity.



*Laura is going to check with the existing parents to see if they'll step up as carpool and camping coordinators and help manage the kit ordering process next year. She'll also search out several new coaching prospects from the local women's cycling community.*

*We are all excited to get some time off over the winter, so we're planning to have another happy hour in February to check in on how this is all going. At that point we'll still have three months of school left to adjust this plan if we need to.*

