

Chapter 4

Cyclo-cross

4. Cyclo-cross Racing

4A. Course and obstacles

4A1. The course shall be held over varying terrain including roads, country or forest paths, and open terrain alternating in such a way as to ensure changes in the pace of the race and allow the riders to recuperate after difficult sections.

4A2. The course shall be rideable in all conditions, regardless of the weather. Clay or easily flooded areas, such as fields, should be avoided.

4A3. The course shall form a closed circuit of a minimum length of 2.5 km and maximum 3.5 km, of which at least 90% shall be rideable.

4A4. Over its full length, the course shall be a minimum of 3 meters wide and be well marked and protected. The use of dangerous elements, such as wires (barbed or not), and sharp or uncapped metal poles shall be forbidden. Furthermore, the course shall not be placed near any object that could constitute a danger for riders.

4A5. An assembly point for starters (roll-call zone) shall be provided and marked off behind the starting line. For championships and other major events eight lanes with a width of 75 cm and a length of 10 meters shall be marked off at the start line to facilitate organizing the riders into starting order.

4A6. The starting stretch shall be a minimum of 200 meters in length and at least 6 meters wide to allow the field to string out properly. It shall be as straight as possible and not downhill. The first narrowing or obstacle after the starting stretch may not be abrupt, but shall allow all the riders to pass easily.

4A7. The finishing stretch shall be a straight line. It shall have a minimum length of 100 meters and a minimum width of 6 meters for championships or 4 meters for other events (6 meters is recommended). It shall be flat or uphill.

4A8. The starting and finishing stretches shall be free of obstacles.

4A9. Obstacles

(a) An obstacle is a part of the course likely to require riders to dismount.

(b) The total length of obstacles should not exceed 10% of the course distance.

(c) The maximum length of an obstacle is 80 meters; the maximum height is 40cm.

(d) The course may include a maximum of 6 artificial obstacles.

(e) Artificial sand pits shall be between 40 and 80 meters in length and at least 6 meters wide, on a straight part of the course. The entrance and exit to a pit shall be at the same level as the course (no drop-off or step up).

4A10. The course may include a single section of temporary artificial barriers. This shall consist of two barriers of wooden or other non-metallic material, standing vertically, up to 40cm tall, between 4 and 6 meters apart, and taking up the full width of the race course. The surfaces of the barriers must have no gaps from the top to the ground. Barriers may be placed on flat or uphill terrain; downhill barriers are expressly forbidden.

4A11. Races which are not UCI events, national championships, or used to qualify riders for national teams or international competition may have two additional sets of temporary artificial barriers (3 total). The barriers must meet the specifications in 4A10, and the total number of artificial obstacles may not exceed 6. The addition of additional temporary barriers should be done only in unusual circumstances (e.g., local tradition at a particular event or the lack of suitable terrain)

4A12. The course may cross bridges or footbridges provided that they are a minimum of 3 meters wide and that there is a guard rail on both sides. A non-slip surface (carpet, wire mesh, or special anti-slip paint) shall be used on bridges and

footbridges. A separate footbridge shall be provided for spectators.

4A13. No acrobatics on the part of the riders shall be required to overcome obstacles.

4A14. Having consulted the Race Director, the Chief Referee may decide that artificial obstacles shall be removed if the circuit is unusually slippery.

4A15. Feeding is generally not permitted unless specifically authorized by the Chief Referee. If authorized, there is normally no feeding in the first two and final two laps of the race, and a temperature of at least 68 degrees is recommended. All feeding takes place in the pit lane, unless the Chief Referee specifies otherwise.

4B. Equipment pits

4B1. An equipment pit is the only part of the circuit where riders can change wheels or bicycles.

4B2. Two equipment pits shall be located around the course, in agreement with the Chief Referee, in places where speeds are not high but not on stony, gravel, or downhill stretches. They shall be straight and free of obstacles. If, during each lap, the course passes two points sufficiently close to each other, just one pit – known as a double pit – may be set up at that point. A double pit is required for championships and recommended for other events.

4B3. In the equipment pits, the race course and the pit lane shall be separated and distinctly marked by tape at the very least. The pit lane shall be a minimum of 3 meters wide at all points. Adjacent to the pit lane shall be an area with a minimum depth of 2 meters reserved for mechanics and stationing of bicycles and equipment.

4B4. The equipment pits shall be sign-posted and marked by means of a yellow flag at the beginning and the end of where the course is divided between the race and pit lanes.

4B5. In championship events, a supply of water for cleaning equipment shall be available in the immediate vicinity of the equipment pits. The water supply and connections for high-pressure cleaning equipment shall be made freely available.

4C. Equipment changes

4C1. A rider may use the pit lane only to change a bicycle or wheel.

4C2. Changing of equipment shall be done at the same point with no advance in the rider's position.

4C3. A rider passing the pit entrance and continuing beyond the pit exit (yellow flagged area) may not enter that pit, but must continue around the course to the next pit. A rider not passing the pit exit, may enter that pit after dismounting and walking backwards on the course to the pit entrance.

4C4. The exchanging of wheels or bicycles between riders shall be forbidden.

4D. Starting

4D1. The riders shall assemble in the roll-call zone a maximum of 10 minutes before the start.

4D2. For championships, the call up order shall be listed on the race announcement, information pamphlet, or at registration.

4D3. Any rider causing a false start shall be disqualified.

4E. Duration of races

4E1. The length of the race may be specified by number of laps or by time.

4E2. In events based on time, the number of laps to be ridden shall be determined on the basis of the time of the first rider to complete 2 full laps. From the 3rd lap on, the laps to go will be displayed at the finish line.

4F. Abandons

4F1. Riders dropping out shall immediately remove their body number, leave the course, and may not cross the finish line.

4G. Finish

4G1. Before the start of a race, it should be announced whether lapped riders will be pulled or remain in the race. If riders are to be pulled, the following applies:

(a) Riders who have been lapped shall continue the lap to a designated location before the finish line and withdraw, under the control of the officials.

(b) The Chief Referee may, after consulting with the Race Director, impose the 80% rule. Under this rule, riders whose time gap to the race leader is at least 80% of the race leader's time (calculated using the leader's first lap) will be pulled by the officials except in the final lap. The number of 80% is merely an approximation based on a typical course; the intent is that all riders should be pulled before they are lapped.

(c) Riders who have been pulled because of lapping or the 80% rule will be listed in the results based on their position when pulled and the number of laps remaining. The results will list the number of laps remaining after the lap on which they were pulled.

4G2. If lapped riders are permitted to continue in a race, they finish on the same lap as the leader, and are placed according to the number of laps down and then on their order of finish.