



THE NORTH AMERICAN TRIALS SERIES

REGULATIONS 2005

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Record of Revisions		
Section	Date	Reason
Title Page	2 Feb 04	- Removed "for bicycles"; moved 2004 closer to title; made Paul's name a little smaller
various 5.2 6.2 13.2 13.3 15.1	21 Oct 04	- Minor grammatical changes - Added "Riding the same section twice in a row is strictly prohibited" - Added "or the intent is to remain on a balance beam" - Deleted "(i.e. have 1 gear for example)" - Changed "wheels" to wheel(s) - Deleted "There must be a rear derailleur." - Deleted "There must be at least five working gears." - Added "given there are eligible riders"
various 2.4 2.5 4.1 4.2 4.3 6.2 6.4 6.5 7.1 9 10.6 13.2 13.3	20 Nov 04	- Justified text and grammatical corrections - Since classes are open, trimmed schedule down to one basic timetable. - Removed info on how to distribute prizes between mod & stock in same skill if rider number isn't equal. - Removed stock and mod from categories. - Removed old section 4.2 Combining Categories. - Removed old section 4.3 Riding Two Bikes. - Added guideline to mind strengths/weaknesses of both bikes. - Added "from the start of the section" to the final bullet. - Deleted "bike and" from the final bullet. - Deleted "bike" and "stock" from fourth bullet. - Deleted "had hitherto" and "that" - Added "previous" - Added "Concession of one of the riders..." - Deleted 20" bike characteristics. - Deleted 26" bike characteristics.
3.2 13.1 Table of Contents	23 Nov 04	- Deleted "and determining if riders can ride both stock and mod bikes" - Deleted "for Stock and Modified Categories" - Reformatted table of contents
1.1 1.2 2.1 4.1 4.2 7.1 9 15.1	10 Dec 04	- Replaced "bicycle" with "trials". - Added definition of checker. - Deleted "existing" from the first sentence. - Added "There is no segregation..." - Added section - Added "upper level" to bullet four. - Added "For scorecard rules concerning riders with two bikes, see Sec 4.2." - Deleted "Riders can only compete in one category each year." - Added "It is acceptable for riders to compete on different size bikes over the course of the season."

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1. Introduction

1.1. About NATS

The North American Trials Series is a loosely organized series of events for trials riders, composed of five to seven competitions held annually in the United States and Canada. These competitions are called Bike Trials or Observed Trials. They are freestanding and independent of each other, thus permitting the existence of a North American series without the overhead costs of a fully-fledged governing body. At the same time, it is clearly desirable that the competitions should be governed by a common set of criteria. The regulations set out below are intended to provide a framework for the competitions, but are not intended to override the rules of the local bodies that sanction and insure each event. Where there is no conflict, these regulations apply.

A Bike Trials or Observed Trials Event is a competition in which riders must ride over a series of obstacles without any part of the body touching the ground. An event or competition takes place on a *course* composed of five to ten *sections*, each of which must be completed within a given time. The progress of riders is judged in each section by an Observer and a Timekeeper who give penalty points for infractions. These are recorded on a scorecard that the rider carries. After a specified number of laps through the sections, the rider with the lowest number of penalty points is declared the winner.

1.2. Trials Competition Dictionary

- *Checker* – person observing the rider in a section, synonymous with observer or judge.
- *Clean* – the lowest score a rider can attain in a section, except if the section involves a negative portion.
- *Clean three* – when the rider accumulates three dabs in a section.
- *Dab* – when a rider touches his/her foot on the ground, rock, log, or any other obstacle except their bike.
- *Dirty three* – when rider accumulates four dabs in a section, a score of four is marked as a three, see Sec. 10.4.
- *Five* – max number of points a rider can attain in a section. Also used as a verb, “I just fived a section.”
- *Line* – a small portion of a section.
- *Section* – marked out path or area that the rider travels from start to end. A rider is scored in a section.

2. NATS Event Requirements

2.1. Assignment of Events

The NATS schedule is made up of independent trials events. The schedule, and the inclusion of new events, is made by consensus of the existing organizers. It has been found desirable to keep the number of events at five to seven each year. Two main factors determine whether an event should be included in the schedule. First is an even regional distribution of the events. The other factor is the quality of the venue and reputation of the organizer. NATS events are generally not assigned to first-time organizers, but only to those who have already shown an ability to manage events with substantial efficiency.

2.2. Venue

NATS events can be held on all natural terrain, all man-made, or some combination of both. Natural terrain should have significant challenges such as big gaps and drops for experienced riders, as well as easier obstacles suitable for beginners. Venues with mostly artificial sections should be located where many spectators can be accommodated.

2.3. Sanction and Insurance

The event must be insured, either through a cycling governing body or other organization or directly through an insurer. At minimum the organizers, volunteers and the venue must be protected from rider liability and all participants must have third party liability insurance.

2.4. Schedule

Below are two options for an event schedule. It is desired that one of these two options be used for events so as to promote consistency between events. Exceptions may be made to fit into a larger venue schedule if necessary. This determination should be made by the Event Director (ED). The ED must give notice of the schedule well before the competition. Schedule options are as follows:

Option A		Option B	
9:00 – 10:00am	Rider Registration	9:00 – 10:00am	All Rider Registration
10:00 – 4:00pm	All Classes	10:00 – 2:00pm	Beg., Sport & Women
4:30pm	Prizes	1:00 – 5:00pm	Expert & Pro
		5:30pm	Prizes

2.5. Prizes

The following are recommendations: NATS events should have at least \$1000 in pro prize money, and a similar amount for draw prizes for all categories. It is desirable to give medals or trophies to all categories.

2.6. Publication of Results

The complete results must be posted near the registration area at the conclusion of the event, i.e. same day. Any ties **must** be resolved through 10th place, per 10.6 Adding Scores. Results should be emailed to the NATS webmaster no later four days after the event. Instructions for submitting results are available at http://www.natrials.com/materials/results_template.php.

3. Officials

3.1. Event Director (ED)

The event must have an Event Director who is responsible for most organizational decisions. The ED should assign a head Observer, and a head Scorekeeper. The head Observer should be an experienced individual who can assign observers and timekeepers to the sections and train them if necessary. The head Scorekeeper is responsible for adding scores and keeping track of the scorecards in case of protests. The names of the officials should be posted where registration information and results are posted.

3.2. Formation of the Jury

There should be at least three members of the Jury, and they should be appointed by the ED in advance of the event. The Jury is responsible for inspecting the course to see that it conforms to guidelines (Sec. 5). It also hears protests from riders (Sec. 14). The Jury should be composed of the ED, the head Observer or someone else experienced in trials, and another experienced representative, preferably a veteran rider. If the event's sanctioning body requires it, the Jury should also include an official from that organization. Care should be taken to avoid conflict of interest and, in the event that a protest involves someone close to a Jury member, that person should be replaced for evaluation of the protest in question.

3.3. Course inspection

The course must be inspected to make sure it is in accordance with Sections 5 and 6 of these rules. This must be done in sufficient time to make changes to the course if necessary, preferably the day before the competition. The composition of the jury for course inspection can, if necessary, be different from that used for considering protests.

4. Categories

4.1. Rider Categories

Competitors are divided into the following categories:

- Pro
- Expert
- Sport
- Beginner
- Women

There is no segregation between different bicycle types. Riders are split into skill categories only.

The Women's category for the NATS championship is normally composed of a combination of beginner and sport sections. Women who are truly beginners and not competing for the championship can opt to ride in the unisex beginner class. If there is only one woman competing, and not collecting NATS points (eligibility in Sec 15.1), she can ride in the appropriate category. Beginner classes are unisex; women who are above beginner class are encouraged to compete in Women's.

4.2. Riding Two Bikes

Riders may use only one competition bicycle over the course of a event, for bike malfunctions see Sec. 13. It is the ED's discretion that competitors be allowed to ride a second bike size for fun. The second bike size will be ridden only after completion of the first. Upon completing the competition (first) bike, the rider must hand in their scorecard, at this time the ED will issue a second card indicating that it is not a valid competition card. Participation on a second bike is for fun only, and the rider's score will not be tallied. Second bike scorecards do not need to be submitted to registration. Riders participating on two bicycles must allow riders on one bike preference in section queues.

5. The Course

5.1. General Guidelines

The course is defined as all of the sections, and the track or path that joins them together. For competition held in substantially natural terrain, the total length between all sections should not exceed 1.5 mi (2.4 km). If the course is a loop, the sections should be numbered in sequential order, to minimize the distance the riders must travel. Where sections are made close together, they must not interfere with each other. A rider in one section must not be able to get in the way of a rider in another section. Thought should also be given to crowd control. Spectators must be at least six feet back from any obstacle over three feet high, and at least ten feet back from any obstacle over six feet high.

5.2. Order of Sections

The rider can select which section to begin competing. After that, he or she must ride the sections in order. For example, if a rider starts on section 4 out of 6, he or she must ride, 4-5-6-1-2-3. In the event the competition must finish within a defined time, the Event Director can allow the riders to complete sections out of order, although this is not recommended. Riding the same section twice in a row is strictly prohibited.

6. Sections

6.1. Definition

A section is a path marked out with boundary markers, through which the rider must ride while penalty points are assessed for various infractions. The time limit to complete each section is two minutes.

6.2. Construction Guidelines

- Sections are typically thirty to sixty feet long and should be a minimum of 3 ft (0.91 m) wide on the ground. It can be narrower where the section is elevated or the intent is to remain on a balance beam.
- There should be a minimum of four and a maximum of ten sections.

- It is the responsibility of the Event Director to ensure that unreasonable levels of danger are avoided. In particular, there should be no dangerous objects to land on if a rider falls off a high object. Artificial obstacles should be constructed so that they do not collapse or fall over under normal riding conditions.
- Sections should differ substantially from each other and show variety.
- The exit line of the sections should be drawn six feet away from the last difficult part of each section.
- It is extremely important that over the set of all sections in an event, care must be taken not to discriminate against bike type. Individual sections may favor a bike, but the next section must favor the other. 26" bike strengths are rolling and gaps, 20" strengths are tight quarters and sidehops/ups to narrow objects.

6.3. Section Difficulty

- Pro: Unlimited drops and gaps.
- Expert: Drops and gaps not to exceed six feet. Drops and gaps over four feet high should have takeoffs that are reasonably flat and smooth and with substantial grip.
- Sport: Drops not to exceed three feet, and drops over eighteen inches must allow for side dropping. The takeoff areas for all drops over eighteen inches high should be reasonably flat and smooth and with substantial grip. In the event of low grip, such as slippery rocks, riders should not be over eighteen inches off the ground.
- Beginner: Drops are not to exceed eighteen inches, and there should be no back wheel drop-ins required.

6.4. Section Modification during Competition

- Intentional modification of a section by riders or spectators is prohibited, see Sec. 12. Note that kicking objects to test stability does not constitute intentional modification if an object moves.
- Changes in natural terrain over the course of the competition are expected and no action need be taken to restore a section to its original form.
- For artificial elements of a section, it is the responsibility of the ED to ensure that the section stays substantially the same for all riders. If a part of the section fails while a rider is on it, the section should be fixed and that rider should be given a rerun from the start of the section.

6.5. Markings

- The sections must be marked with tape on the right and left sides. The tape must be substantially visible and well secured. This can be done either by being tied off to trees or other obstacles, or held with stakes. It is recommended that in areas where rider/tape interaction may occur as in Fig. 6b, the tape should be no more than 10 inches above the ground. All broken tape must be replaced in the same position before another rider enters the section.
- The entrance and exit of each section must be indicated with the words "IN" and "OUT" or "START" and "END".
- Each section must be clearly numbered with the ability category indicated.

6.6. Inter-category Boundaries

- If there is an inter-category boundary within the section, the two routes must be clearly marked, preferably with color-coded arrows.

6.7. Negative lines

- At the discretion of the ED, routes can be set which can subtract points from the rider's score. The negative line is laid out like any inter-category line in a section, marked with an appropriate arrow, and inter-category boundary tape if necessary. A negative line can be used if there is an obstacle that presents unusual challenge, notably height or gap distance, a negative line can be used to reward exceptional riders without overly penalizing the rest, see Sec. 10.3 for negative line scoring.

7. Observers

7.1. General

The Event Director is responsible for appointing at least one observer per section. The observer has authority in the section he or she is observing. If the observer is in doubt in a ruling, the benefit of doubt goes to the rider. The observer must make up his or her own mind however, and is under no obligation to consult other witnesses.

- The observer is only obliged to listen to the rider.
- If possible, there should be more than one observer at a section. In that case, one should be appointed the head observer, and the others should act as assistant(s). In particular, an assistant can time the riders, and punch scorecards.
- The timekeeper, who can be the observer, or an assistant, should advise the rider approximately one minute before the finishing time and at 30 seconds, 15 seconds, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.
- Upper level categories (expert and pro) must not be split into groups where each checker follows a group. In event of this situation, riders within each group should check each other, or all riders should remain in one group.
- Abusive language or behavior directed at the observer (or any spectators or riders) is not allowed. (Sec. 12).

8. Rider Responsibilities

- The rider must know the rules.
- The rider is responsible for knowing where a section starts and ends, and which route he or she is supposed to take in the case of multi-category sections.
- The rider can ask the observer at any time to be told the elapsed time.
- The rider is responsible for his or her scorecard. If it becomes damaged by moisture, or if it has been mismarked by the observer(s), the rider can ask the Event Director for a new one. If it becomes lost, the rider will be issued a new card (see Sec. 9 for penalty).
- The rider must wear an approved helmet, and any other safety equipment mandated by the organization, which provides insurance.
- The rider must conduct him/herself in a professional and sportsmanlike manner at **all** times.

9. The Scorecard

Riders are to be issued a scorecard at the beginning of the competition. It must indicate the rider's name and category, and places for the rider's score to be punched by the observers at each section. A standard NATS scorecard is available for download at <http://www.natrials.com/materials.php>.

The Event Director has the option of issuing one scorecard for the entire competition or having the riders return to the event control to be issued a new scorecard at the end of every lap. The second option is recommended as it allows staff to add the scores more easily, facilitates the posting of intermediate standings, and it reduces the potential for riding the sections out of order.

For scorecard rules concerning riders with two bikes, see Sec 4.2.

Lost cards: The rider is responsible for his or her scorecard. If a card is lost, a new one can be issued with five points punched for every section the rider completed on previous laps.

10. Scoring

10.1. Section Entrances and Exits

The rider enters a section when his or her front axle crosses the plane defined as the line between the left and right ends of the section tape at the entrance. The rider likewise exits the section when his or her front axle crosses the plane defined by the exit ends of the left and right section tape. This means that once the rider exits, he or she can get off the bike without incurring further penalties. Timing should begin when the rider enters the section, and end when the rider exits the section, as defined above.

10.2. Inter-category boundaries

If there are inter-category boundaries in the section, a rider can enter a route not intended for his or her category, but that rider must return and ride the correct route for the category to avoid a gate foul.

10.3. Negative lines

When a rider enters a negative route, the section observer subtracts the indicated amount from his or her score. If the rider enters with a one, for example, and the line is negative two, the rider's score then lies at negative one. The rider then gains points for subsequent dabs. Any infraction which results in an immediate five (two feet down, breaking the tape etc), causes an immediate five, regardless of whether or not the rider had a negative score at that point. As with other inter-category routes, the rider must ride the route in its entirety to get the negative points.

If a rider finishes with fewer than zero points, the observer should punch the number corresponding to the negative number, then add a minus sign, “-“ in front of it. The observer should then initial the card next to the negative score.

10.4. Using Scorecards

Each time a rider scores a penalty, a specified number of points is added to his or her score. The maximum number of points that can be scored in one section is five, and the minimum is zero, except where there are negative point routes. It is not possible to score four points. If a rider gets a total of four points he or she is awarded a three on the scorecard.

After the rider completes the section, the observer notes the score, and punches the appropriate place on the scorecard, using a hole punch provided by the Event Director.

10.5. Immediate Fives

Riders are allowed to come to the observer and have their scorecard punched with a five without having to ride the section. They must not however deviate from the correct order of sections, so each section must be visited in sequence.

10.6. Adding Scores

After the scorecards are collected, the scorekeeper must add the scores. The number of cleans should also be noted. In the event of a tie, the winner will be declared as:

- 1) The rider with the most cleans
- 2) The rider with the most ones
- 3) The rider with the most twos
- 4) The rider with the most threes

In the event of a complete tie, the Event Director must organize a ride off, using an existing section. This can either be scored using conventional penalties, or in the event of a tie in the ride off, by awarding the place to the rider who takes the least time. Concession of one of the riders is also an acceptable means of determining rank. If a rider is not present (and cannot be located) at the time of scoring, the rider present will be ranked above the absent rider.

11. Time

11.1. Section Limit

The time limit for each section is two minutes. Within that period, there is no time limit on any individual dab. Riders may finish their two minutes after fiving on the first loop only. During subsequent loops the riders should exit the section immediately after fiving. The Event Director may require riders to exit after fiving on any and all loops if the number of riders and/or schedule requires it.

11.2. Number of laps/loops

The number of laps is dependent on the number of sections. Ideally riders should ride between 12 and 20 sections.

11.3. Course Limit

The course time limit is dictated by the event schedule, see Section 2.4.

12. Penalizations

Type Of Penalty	Points
One foot down/in or out of bounds (Figure 1)	1
Two successive non simultaneous dabs	2
Three or four successive non simultaneous dabs	3
More than four non simultaneous dabs	5
Two feet down simultaneously (Figure 2)	5
Any body part touching other than feet (Figure 3)	5
A pedal down or pedal rest (Figure 4a)	0
A toe or heel down on either side of the pedal (Figure 4b)	1
Foot sliding (more than one foot width)	3
Foot crosses the bike's center line/no dab (not shown)	0
Foot crosses the bike's center line with a dab (Figure 5)	5
Body/bar brushes against object without providing support	0
Handlebar touching (leaning on) any part of the section	1
Either axle crosses the vertical plane of the tape with the tire touching the ground. (Figure 6). Note: if the wheel hits an object out of bounds but axle does not cross the tape, there is no penalty.	5
Either axle crosses the vertical plane of the tape but that wheel does not touch the ground (figure 7)	0
Stretching tape without breaking it or having an axle cross the tape.	0
Breaking tape or moving a "well secured" (judge's discretion) marker.	5
Straddling the tape where both sides of the bike are in the section (Figure 8)	0
Passing across the tape and landing back in the section (Figure 8)	5
Exceeding section time limit	5
Exceeding competition time limit.	DQ
Negative lines (where applicable)	-1 to -3
Intentionally modifying the section	5
Losing score card (discretion of ED who can replace it)	5 * # of sections
Pre-riding the course	100
Use of abusive language or throwing bike: 1 st time = warning, 2 nd time = checker gives 5, 3 rd and subsequent Jury gives between 10 dabs and DQ.	5-DQ
Gate Foul (entering or exiting the section from the wrong place)	5

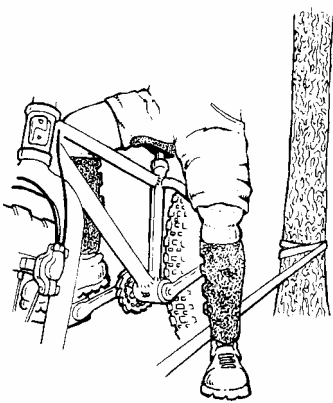


Figure 1.
1 Point

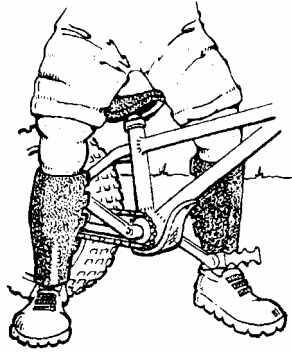


Figure 2.
5 Points



Figure 3.
5 Points

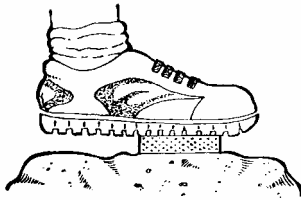


Figure 4a
0 Points

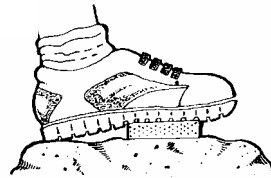


Figure 4b
1 Point

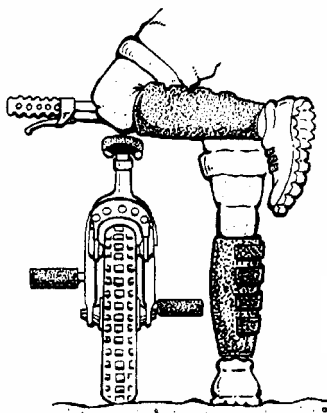


Figure 5a
5 Points

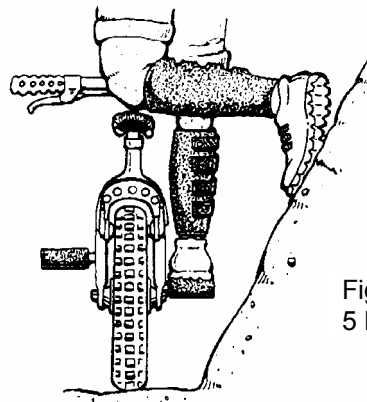


Figure 5b
5 Points

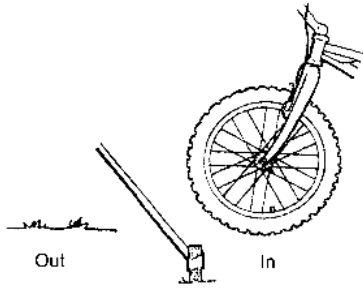


Figure 6a
0 Points

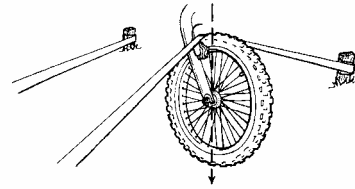


Figure 6b
5 Points

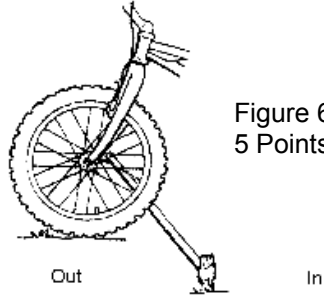


Figure 6c
5 Points

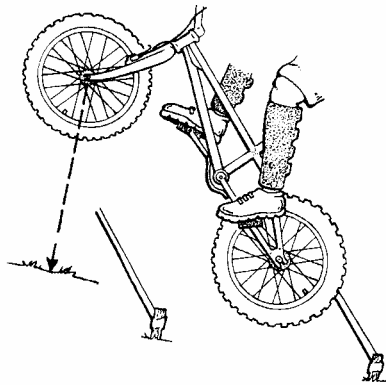


Figure 7
0 Points

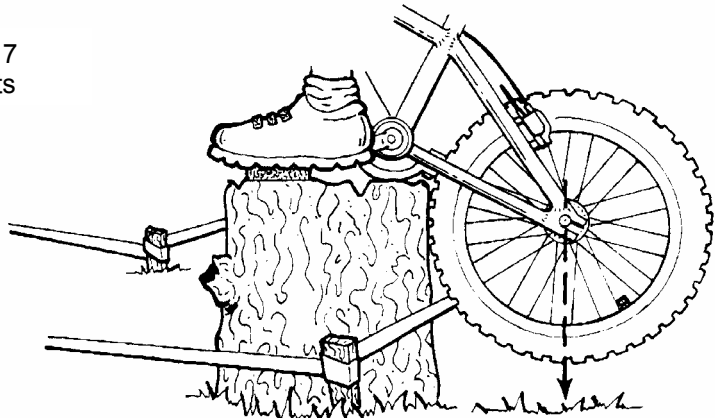
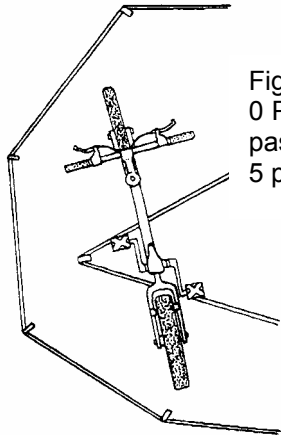


Figure 8
0 Points if wheels do not
pass directly over tape
5 points if they do



13. Bike Regulations

- The bike must be propelled by a pedal-crank system
- The bike must pass whatever technical safety control is mandated by the organization providing event insurance. This should include at least:
 - The ends of the handlebars must not be open.
 - The bike must have effective front and rear brakes.
 - There must be no discernible stiff or broken links in the chain.
 - There must be no discernable cracks in the frame, stem or handlebars.
- In the event that a bike is rendered inoperable, the event director may permit the rider to complete the course on another bike. This is only allowed if damage occurred to the bike while actually in a section.

14. Protests and Dispute Settlement

14.1. Making Protests

A protest can be lodged by anyone against an observer's ruling. Protests typically arise when a bystander (another rider or a spectator) observes a rider make an infraction that is not recorded by the observer, or when an observer gives the wrong penalty. Protests must be lodged with the Event Director within fifteen minutes of the official results being posted. Protests must be in writing, and must include the rider's name, the section number and a description of the protest. If these criteria are not met from a protest's inception, the protest will not be considered. In the event of a protest, the Jury must be convened to evaluate the protest and make a ruling.

14.2. Evaluation of Protests

The Jury will base its ruling on the input from the relevant parties, including the rider, the observer, and the person who lodged the protest. In the evaluation of protests the benefit of the doubt must go to the observer. The Jury is not obliged to overrule the observer based on testimony from witnesses. Only if all parties present at the incident agree on the facts, and the observer accepts that he or she made an error in assigning penalties, can an observer's decision be overturned.

Example: 1. A rider puts both feet down, but the observer does not see it because his or her view is blocked by a tree. In this case, the jury must rule for the observer.

Example 2 On lap 1, a rider exits a section with a five, then reenters from the end to reattempt the last obstacle. The observer assigns a five for the section, and allows the reattempt. In a subsequent protest, with agreement from the observer as to the nature of the incident, the rider is awarded another five point penalty for a Gate foul.

15. Series Standings

15.1. Eligibility

The NATS Championship is awarded in all categories given there are eligible riders. To be eligible for the NATS championship however, riders must attend a minimum of **three** events, irrespective of the number of events in the series. Changing categories will result in losing any points gained in the lower category. It is acceptable for riders to compete on different size bikes over the course of the season.

15.2. Scoring

Points will be assigned according to the following table:

Place	Points
1	15
2	12
3	10
4	8
5	6
6	5
7	4
8	3
9	2
10	1

Championship scores will be added from the rider's best 4 of 5, 5 of 6, or 5 of 7 events, depending on the number of events in the series. In the event of a tie, the higher ranking goes to the rider with the lowest average number of dabs at the events counted towards their NATS placing.

15.3. Publication of results

The champion for a class is declared after the tie process is satisfied. Additional riders, both those eligible for the championship and casual riders will be listed on the points page. The points page will contain a list of all riders with the number of points they earned in descending order. The champion will be listed first, with his or her champion status noted. All other riders will be listed below the champion in descending order depending on their NATS points. No official rank will be given to any rider except the champion. Example below.

NAME	MOTORAMA	SQUAMISH	SNOWSHOE	LAKE PLACID	KERNVILLE	TOTAL POINTS
JJ Gregorowicz *	15		15	15		45
Jeremy VanSchoonhoven		15	10			25
Cristiano Santos	8		12			20
Ross McMaster	0		8	12		20
Trevor Young	0		5	10		15
Mike Bentham		12				12
Shaun Miller	12					12
Dylan Korba		10				10
Jeff Lenosky	10					10

* Champion