



HRJC HANDBOOK

Updated 3/20/26

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CONTACTS: Athletes and parents, put these in your phone

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

NORMAL PRACTICE DAYS & TIMES

Spring and Summer Program: Monday & Wednesday 4:30 – 6:30 pm

Fall Middle School Program and High School League: Monday & Wednesday (and many Fridays) 4:30 – 6:30 pm

PRACTICE LOCATIONS We meet for practice at various schools, trailheads and other locations around Highlands Ranch and surrounding areas. We rotate practice to provide new terrain and to prevent overuse of trails by our group. HRJC does not provide any transportation. The locations are announced ahead of time on the Spond App.

RIDING TO AND FROM PRACTICE It is up to each family to decide if their child may ride to and from practice. Riders riding to and from practice early during the spring season and late during the fall season should use front and rear lights. *HRJC is not responsible for kids riding to or from practice.*

BAD WEATHER We will almost never cancel practice due to bad weather. We ride in the rain and snow! Be ready. Please dress for the conditions each day. This will range from very hot to very cold, and include rain, snow, wind, sleet, etc. In the case of *extreme weather (lightning, hail, tornados, or severe air quality)*, we will cancel practice via the Spond App, but it almost never happens so don't ask if practice is canceled if you see some weather on the horizon. Here is a [quick video](#) from our friends at Boulder Junior Cycling on cold weather gear.

WHY WE DON'T USUALLY CANCEL IN BAD WEATHER

- Riding in bad weather builds skills and grit that are highly valuable.
- We usually have the most fun and most memorable practices when the weather is poor!
- Trying to predict the weather never works. The moment practice is canceled the sun comes out. It is far easier for staff and parents to stick with the schedule.
- Many families count on practice happening and have few options if it is canceled.
- There is no substitute for the lessons learned in bad weather.

COACHES: HRJC provides a trained coaching staff that brings a high level of training and experience to the program. Our coaches include top-level racers, a former national team director, and veterans of the sport. All of them have a passion for junior cycling that fuels our success.

Our coaches hold the following certifications:

- SafeSport or NFHS Athlete Abuse Awareness
- Positive Youth Development
- Wilderness First Aid & CPR
- Concussion Training
- Background Check

PERSONAL COACHING AND TRAINING PLANS HRJC's Head Coach, Scott Schnitzspahn, is a professional coach, certified at the highest level by USA Cycling, and a certified Skills Instructor by the Bicycle Instructor Certification Program. He is the former Vice President of Elite Athletics for USA Cycling and is the current High Performance General Manager for USA Triathlon. He has led teams at world cups, world championships, and Olympic Games. He has personally coached junior national champions and junior world championship team members. Coach Scott provides a general training plan for HRJC riders to follow outside of practice through the TrainingPeaks platform. See the Training Details section for more information.

RACING TEAM While HRJC is primarily a club, we will also race as a team and racing is encouraged. For the fall Colorado High School Cycling League, HRJC club members will go to the races as one team but represent their individual high schools. HRJC operates the Colorado League high school teams for Ambleside, Highlands Ranch, Mountain Vista, Rock Canyon, STEM, Thunder Ridge, and Valor Christian. See the Racing section for more details.

PARTICIPATION IN OTHER TEAMS Currently HRJC is supportive of riders being members of other teams or working with outside personal coaches. While many members of HRJC do race, the focus of the team is more about fun, friendship, and building skills they can use in a sport that can be done for life. We specifically try to schedule our practices around the other competitive cycling groups in the area so riders, and coaches, can participate in multiple programs if they wish.

HRJC Anti-Discrimination Policy Highlands Ranch Junior Cycling does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), or sexual orientation.

These activities include, but are not limited to, club membership, the hiring and firing of coaches, the selection of volunteers and vendors, and the provision of services.

We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, student-athletes, coaches, and volunteers.

COMMUNICATIONS

COMMUNICATING WITH COACHES We encourage athletes to talk directly to their coach whenever they have questions, concerns, or problems, *and that parents play a supporting role, not a leading role.* Our hope is that athletes will learn how to advocate for themselves and build a line of communication and trust with their coaches rather than parents taking on this role.

TEXTING & ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS: Riders are encouraged to message the coaches through the Spond App whenever needed for advice, questions, and to stay in touch. Remember, one-on-one texting, email, and direct messaging is prohibited. Always copy a 3rd party such as another coach or adult.

COACH HOURS: *Please do not call or text our coaches after 8:00 pm*

LOOK FOR REGULAR NEWS AND CHATS ON THE SPOND APP: It includes practice locations and important news. *BE SURE TO READ THE UPDATES.* "Log In To Your Account" on the Spond App online or on the app to manage your contact info, add new email contacts, change your address, etc.

CONTACT INFO IN THE SPOND APP Make sure all athletes and parents have their email and phone numbers entered in the Spond App. Many families have only entered a parent's email and the athlete email is missing or vice versa. Please go into your account to edit this or the athlete or parent will miss communications. Please also make sure that each rider has their parent connected to their account and emergency contact information updated in the app.

INSTALL THE SPOND APP ON YOUR PHONE (riders and parents) It's *mandatory* that riders and parents install the Spond App for several reasons, including last minute practice location changes and emergency contacts. Find the Spond App in your phone's app store, search for HRJC and ask to join using the code REZEL.

ATTENDANCE *Practice is technically optional, but riders are expected to attend all practices they register and RSVP for.* Our program follows a curriculum that is cumulative. We add skills, knowledge, fitness, and team spirit with each practice. We know that missing the occasional practice is unavoidable. Please contact the coaches if you must miss a practice.

RSVP IN THE SPOND APP RSVPing in the Spond App for practices and races is mandatory FOR ATHLETES. The deadline is Sunday evening at 7:00 PM for the coming week.

Go into the calendar of Events on the app and RSVP FOR THE ATHLETE for each practice or race as far forward as you can. This helps coaches in their work with each athlete.

WHAT TO BRING TO PRACTICE

CLOTHING FOR PRACTICE Riders should arrive at practice ready to ride in cycling clothing appropriate for the weather, including rain and snow. You do not have to wear the HRJC kit, but many riders do. Jeans, hoodies, etc are not appropriate. Don't forget a helmet.

ALWAYS BRING WATER, SNACK, AND TOOLS It is mandatory that each rider bring a hydration pack (backpack or fanny pack or attached to bike) or water bottles. We recommend you leave it packed and ready to go all season.

This pack should include:

- Jacket (We have lightweight HRJC jackets available for purchase)
- Extra clothing for the weather that day
- Snack
- Drink (water is enough)
- Inner tube that fits their bike tire
- Multi-tool, tire levers, and pump or inflation device

SCHOOL BACKPACKS Athletes can stash extra gear and book bags in athletes and coaches' cars at the trailhead or meeting spot if needed.

WRITE YOUR NAME ON EVERYTHING! Including backpacks, water bottles, helmets, gloves, jackets, etc. DO THIS NOW. Team name stickers are available to label hard items at www.veloink.com. Our official team layout is the Name+Flag product, black background, white text, Exo font, Size Medium, gloss finish, HRJC logo as the left flag, and, if in high school, your high school flag as the right flag.

ALWAYS BRING A JACKET It is mandatory that each rider bring a jacket to every practice. HRJC has team jackets that are available in the team store on the www.hrjc.bike website.

FUELING, SNACKS & DRINKS It is mandatory that each rider eat a good meal to fuel before practice. Athletes should bring a snack and a water bottle (2 bottles or full pack in summer) to every practice.

PACKING TIPS

1. Plan for rain/storms in the afternoons. It may be sunny most of the day and then rain at 4 pm.
2. When you leave home in the morning, always pack for rain and cold weather just in case.
3. Temps can drop significantly between morning and evening.

YOUR BIKE:

The minimum bike requirement for HRJC is an appropriately sized mountain bike with a suspension fork, knobby tires, and functioning gears and brakes. Flat pedals, a dropper post, and sealant in the tires are highly recommended. Experienced riders can use clipless / “clip in” pedals. Ask if you aren’t sure what these items are.

A bike that fits and works as intended will lead to better practices. Coaches don’t have the time and/or equipment to make repairs at the start of practice. Instead, make certain that the bike is working as intended. It is recommended that you bring your bike into your local shop (we recommend BikeSource) before the first practice to have it looked over, checking the chain for wear and lubrication, ensuring tubeless sealant is present in the tires if running tubeless, and making sure all bolts are tight, shift cables are not worn, housing is fresh, and the gears shift properly and brakes are adjusted.

A few things you can do before practices to ensure they go smoothly:

1. A clean bike is always good. It has many benefits. It forces you to give the bike a good once over, allowing you to clearly see the state of the entire bike. Clean your bike after every ride.
2. Brakes are the most important parts on a bike. Check that they are working correctly, as well as checking that the wheels and rotors are true.
3. Check tire pressure. Properly inflated tires minimize the risk of flats and maximize traction. Optimum tire pressure varies based on the size of the rim, tire, rider, terrain, and riding style. In general, MTB tires should be inflated between 18 and 30 pounds per square inch (PSI).
4. Clean the chain and apply fresh lube on a weekly basis. Be sure to clean the chain before re-applying lube. If you apply lube to a dirty chain, it will only get dirtier as the weeks go on.

GOATHEAD THORNS: We recommend all riders use liquid sealant in their mountain bike tires to prevent punctures from thorns. Inject it into your tires or inner tubes. Ask a coach for help if needed.

BIKE FIT A well-fitting bike is a fast and safe bike. We strongly encourage all athletes to get their bike properly fitted once per year. In our experience, most HRJC athletes will start the season with the wrong saddle height and a poor body position on the bike.

HRJC Partners with BikeSource and Physio Room for bike fits. Call to book an appointment

TRAINING DETAILS

TRAINING PLANS: All HRJC athletes, regardless of their age and level, will receive training advice from the coaches in-person at practice. Once each athlete reaches an appropriate stage in their development, HRJC coaches will provide a day-to-day training plan. This is accomplished in two ways: 1) online in the TrainingPeaks app, and 2) verbally at practice. Readiness for a day-to-day training plan will be determined by the coaches. **Parents should not provide training plans or training advice to the athletes.**

TRAINING PEAKS This is an app/website we use to provide a training plan and as a training diary. Using Training Peaks is optional, but highly recommended for everyone who wants to follow a training plan and learn how to train for racing. If you do not have an account, you will be asked to create an account (free). If you already have an account, you'll log into your existing account. You can find the HRJC training programs here: <https://www.trainingpeaks.com/my-training-plans/HRJC>

Follow this link to add Coach Scott to your account:

<https://home.trainingpeaks.com/attachtocoach?sharedKey=ZGBFLAO3WWD46>

You can use Training Peaks on a desktop or on your phone. We recommend you set it up on both so you can use the app on your phone for quick updates and use your desktop when you want to see more information. Get the app here: <https://app.trainingpeaks.com/>.

RACING

RACING Racing is not required, but strongly encouraged. All athletes riding with HRJC should be motivated to push their limits and commit to a season-long process of growth and effort. If cost is an issue, please contact Coach Scott about scholarships.

NEW TO RACING? We'll send a tip sheet for parents prior to the first race which includes details about categories, rules, registration, etc. Coaches will teach kids everything they need to know to race, even first timers.

TEAM RACES HRJC provides coaching and a dedicated base camp at many races each season. Many families participate in additional races on their own or with other local competitive race teams.

RACE CALENDAR We'll provide details to upcoming races in our regular news updates. Racing will mostly consist of local, and a few not so local, Colorado races.

RACING LICENSE Many races require a racing license. USA Cycling provides racing licenses for juniors. If you plan to race regularly, do this now!

Details: <https://memberships.usacycling.org/products/junior>

HRJC highly recommends getting a USA Cycling Junior+ membership as this includes insurance that covers all out of pocket expenses for any bike related accident anywhere in the USA, any time. Check the HRJC discounts document for potential discount codes with USA Cycling.

TEAM AFFILIATION If you aren't racing with another team, be sure you've selected Highlands Ranch Junior Cycling as your team on your racing license. Get it changed if needed by going here: <http://www.usacycling.org/club-membership-faqs.htm>

VOLUNTEERING HRJC relies on volunteers and it helps build our community. Families are asked to volunteer several hours each season to help keep our programs running, and we'll announce different opportunities for those with a little or a lot of time to pitch in.

TRAVEL We are tentatively planning several optional travel adventure rides and races. Depending on the ride difficulty or race demands, attendance on team trips is sometimes limited to coach selection and based upon the athlete's age, level of development, race results, and team logistics. Travel for adventure rides or races with the team may require additional fees plus expenses.

SAFESPORT & ATHLETE WELLNESS

HRJC ATHLETE WELLNESS PLAN HRJC has implemented a plan that establishes best practices and guidelines to follow when addressing various athlete wellness issues that might include topics like Injury, Concussion, Mental Health, RED-S (Relative Energy Deficiency in Sports), Disordered Eating, and SafeSport issues.

HRJC ATHLETE WELLNESS

A wide range of resources can be found on the USA Cycling website [here](#).

SAFESPORT SafeSport is a set of resources and policies to safeguard athletes from bullying, harassment, hazing, physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and sexual misconduct. HRJC requires adults who have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes to follow the SafeSport policy. This includes coaches, board members, and chaperones.

[Read more details](#) about the USA Cycling SafeSport program.

SAFESPORT ONLINE COURSE IS RECOMMENDED - BOTH PARENTS AND ATHLETES

Instructions for taking SafeSport online courses:

Athlete Wellness and SafeSport is a high priority for HRJC. We are pursuing Gold Level Certification in the USA Cycling SafeSport program, the highest level available.

SafeSport is a set of resources and policies to safeguard athletes from bullying, harassment, hazing, physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and sexual misconduct.

HRJC recommends all athletes, parents, and coaches to take a basic-level online SafeSport course, and upload your certificate of completion to HRJC.

Athletes and parents should take the course every 12 months (returning parents will take a refresher course).

There are several courses to choose from:

- Athletes age 12 and under should take "SafeSport for Kids" (15 mins)
- Athletes ages 13-17 should take "SafeSport for Youth Athletes" (15 mins)
- Parents should take "Parents Guide to Misconduct in Sport" (30 mins)
- Coaches **and athletes who are 18+** must take a higher level course called "SafeSportTrained" (90 minutes)

How Do I Complete SafeSport Training?

If you are completing training for the first time, use this link:

<https://safesporttrained.org?KeyName=NGBUSAC-L2sCAP>

If you are renewing your training and have an account, use this link:

<https://uscenterforsafesport.org/>

The learning dashboard displays the courses, your completion status, and certificate download link.

Once you complete the course, please upload your certificate of completion to our dropbox folder so we can maintain a complete set of records. The dropbox folder for certificates is here: <https://www.dropbox.com/request/c0mA7o2ZSVP0C61jCA5N>

MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY Known as the MAAPP, it is a set of guidelines established by numerous sport organizations. The goal is to eliminate isolated, one-on-one interactions between children and adults. Establishing clear boundaries for one-on-one interactions reduces the risk of physical, sexual, and emotional misconduct as well as opportunities for bullying, harassment, and hazing. The majority of child sexual abuse is perpetrated in isolated, one-on-one situations. By reducing such interaction between children and adults, programs reduce the risk of child sexual abuse. However, one-on-one time with trusted adults is also healthy and valuable for a child. Policies concerning one-on-one interactions protect children while allowing for these beneficial relationships.

[Read more details](#) about the USA Cycling Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy

There are a host of guidelines, but the key ones cover: meetings, one-on-one coaching, car sharing, and electronic communications.

Meetings between adults and minor athletes: Must be observable and interruptible by another adult.

Individual training sessions: Must be observable and interruptible by another adult, unless agreed to in writing by the minor athlete's parent/legal guardian in advance.

Car sharing: Adults shall not ride in a vehicle alone with an unrelated minor athlete, unless agreed to in writing by the minor athlete's parent/legal guardian in advance. (Emergency circumstances excepted.) Transportation is allowed when at least two minor athletes or another adult are in the vehicle.

Electronic communications: one-on-one texting, email, and direct messaging between adults and minor athletes should be avoided. Electronic communications should include a 3rd party.

TO REPORT SAFESPORT OR MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY VIOLATIONS: Contact the **USA Center for SafeSport** at <https://uscenterforsafesport.org/report-a-concern/>

PARENT'S ROLE

BEING A GREAT SPORTS PARENT We want to help parents learn how to find that “sports parent sweet spot” where you support your kids and show your love, but avoid adding pressure or becoming too intense. We hope parents can allow kids to be independent and find their own level of sports success. But we know it’s hard to find that “sports parent sweet spot” because we love our kids so much and want the best for them.

Parents should focus on the goal of using sports to teach life lessons, while leaving the goal of winning to the athletes and coaches. The best practice is: Release your child to the game. They need to feel that their sport is their thing. Let them “own it” even if they make mistakes.

Our suggestion for parents is to leave coaching and instruction to the coach. Parents who provide additional coaching can do more harm than good, especially as it may conflict with the coaches’ advice. This includes selecting races to attend: athletes should work with their coaches to select races to attend, and parents play a supporting role. Parents, if you have questions about the race schedule or the progression of the athlete, please contact the coaches.

Encourage the athlete to communicate with their coaches. We want to develop athletes who are independent and who can think and speak for themselves. When issues or problems arise, the first step is for the athlete to meet with the coach. It is the athlete who works with the coach on a daily basis and is a member of the team. Therefore, it is the athlete who should be having this conversation with the coach.

But please remember: parents are invited to contact the coaches whenever needed and we encourage an open line of communications at all times.

SHOULD PARENTS STAY AT PRACTICE OR RIDE WITH THE KIDS? HRJC’s policy is that parents may NOT participate or tag along during practice unless specifically requested by a coach to do so. That said, HRJC is always in need of more great volunteer coaches who get to ride with the kids at every practice! Please go to www.hrjc.bike/BecomeACoach to learn more.

Release Your Child to the Game! By the Changing the Game Project

“Once you are confident that your child is in a safe environment, one of the greatest gifts you can give the young athletes in your house is to let them go and let their sports experience belong to them.” Link: [Release Your Child to the Game!](#)

TEAM DISCOUNTS

BikeSource / Specialized: BikeSource in Highlands Ranch is our partner bike shop. BikeSource provides priority service when possible and special discounts to HRJC riders. When shopping at BikeSource, be sure to tell them you are a member of HRJC!

USA Cycling: All junior athletes ages 6-18 can register for a Junior Race Membership to USA Cycling. A USA Cycling membership comes with a number of great benefits and discounts. Go to: <https://memberships.usacycling.org/>

Colorado League: All high school athletes who are registered with the Colorado League receive generous discounts on products from Colorado League sponsors. Those benefits can be found under "Discounts" here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Vb8ibHCXHuzXPmq_Wdg5kKjwEV7V0ey3EfpU4PHV2yc/edit?usp=sharing

FINDING USED BIKES AND CLOTHING

HRJC Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/HRJCMTB>

Pros Closet: <https://www.theprosclout.com/>

Front Range Bike Swap (Facebook) <https://www.facebook.com/groups/frontrangebikeswap/>

Highlands Ranch Junior Cycling

CODE OF CONDUCT

When athletes are registered for an HRJC program, the Code of Conduct is agreed to as part of the Waiver.

Athletes participating in any Highlands Ranch Junior Cycling programs or events agree to abide by and are bound by this Code of Conduct. Any athlete who fails to follow this Code of Conduct will be subject to consequences, up to and including exclusion from the HRJC program, without refund.

It is essential for all athletes to adhere to these rules to maintain the integrity of the team, uphold a positive image within the community, and ensure a safe and respectful environment for everyone involved.

By agreeing to this Code of Conduct as part of the Waiver during registration, athletes acknowledge the seriousness of their commitment to these principles and the potential consequences for failing to abide by them.

All disciplinary action shall be taken at the sole discretion of the Executive Director.

1. Athletes shall treat themselves, coaches, team members, parents and team members' siblings with respect and dignity and make a sincere effort to support the team and the shared goals of the team.
2. Athletes shall not possess, transport or use any illegal drugs, including any and all performance enhancing drugs as defined by the United States Anti-Doping Agency, alcohol, any form of tobacco, marijuana or any other form of liquid concoctions or edibles containing any marijuana nor shall any athlete possess, transport or use any contraption to smoke or otherwise ingest or inject any of the substances described in this provision.
3. Athletes shall not bully, aid or abet any other athlete to engage in conduct that constitutes a violation of this Code of Conduct.
4. Athletes shall not engage in any manner of criminal activity.
5. Athletes shall always wear a helmet while riding.
6. Athletes shall not take risks (willingly attempt anything which is beyond one's ability to control their bike safely).
7. Athletes shall stay on legal, established trails to limit damage and erosion to the environment and shall model and display a 'Sharing the Trails' ethic at all times.
8. Athletes will follow all traffic laws.
9. Athletes shall not tamper with, trespass upon or damage any property of anyone else.
10. Athletes are ambassadors. Remember, you are responsible for all your actions and words while riding on the Highlands Ranch Junior Cycling team. Your behavior reflects upon the team as well as the community itself. Think of yourselves as ambassadors for the team, the sport of mountain biking, and your community.