



Spring 2024 Orientation Document

Welcome to the Des Moines 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 Des Moines 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 Des Moines BMX League is designed for beginning riders, and to help them learn the ropes gradually, with an emphasis on fun, before bringing them in to the next-level "Open Racing" program here at 80/35 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

Our league's regularly scheduled days are Tuesdays, for five sessions. Here are the exact dates and times:

Tuesday, April 23 (5:30PM-8:00PM)

Tuesday, April 30 (5:30PM-8:00PM)

Tuesday, May 7 (5:30PM-8:00PM)

Tuesday, May 14 (5:30PM-8:00PM)

Tuesday, May 21 (5:30PM-8:00PM)

Sessions Meet At:

80/35 BMX (In Ewing Park)

1701 E. MCKINLEY

DES MOINES, IA

Event Day Phone: 515-250-6498 (Casey)



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League Session Timeline

5:15PM-5:30PM - Check-in and get-ready

5:35PM-5:40PM - Riding / warm-up on the track

5:45PM-6:50PM - Instruction

6:50PM-7:00PM - Snack/Water Break

7:05PM - Report to Staging

7:10PM - Racing!

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

First Session Stuff

Please arrive 15-mins early on the first day to handle paperwork

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

- 1). The PAPERWORK TABLE. ALL riders must stop at this table, to sign your USA BMX paperwork. This is a different form than you may have signed at the Open House.
- 2). The check-in table will be next. Please hand your signed paperwork to one of the volunteers at the table. They will hand you your RIDER PACKET in return (Jersey and Number Plate).

Attach your number plate to the handlebars, using the "fuzzy ties" we have at the check-in table.

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

- 5). After you have your rider kit, 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.

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 him/her by the check-in table.

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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-so as can be expected from a bunch of excited BMXers), proceed to the "staging area" behind the starting hill. Then, our INSTRUCTION session will begin, with your coach and the on-track volunteers. This is a great time for photos and video of the kids taking their first laps on the track.

Just before the mid-session break, a volunteer will gather parents to discuss 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 or the morning-of your next League session, 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, 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 Noon on the day-of. If you do not receive a briefing, please let us know immediately (email to mike@bmxleague.com or text to 312-919-3637). We can add a second email address to your profile, if needed.

Non-League Racing (aka "Open Racing")

During the five weeks the League is in session, League riders participate only in League instruction and racing, and hold off on participating in any regular open racing at the track. 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.

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What to Wear To the Sessions

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

IMPORTANT Riders should wear the League jersey, and jeans to each session. Special racing pants and jerseys are for "Open Racing," after the league program. Gloves are strongly recommended.

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



For non-racers, we encourage you to dress in layers, perhaps a little warmer than you might be otherwise inclined to dress for an indoor event. 80/35 BMX can be windy, especially after the sun goes down, so bring a hoodie or light jacket, just in case. Racers will be plenty-warm, as they ride and race around the track.

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 mid-session. Nothing too heavy--Fig Newtons, Fruit, Animal Crackers, PB&J sandwich, etc.

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

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“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 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 recognizes the true progression each individual rider earns over the five weeks of the League season.

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.

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.

What happens when it rains?

If we have notice before a session that inclement weather is imminent for our league session time, we will send out an email advising you that the session is OFF for that day. We always ask you to reply with a “Got It!” so we can mark you down as having replied. We want to avoid having you go all the way out to the track, only to find a locked gate, so your “Got it!” really helps. Sometimes, if time is short, we will also send a text message (and again, ask for a “Got It” in reply).

Unstarted sessions which are called off due to weather or poor track conditions will be tacked-on to the end of the season. Your season will still be FIVE sessions.

Specific circumstances will dictate what happens if we have to call a session for rain once the session has begun (make it up over the remaining weeks, or do the whole session over...it largely depends on at what point the session needed to be called off).

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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 Friday at 5PM, following the first session. The tuition is the same, at \$149, and so is the fun! They can sign up at <http://desmoinesbmxleague.com>

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

Yes, we have League-specific discounts on bikes and helmets. Contact League Coordinator, Mike Carruth at mike@bmxleague.com for more info.

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

Contact Des Moines BMX League coordinator, Mike Carruth at 312-919-3637 or via email at info@desmoinesbmxleague.com.

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