



# Payne Mountain Bike Club FAQs

## **What ages/grades can participate?**

The Arizona Cycling Association allows 6<sup>th</sup> through 12 grades.

## **Do I need to have an expensive mountain bike?**

The ACA and the Payne MTB group are all about more people on bikes having fun. An expensive mountain bike is not required, but box store bikes do present special problems. Inexpensive bikes are not up to the harsh treatment that comes from riding on the trail and may become a hazard to the rider. Additionally inexpensive bikes are often heavy and have a limited gear range. This means the rider is struggling up a hill while their peers are zooming up the hill. A good starter bike estimate is \$900-\$1200 (used bikes are a great option too).

## **Do I have to race if I join the Payne MTB Club?**

The Payne MTB Club is open riders who want to race and riders who just want to be on the trail with cool people, get some exercise, improve skills, and have fun (adventure riders).

## **Who can join the Payne MTB Club?**

The Payne MTB club is open to Payne JHS 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders and to 6<sup>th</sup> graders who live within the district defined boundaries for Payne.

## **Where can I find more information?**

The Arizona Cycling Association has a great website full of great information:

<https://arizonacycling.org/>

## **During practices will I be expected to keep up with much faster riders or be held back by slower riders?**

During practices we divide the riders up by skill level (speed, conditioning, and bike handling abilities) so you will ride with others at your skill level.

## **Will we race on Saturday or Sunday?**

The league is planning to have each team race two Saturdays and two Sundays in 2023 (subject to change).

## **Do I really need all that extra "trail ready" gear (spare tubes, tools, air, etc.)?**

Absolutely, 100% yes. Every rider needs to be self-sufficient on the trail. Everyone is always happy to help-out, but you need to have your own "oh crap!" gear to repair a flat or remove a tire or wheel.

## **Are the racecourses safe?**

The trails we ride during races are well vetted and tested. You will not be riding alone out in the wilderness, you will be on the trail with a lot of other riders, marshals, and medics (and cheering fans).

**Who are the coaches, who will be on the trail with me?**

The coaches are parents, volunteers and teachers who have undergone ACA training and background checks.

**Can my mom or dad ride with me during practices?**

All adults on the trail with our riders during practices must be an ACA certified coach. Parents or guardians are invited to be coaches regardless of skills. A newbie parent-coach can learn mountain bike skills right along with you.

**What happens if I miss a practice?**

Missing practice is not a problem. If you miss too many you might suffer from loss of conditioning, but there are no penalties from the team, and you can still race.

**Where do we practice?**

A vast majority of the practices are held at San Tan Regional Park. Occasionally we may hold a practice at one of the other county parks. The Maricopa County regional parks (San Tan, Utery, McDowell, White Tanks) require an entry fee including for dropping off and picking up riders at practice. We encourage families to buy yearly park passes.

**When do we practice?**

We will practice two days a week, probably Monday and Wednesday. Times may change, but typical would be to arrive at 5:45 PM and roll out at 6:00, meet back at the trailhead at 7:15 and dismiss at 7:30 PM. We try to hold practice on days that other teams don't practice to reduce crowding on the trail.

**Where are the races?**

The race venues are subject to change, but the likely locations will be: Flagstaff, Prescott, Snowflake-Taylor, and the Phoenix area (McDowell Mountain Regional Park).

**Do I need to use clipless pedals?**

You do not need to use clipless pedals. Most junior high racers and riders use flat pedals and sticky bottomed shoes. Regular sneakers work fine too.

**Contacts:**

Jamie Collier  
Head Coach, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Teacher  
[Collier.james@cusd80.com](mailto:Collier.james@cusd80.com)

Nicole Austin  
Team Director  
[nicole.c.bailey@gmail.com](mailto:nicole.c.bailey@gmail.com)