

Off-road marshal guidelines (DH, 4X, XC, CX)

Thank you for being a marshal. Without volunteers like you, the event would not happen.

Key officials in a race

- **Event organiser** – An event organiser has overall responsibility for the planning, running, promotion, administration, risk management, results filing, and clean-up of a cycling event.
- **Commissaires (chief and assistants)** – A commissaire is a senior official in a bike race, they ensure all safety and sporting aspects of a race are facilitated and controlled.
- **Chief Marshal** – The chief marshal coordinates the team of marshals and is their main point of contact.
- **Marshals** – An off-road race marshal is a race-facing marshal, their main focus is to keep the course clear and safe for the riders. They use flags to warn riders of hazards or to stop a race. An off-road race marshal may also answer questions from spectators, or issue instructions to keep the course and security zones clear.

Marshal briefing

At the start of the event, all marshals will have a briefing meeting. Key event information and role details will be discussed, maps and equipment will also be handed out. You will need to sign when you take the equipment and as acceptance of this role. If there is anything you are unsure about, or if you have any questions, please ask either the chief marshal, event organiser or a commissaire.

Equipment

The equipment you will be given is:

- a radio
- a whistle
- a red flag
- a yellow flag
- a hi-vis marshal vest
- event details, including site map with the course and marshal points, the timing schedule, and emergency contact details
- notepad and pen
- course tape
- refreshments for the duration of your marshalling duties

You may also be given a bin bag to collect rubbish in your area.

You will need to bring suitable footwear and clothing for walking, standing or sitting still, so check the weather forecast. You should also be prepared for the weather to change, especially if you are on an exposed hillside! Remember to bring any other equipment, provisions, drinks or snacks you may want during the day in a backpack. These could include waterproofs (these are also windproof!), sun cream and insect repellent, small camping chair, which could all be required during a single British day!

Radio

You will need to listen to the radio messages to follow what is happening during the event, keep it within earshot. If you need to use your radio to send a message:

- Speak slowly, clearly, and keep your message to the point.
- Give your marshal point number
- Radios are only for event information, only refer to riders by their number, and consider others may overhear your message
- If you are not speaking, do not press the 'call' button! Pressing the call button blocks all other radio communication. Ensure you do not press it accidentally.

Whistle

- You will need to use your whistle repeatedly whenever you are waving a flag.
- In downhill events, blow the whistle every time a rider goes past you. One short, loud, blast for each rider – i.e. two blasts for two riders close together and so on.

Flags

You will need to show flags to riders as briefed, as told on the radio, or if a rider crashes in your area.

What do the flags mean?

- **Red flag** – tells riders that racing has been stopped – riders stop immediately and await instructions.
- **Yellow flag** – warns the rider that there is a hazard – riders reduce speed and proceed with caution.

When not in use, keep the flags out of sight, next to you. You should only pick them up and use them if there is an incident. It is important not to create confusion with the flags, keep them out of sight where a rider will not see them accidentally.

How to wave a flag to give the signal:

- Hold the flag so its colour is visible to the rider. For example, the stick in one hand and an opposite corner of the flag in the other hand.
- Extend your arms so the riders can see the flag and move it from side to side.
- Blow your whistle repeatedly to give riders an audible alert that you are showing a flag.

Crashes

If a rider crashes in your area:

- WAIT a few moments. Do not rush to help them. Usually, they are OK and will move out of the way.
- If after a few moments they are not moving or appear hurt, then either:
 - If the rider is not blocking the course and not in a dangerous place and it's a training session wave your yellow flag to advise the next riders.
- OR
- If the rider is blocking the course or has crashed in a dangerous place (like the landing off a jump) AND the next rider is coming, then wave your red flag.
- Radio the chief marshal to report it and to get medical assistance, remember to give your marshal point number.
- Stop spectators from attempting to move riders, moving of riders should be left to the medics who will do so safely.
- If you are having a problem with crashes in your area, radio your chief marshal for extra help.

Security zones

- Security zones are areas just outside the racecourse and are marked by a second line of tape. These areas are kept clear for the safety of all spectators and riders, should they crash. Security zones will be shown on the course map and you are responsible for keeping security zones in your area clear of all people and objects. Photographers and media are also not permitted in them.
- You need to ask people to move out of the areas, if they don't, report it to chief marshal immediately.
- You could advise spectators to stand up-hill of the course as it is generally a better view and safer.

Rider off-course

- During a race run a rider might go off the course – i.e. go through or over the course tape.
- If they do, then they have to get back onto the course in the same place that they left it when safe.
- Watch the rider, and if they go back onto the route further along/down the course, make a note of the rider's number and inform the chief marshal.

Course repairs

- If the course marking tape is broken, please try to fix it. Do this from outside the course, do not put yourself or riders in danger.
- If a course post comes out of the ground, you must put it back in the same place.
- If any big rocks or anything else moves on the course and you consider it to be dangerous, radio your chief marshal for help.
- If you have a problem or are not comfortable making any repairs, then radio for help!

Mechanicals

Riders are not allowed external assistance during racing. If a rider has a puncture or mechanical, they are required to fix it themselves. Do not assist them. During racing, note and report to the chief marshal any unpermitted assistance or any rider not completing the full course.

Need a break?

Do not leave your position unattended during training or race runs. If you need to leave your marshal point at any time, radio your chief marshal and ask them to send a replacement.

End of racing

Stay at your marshal point until you receive confirmation from your chief marshal that you can leave your position and that racing has finished. There may be riders still on course or reruns to be completed. You may be asked to clear course tape and bring it with any other rubbish collected.

Thank you again and enjoy the event

Off-road marshal briefing checklist (DH, 4X, XC, CX)

This checklist is to ensure effective delivery of the marshal briefing. During the briefing, ensure the items below are covered.

Marshal briefing

Thank you! Thank the marshals. Without volunteer marshals, the event would not happen.

Event format. Run through the event format for the day and the categories.

The role of the marshal and event communication.

- Explain the role of the marshal – they are to assist with ensuring safe and fair racing.
- Distribute maps and radios. Get marshals to sign out (and back in when returned) their equipment also write their mobile phone numbers down which can be used by the chief marshal if needed.
- Show marshals where they will be positioned and explain how to get there.
- Ensure all marshals know which radio channel is going to be used.
- Any infringements made by riders on the course need to be reported via radio and recorded in the notepad.
- If a marshal's requests are ignored, and they are unable to deal with spectators or riders alone, contact the chief marshal for assistance.
- It is also useful to identify where the other marshal points are that are close by.

Radio

Marshals will need to listen to the radio messages to follow what is happening during the event, keep it within earshot. Confirm which channel is the marshal's channel. When marshals need to use their radio, they should:

- Speak slowly, clearly, and keep message to the point.
- Give their marshal point number.
- Radios are only for event information, marshals should only refer to riders by their number, and consider that others may overhear the message.
- When not speaking, do not press the 'call' button! Pressing the call button blocks all other radio communication. So, ensure it is not pressed accidentally.
- If marshals have any questions or issues, please ask the chief marshal, event organiser or a commissaire.

Whistle

- Marshals will need to blow their whistle repeatedly whenever they are waving a flag.
- In downhill events, marshals blow the whistle every time a rider goes past them. One short, loud, blast for each rider – i.e. two blasts for two riders close together and so on.

Flags

- Brief marshal how to show their flags to riders, when told on the radio, or if a rider crashes in their area.
- **Red flag** – tells riders that racing has been stopped – riders stop immediately and await instructions.
- **Yellow flag** – warns the rider that there is a hazard – riders reduce speed and proceed with caution.
- When not in use, keep the flags close, but out of sight. They should only be picked up and used if there is an incident. It is important not to create confusion with the flags. Do not wave them at flies or insects! Also, do not leave them hanging anywhere they could be seen and misunderstood. Keep them out of sight where a rider will not see them accidentally.
- How to wave a flag to give the signal.
 - Hold the so its colour is visible to the rider. For example, the stick in one hand and an opposite corner of the flag in the other hand.
 - Extend arms so the riders can see the flag and move it from side to side.
 - Blow the whistle repeatedly to give riders an audible alert to the flag being shown.

Crashes

Explain what to do if a rider crashes in a marshal's area:

- They should WAIT a few moments. Do not rush to help them. Usually, they are OK and will move out of the way and off the course.
- If after a few moments, they are not moving or appear hurt, explain what to do if:
 - the rider is not blocking the course and not in a dangerous place
- OR
 - the rider is blocking the course or has crashed in a dangerous place (like the landing off a jump) AND the next rider is coming, then wave the red flag.
- Radio the chief marshal to report it and to get medical assistance, remember to give the marshal point number.
- Stop spectators from attempting to move riders, leave moving riders to the medics who will do so safely.

If a marshal is having a problem with a lot of crashes, they should radio the chief marshal for help.

Security zones

Explain what a security zone is:

- Marshals are responsible for keeping any security zones in their area clear of all people and objects. These areas are kept clear for the safety of riders and spectators.
- Spectators, photographers and media are not allowed in security zones at any time.
- Tell anyone in a security zone to move out of it, if they don't, report it to chief marshal immediately.
- Marshals can advise spectators to stand above the course as it is generally a better view and safer.

Rider off-course

- A rider might go off the course – i.e. go through or over the course tape.
- If they do this during a race, they must re-join the course in the same place that they left it. Watch the rider, and if they go back onto the race route further along/down the course, make a note of the rider's number and inform the chief marshal.

Course repairs

- If the course marking tape is broken, please try to fix it. Do this from outside the course. Marshals should not put themselves or riders in danger.
- If a course post comes out of the ground, it must be put back in the same place.
- If any big rocks or anything else moves on the course and it could be dangerous, radio the chief marshal for help.
- If there is a problem or it is not safe to make any repairs, then radio for help.

Mechanicals

- Riders are not allowed external assistance during racing.
- If a rider has a puncture or mechanical during racing, they are required to fix it themselves.
- Do not assist them.
- Make a note of the rider's number and inform the chief marshal of any rider's prohibited assistance during racing or any rider not completing the full course.

Need a break?

- Marshals should never leave their position unattended during training or racing.
- If marshals need cover so they can leave their marshal point, radio the chief marshal and ask them to send a replacement.

End of racing

- Stay at the marshal point until the chief marshal confirms that that racing has finished, and it is safe to finish. There may be riders still on course or reruns to be completed.
- (If required, and if bin bags – please clear course tape and bring it with any other rubbish collected.)

Debriefing

- Attend the debriefing meeting at the end of the event.
- Return the radio and other equipment, signing it back in.

Event specific information

- Additional event specific information.

Thank marshals again and hope they enjoy the event!