
UPDATE ON OUR BID TO JOIN NICA:

MiSCA WILL CONTINUE INDEPENDENTLY

It is with mixed emotions we announce that MiSCA will *not* transition into a NICA League. Our bid was approved, but there were a few provisions that we could not be agreed upon. There have been some changes at NICA since we started discussions last year and the MiSCA Board felt it was no longer a good fit for our organization. It's definitely a letdown because we put a lot of time and effort into the process. We recognize that the NICA model is clearly successful, so we will be making several changes for 2018. One major change is rider, team, and coach registrations for the "League", which will cover liability and race entry fees for the entire riding season. Additionally, we will provide our coaches with training and more resources to better teach kids and manage teams. We are extremely excited for the future and we knew, regardless of our relationship with NICA, that 2018 would be a year of change and growth for MiSCA. Below is an outline of a few challenges we encountered during the *discussion of provisions* stage in our journey to join NICA.

Elementary Riders: Throughout our discussions with NICA, they seemed open to the idea of allowing Michigan to have Elementary classes. We went into the process knowing there was a possibility they would not allow these riders and we were prepared to offer different programming if needed. NICA decided that no riders under grade 6 would be allowed to join the Michigan NICA League, compete in races, or join teams. Additionally, they were firm that no elementary riders could use the same race venue on the same day as a NICA event, even if MiSCA were to handle the registration/insurance separately.

Organizational Governance: When we started the process, we were told the Michigan NICA League would form under MiSCA's existing 501c3 and corporate organization. We were also told we could retain our current branding, incorporating it into the standard oval shape of other NICA Leagues. One of the provisions of our bid acceptance was that the "NICA Michigan Interscholastic Cycling League" would fall under NICA's 501c3 and there would be no connection to MiSCA. While existing MiSCA Board members would likely join the new organization under NICA, all corporate governance and finances would be fall under NICA.

Program Structure: MiSCA was bidding to become an Affiliate League. Leagues are considered Affiliate when they have their own 501c3 non-profit status and have already been coordinating races (MiSCA has a 501c3 and has been organizing youth races since 2010). NICA wanted to start the new Michigan League as an Emerging League, which is typical of a state getting started. Once a League satisfies many benchmarks, they reach Project status and can begin hosting NICA races. These statuses have differing fee structures as well, with Affiliate Leagues contributing the lowest annual fee to NICA. While much of the Emerging League fees come back in the form of a grant, this did require an additional \$25,000 cash outlay provided by MiSCA to NICA through 2019.

Timeline: When we started talking with NICA in fall 2016, they recommended a spring 2017 start time, which seemed too quick for us. We recommended a fall 2018 start time, which seemed reasonable to all parties at the time. If we came in as an Emerging League, there would be no NICA races in 2018 and there would be no set date when NICA races would start in Michigan. We assumed with this timeline that we would run NICA races starting in 2019, but that was not guaranteed. That would make it 3 years since we started discussions.

We went into the process with the understanding that NICA had become more flexible in their structure and were really excited to welcome MiSCA. In the end, the NICA Board was very firm on the provisions they introduced *after* accepting our bid. These provisions proved too difficult to overcome and ultimately we voted to discontinue our pursuit of becoming a NICA League. I want to thank the MiSCA Board for all the effort they contributed to the NICA bid process, as well as the thoughtful considerations and reasonable approach we took when making this choice. This was not an easy decision and it was not the conclusion we expected to come to this summer. I also want to thank the NICA team, namely Austin McInerney and Lauren Duensing, for their support during this process. We understand the challenge it would have been to onboard a new Affiliate League while also coordinating several new Emerging Leagues – all of this while running an organization that reaches 15,000+ kids in 19 states already! We are still in discussions with the NICA team, so that hopefully we can work together to get **#morekidsonbikes** in Michigan!

Please feel free to reach out to me directly if you have any questions or concerns. My email address is below and my mobile number is (734) 678-5764.

Looking forward to big things in 2018!



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