

STARTING OUT – MOTOCROSS

Motocross without a doubt is one of the most dramatic categories in motorsport, as it is characterized by the noise, speed and high flying jumps.

Motorsport, like any other sport, can be dangerous should competitors not familiarize themselves with the mandatory rules and regulations in terms of safety.

1. RULES & REGULATIONS

There are two worldwide governing bodies for motorsport:

- The Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), responsible for all forms of automobile sport, and
- The Federation Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM), responsible for all categories of motorcycling and the Commission Internationale de Karting (CIK), forms part of the FIA

Both the FIA and FIM recognise only one National Federation in each country, with such Federation in turn being responsible for the control and administration of the sport in its own country.

In South Africa, the FIA and FIM have transferred their sporting powers to Motorsport - South Africa (MSA) and all motor sporting events in the country are held in accordance with FIA and FIM Sporting Codes.

South Africa is one of only a few countries responsible for the control of both car and motorcycle sporting events, with most other countries having separate governing bodies for the two disciplines.

Before any club's application for affiliation to MSA is considered, the club has to provide a copy of its Constitution to MSA, wherein it must be clearly stated that there will be no discrimination between race, colour, creed or religion within the club. Further requirements for club affiliation can be found in the MSA MOI's.

The control of motorsport in South Africa is divided into six regions, namely: Gauteng; KwaZulu-Natal; Western Province; Eastern Province; Border and FS/Northern Cape.

In view of their relatively small sizes, secretarial services for the Eastern Province, Border and FS/Northern Cape regions are undertaken by the WC MSA Secretariat. Apart from being a full member of both the FIA and FIM, MSA is also affiliated to the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC)

Licences for the year can be obtained on www.msaonline.co.za. The Motorsport Calendar can be found on the MSA Website (www.motorsport.co.za) as well GCR's (General Competition Rules), SSR's (Standard Supplementary Rules) and SR's (Supplementary Regulations).

A GCR handbook can be purchased through the licence department at a set fee.

Competitors are advised to familiarize themselves with all the many rules and regulations.

2. MOTOCROSS TERMINOLOGY

Like any other sport, MX has its own terms and language that are used on a daily basis. Part of starting out in the sport, is learning what these terms mean:

AIRTIME	-	The time spent in the air whilst jumping
ARM-PUMP	-	When the muscles in the forearms get hard. Often happens at the beginning of a race when a rider grips too hard

BANGING	-	Usually describes the leaders banging the bars at the first turn
BERM	-	The build-up of dirt or sand around a corner forming a ridge or wall along which competitors can ride
BLOCK PASS	-	When a rider brakes and slides in front of another at a corner
FACE	-	The leading edge of a jump that determines how high or far you will fly when you take off
HOLE SHOT	-	The term given to the leader at the first turn
GNARLY	-	Refers to a rough, uneven track
KNOBBLY	-	A Motocross tyre
RAILED	-	Around a corner at an exceptionally high speed
ROOST	-	The rocks and debris thrown up behind an accelerating motorcycle
RUTS	-	Grooves that form on a track as a consequence of the same line being used over and over
STOPPIE	-	The action of stopping on the front wheel
STUTTER BUMPS	-	A section of very small bumps that are designed only to be crossed at speeds commensurate with rider skill – also known as WASHBOARDS
TABLETOPS	-	A Flat jump
TEAR OFFS	-	Thin clear plastic lenses that fit over goggle lenses and which can be 'torn off' during a race as and when required
WHEELIE	-	When the front wheel lifts off the ground
WHIP	-	A jumping style often used by freestyle MX riders. Used in motocross as a means of correcting the bike direction in mid-jump
WHOOOPS	-	A section of controlled smaller jumps that you have to find rhythm over

3. LICENCING

Before you enter into any motorsport event in South Africa you need to obtain a competition licence. All motorsport in South Africa is governed by a body called Motorsport South Africa referred to as MSA and has many functions. MSA is the licensing authority for competition licenses and application has to be made via them.

MSA has a very informative website - www.motorsport.co.za , where all the information you require is available to you

In order to obtain an MSA licence, please log on to www.msaonline.co.za and follow the simple tabs. Ensure that you join one of MSA's affiliated clubs before applying for your license.

There are varying levels of licenses that a competitor can apply for and they are as follows:

3.1 Club Licence

This licence allows competitors to only compete in club events. Competitors with club licences may not partake in Regional or National events, unless a support class is stipulated on the Event regulations.

3.2 Regional Licence

This licence allows competitors to compete in club events and Provincial/Regional Championship events, in the region in which the competitor resides. Competitors with regional licences may not partake in National events, unless a support class is stipulated on the Event regulations

3.3 National Licence

This licence allows you to compete in any event in South Africa as well as Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland which fall under the jurisdiction of MSA.

HOW TO OBTAIN A MOTOCROSS BIKE NUMBER, CLASSES AND NUMBER BOARD COLOURS:

Once you have obtained your license you can obtain your race number from MSA
Please refer to SSR 221 – 224 & SSR 243 in the 2018 MSA SA National Motocross SSR's.

4. REQUIRED KIT

Please refer to SSR 225 in the 2018 MSA SA National Motocross SSR's.

5. RACE EVENTS

For any event to take place, the organisers of that event need to obtain a permit from MSA. In order for a permit to be issued, the organisers need to submit Supplementary Regulations (SR's) to MSA by a specific date. Competitors can obtain these regulations from either MSA website or the club hosting the event, and will contain all the details regarding the event. An entry form will be submitted with the supplementary regulations and needs to be completed in full and sent to the organisers, with the proof of payment for the entry fee, before the close of entries date. Competitors need to ensure that the permit number issued by MSA is reflected on the regulations and the entry form.

All MSA affiliated clubs, have a notice board at the track. In order to ensure that the event is an MSA sanctioned event, the notice board should have posted a copy of the permit issued to them by MSA. If there is no permit posted on the notice board, the event is not an MSA Sanctioned event.

6. PITS AND CREW

Competitors need to be aware that as an MSA licenced competitor, responsibility of family, friends and crew in the pits and during the duration of the event lies with the competitor.

Fire strikers / Fire extinguishers of a minimum size of 2.5kg's are compulsory in every competitors pit area.

Environmental mats are compulsory for every competitor to utilize (Mats can be bought at MSA Head Office)

7. OFFICIALS

All officials that would like to assist at events need to take an exam. MSA would then grade the official according to the officials experience at events and results of the exam.

According to the level of event, the correct graded officials will be present at every race event. Competitors need to familiarize themselves with the various positions of the officials and what they are responsible for. Below is a list of the main officials and a short summary of their responsibilities:

1 - The Clerk of the Course (will officiate at Club, Regional and National events) - The COC has wide ranging powers at an event. He is responsible for the safety of all competitors, officials and spectators, and acts on behalf of the organisers.

2 - The MSA Steward (will officiate at Club, Regional and National events) - The MSA Steward represents MSA. The function of the Steward is to act impartially and to ensure that the organisers deal fairly with the competitors and that the competitors respect the organisers. Unless the COC is failing to take appropriate action, the Steward does not concern themselves with issues of safety. Their purpose is to interpret MSA rules and ensure they are being complied with. The Steward will conduct any protest hearings and having reached a decision, impose penalties.

3 - The Club Steward (will officiate at Club events) - The Club Steward assists the MSA Steward. This official does not need to be graded, but will need a good knowledge of MSA and Motocross rules and regulations.