



Ninja Carolina League Member Handbook and Standard Operating Procedures Season 5

Description:

Ninja Carolina League (NCL) is a competitive Ninja Obstacle Course Racing league founded in 2020 in Raleigh, NC with the focus to provide a beginner-level entry point into competitive Ninja and growing the North and South Carolina Ninja Warrior community. We created NCL to allow athletes of all ages & skill levels to succeed in the sport of Ninja.

Competitive Season:

The standard competition season for Ninja Carolina League will run from 01 September to 30 April of each calendar year. The League Championships will typically be held on the last weekend of April, unless one of the other national leagues (UNAA/ NNL/NSC) have their finals that weekend. In that event, the NCL Championships may shift a week to the left or right, at the League leaderships' discretion.

New for Season 5, the season will be split into a fall/ winter session and a spring, beginner-only session. The fall/ winter session will run from 01 September to 19 January, with finals being held on 25-26 January. The spring session will run from 01 February to 27 April, with finals being held the last week in April.

Also for Season 5, the Pro Class will allow for athletes at 13 yrs old. It will use the NSC Hybrid Course Rules format for competition.

Athlete Brackets and Divisions:

Age Brackets:

- ◆ Boys/Girls: 7U
- ◆ Boys/Girls: 9U
- ◆ Boys/Girls: 11U
- ◆ Boys/Girls: 13U
- ◆ Boys/Girls: 15U
- ◆ Male/Female: 16-39
- ◆ Male/Female Masters: 40+
- ◆ Male/ Female: Pro Class (13+)

Athletes will be grouped based on their age and skill level division. An athlete's age as of January 1st of the current season will determine which age bracket they need to register for when competing.

Example: Bobby wants to compete in Season 5 of NCL. His age, as of January 1, 2025 will determine in which age bracket he competes. If he is 11 on January 1, then he will compete in

Ninja Carolina League - Community

the 11U division for the season. If he is 12 on January 1, then he will compete in the 13U age bracket for the season.

Divisions:

NCL is designed to be a beginner-friendly league. As such, there are three separate divisions for the athlete to choose from: Beginner, Advanced, and the new Pro Wave. The Beginner division will run the standard course laid out by the host gym for the competition and be given the designated time limit specified in the rules walk-through. The Advanced division will compete on a modified course consisting of the same or similar obstacles as the beginners, with the addition of several new obstacles or modifications, with a time limit reflective of the advanced course. The Pro Wave will run on a uniquely designed course that may or may not resemble the beginner/advanced courses.

Additionally, competitions may be held with a limited range of age groups or classes. For example, a gym may hold a competition for only our younger athletes (7U to 13 or 15U) or for our adult athletes (15U, 16+, or Masters), or for beginners only, advanced only, or Pro Wave only. If a gym is hosting one of these competitions, it will be noted in the registration information, as well as on the NCL social media presence.

Athletes will register in their selected age bracket and division at the beginning of the season and will be required to remain there for the entirety of the season. If a competitor incorrectly registers in the wrong age bracket or division at their **FIRST COMPETITION**, the host gym may correct the discrepancy in the competition tracking software **PRIOR TO THE ATHLETE COMPETING!** Once the athlete begins their run, they are locked into the age bracket and division they have registered for the duration of the season.

Any athlete who meets one of the following criteria **SHOULD** compete in the Advanced division for their age bracket**:

- Placed in Top Three at previous NCL League Championships within the last two years
- Competed at WNL Tier 1 World Championships within last two years
- Competed at UNAA World Championships within last two years
- Competed at FINA Championships within last two years
- Competed in Ninja Sports Championship within last two years
- Competed at any USA Ninja Association World Cup or US National Championships within the past two years

For any of the above, if the athlete podiumed (1st-3rd place), it is **HIGHLY ENCOURAGED** that the athlete competes in the Pro Wave**.

It is ultimately up to the athlete, coach, and parent regarding which division an athlete should compete. If there is a concern regarding which division an athlete should compete in for the upcoming season, ensure that the discussion is had and decided prior to the athletes' first competition. Each NCL gym has a representative from the NCL board to address any concerns.

In the event there are Athletes who work for the facility hosting an NCL competition and wish to compete, they must run first in their elected age group and division. They also MUST NOT have any role in course design or course testing for the course the gym has created.

Course & Obstacle General Rules & Guidelines:

Competition runs will generally contain between 7-12 obstacles for the beginner level. For the advanced level competitors, a modified course based off of the beginner course with the addition and/or modification of obstacles will be provided. The Pro class course will be uniquely designed and may or may not resemble the beginner/ advanced courses. A course must include the following, at a minimum: three lower body dominant obstacles, three upper body dominant obstacles, and at least one balance obstacle. The remaining obstacles are left to the course designer's discretion. Each obstacle will be worth between one and five points (see Point Scoring System below). A maximum time limit for the course will be established prior to the start of the competition. The time limit established will be in effect for both the beginner and advanced level courses.

Climbing chalk may be provided by the gym hosting the competition. Outside/personal chalk will be allowed during a course run, if allowed/ approved by the hosting gym prior to the start of that day's competition. Tape is permitted for use, so long as it does not give the competing ninja an advantage over the other competitors. Tape must be approved by the Lead NCL Course Judge prior to the start of that day's competition. No gloves of any kind are permitted for use by competitors during their runs.

Obstacles will have a definite beginning and end point, and this will be explained in detail to all competitors during the course orientation. Below, you will find the key items that the NCL judge will look for to consider the obstacle completed.

Generally, obstacles will not be adjusted to accommodate individual competitors. Gyms MAY provide blocks at the start platform for any competitor to use to reach the initial point of the obstacle.

Gyms have the option to "branch" their courses for male and female athletes. That is to say, the course may diverge in two separate directions, with one path being configured more specifically for male athletes and the other being configured more specifically for female athletes.

For season 5 and specifically for the Pro Class athletes (now 13+), the course will follow the NSC Hybrid Course rules format. This means that rather than the typical progression points format, an athlete will have three attempts to complete each obstacle presented in the course. If an athlete fails their first attempt, they may reset and attempt the obstacle again after a reset time has passed. This Reset time is based on the longest time that it takes to reset an obstacle on the course. If the athlete fails an obstacle for the third time, their official run is completed and they must then leave the course.

Completing an Obstacle Rule: 3 Step Obstacle Completion Process

a. Any obstacle, except linked obstacles, are considered complete once all three of these steps have been met (either in this order or simultaneously):

- i. The athlete must disengage the obstacle, and
- ii. The athlete's body must completely pass the front plane of the finish (landing) platform, and
- iii. The athlete must physically touch the finish (landing) platform.

*If the athlete falls backward after passing the front plane, it will be the judges' discretion to determine if the competitor satisfactorily completed the obstacle.

*Overshooting a finish platform. It will be up to the Lead NCL Judge's discretion if overshooting a finish point/ platform will be allowed and will be specified during the rules walk through.

Course Judges

Every gym hosting an NCL competition will have a minimum of two Course Judges (one of which will be deemed the Lead NCL course judge for the competition) and a Course Timer. One of the Course Judges may also be the Course Timer. The Course Timer will be responsible for starting and stopping the ninja's course runs and recording the final time. The Course Timer should record the accrued points of each competitor in the Ninja Master App while the Lead Judge should call the points and address any fails or course issues.

Course Judges will determine if a ninja has or has not completed a course obstacle and the number of points that the competitor has earned on the obstacle. The competitor may choose to reset on the starting platform of an obstacle, if needed, so long as they have not progressed beyond the first touch point. **As soon as an athlete moves beyond the first touch point on an NCL course, they will not be allowed to restart an obstacle.**

Course orientations or "walk-throughs" will be conducted by the hosting gym on the day of competition, where practical, AND prior to the wave/ division beginning, where they will fully explain each obstacle to the competing ninjas. IF NOT PRACTICAL to provide an in-person walk-through, the hosting gym MAY CHOOSE to publish a course walk through video and publish it via social media the night prior to the competition.

Judging and Video Reviews

Course Judges make every effort to accurately record/ award an athlete's run correctly. However, they are also human, and mistakes can be made. If an athlete (16+) or their parent/ guardian (15 and below) believes that there may be a discrepancy for their athlete's run, they may request a review of the run by the event staff. If a course run was filmed by the athletes' designated video person, then upon the completion of that age group a run can be reviewed to determine the correct points of an athlete's run. Course Judges will have the final ruling on

obstacle completion and accumulated points during the run and their decision after review will stand. No points will be awarded or modifications made after the awards for a given division have been completed.

AT NO POINT MAY ANY PARENT OR ATHLETE REQUEST A REVIEW OF ANOTHER ATHLETE'S RUN! This has occurred previously in other leagues and often leads to frivolous challenges, poor sportsmanship on the part of the athlete or parent/ guardian and undue delay of the competition. Remember, the goal here is to have fun, cheer on your fellow ninjas, and lift up the community.

Good Sportsmanship

NCL strives to provide athletes with a fun, honest & competitive sporting event at every comp, we know that the venue staff are human, and mistakes will be made. All venue staff should always be treated with respect as they deal with their responsibilities on the course and at the venue. If an athlete, coach, parent, judge, or gym owner displays conduct that is argumentative or disruptive in any way to the competition or the venue, the individual(s) involved may be subject to disqualification where applicable and those persons may be asked to leave the facility.

Progression Point Scoring System

Each obstacle on the course (except for the Pro Class) will be worth between 1 and 5 points. Points will be awarded based on how far an athlete gets on the specific obstacle, typically identified by "touch points". A point is awarded for touching at or beyond a touch point.

The intent for NCL is for athletes to have the opportunity to complete/ attempt as many obstacles as possible in the time limit provided. This means that the athlete can continue through the course until the time limit expires. NCL runs based on a "soft time limit", meaning that if an athlete is currently attempting an obstacle (moved off the starting platform or starting point), then the athlete may continue that obstacle even if their time limit expires. An athlete **MAY NOT** begin another obstacle after their time limit has expired.

Obstacle Malfunctions & Resets

If a course obstacle malfunctions (a malfunction is defined as an obstacle not working as designed, built or manufactured by the course designer) or breaks during an athlete's run, the athlete shall be granted a temporary pause in their time until the obstacle can be reset or repaired, based on the situation. The athlete's time will revert to the time recorded for the previous obstacle that **DID NOT** have a malfunction and the athlete will be re-started from that point in the course, where their time and run will continue. The obstacle will be repaired or replaced at the gym's discretion.

If the situation results in a pause that cannot be readily addressed, the athlete will be given a 15 minute break and then be afforded the chance to continue the course from the last obstacle that **DID NOT** have a problem. During the break the competition shall continue to operate.

Athlete Injuries

Ninja OCR is a sport prone to the possibility of injury, where athletes will push themselves to, and often beyond, their limits in an attempt to go “furthest, fastest”. While every measure is taken to limit the chance of injury on a course, they do happen. If an athlete injures themselves during a course run, the course clock will not stop. If an athlete chooses to continue the course, they may do so so long as they do not risk further injury. The lead course judge has the final authority to stop an athlete’s run if, in their opinion, the athlete is unable to safely complete the course. If the lead course judge stops the athlete from completing the course due to an injury, the decision is final and may not be appealed.

Any injuries that occur during an NCL competition **MUST** be reported to the gym and to the NCL President not later than the day following the competition.

Ninja Carolina League Finals, Cash Payouts & Prizes

The Ninja Carolina League Championships will be typically held on the last weekend of April for each season. The exception to this would be if one of the bigger leagues (UNAA or WNL) has their finals the same weekend. In that event, NCL will shift the championships by one week either to the left or right, depending on current factors and make the announcement via the NCL social media presence and on its website.

Ninjas may compete in as many season competitions as they desire; however, to qualify for the NCL League Championships, an athlete must accrue a minimum of 125 league points which can only be attained by participating in a minimum of two league competitions for the season.

IF, AT THE END OF THE REGULAR SEASON, THERE ARE FEWER THAN 5 COMPETITORS FOR A GIVEN DIVISION WHO HAVE QUALIFIED FOR THE LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP, THE LEAGUE WILL HAVE THE OPTION OF TAKING UP TO THE TOP 5 COMPETITORS FOR THE DIVISION.

NCL League Championships will have a structured payout for each bracket and division. Payouts will be made to the top three finishers per age division and gender in the following amounts:

1st Place: \$100
2nd Place: \$75
3rd Place: \$50

Additionally, each of the top three finishers will receive a NCL League medal and the first-place finisher will receive a custom award, designed by the hosting gym.