

AFM - New Racers FAQ

Contributed by AFM Editor
Last Updated Wednesday, 30 May 2012

What kind of license do I need to race in AFM?

You have to get an AFM Competition license. The AFM also offers reciprocity to license holders from other racing organizations, WSMC, CVMA, OMRRA, WMRRA, CCS, MRA, WERA, AMA, etc.

Do I have to have a motorcycle driver's license?

No.

How much riding experience do I need to race?

A lot if possible, but it really depends on the rider. The keys are to have good control of your machine, to know how to take a turn at speed, to be very proficient in the use of the engine, gears, and brakes...and not be afraid to go fast. How old do I have to be to race?

If you are under 16 years of age, you must appear before the board with your parents for approval. If you are under 18, you must have your parents consent and attendance at all race events you participate in. You must be 16 years of age or older to race at Infineon Raceway. Riders under the age of 16 must either hold an expert license with a recognized Road Race organization or have 2 years asphalt racing experience with 20 race finishes and complete the AFM approved NRS school.

Medical Insurance requirement.

Personal major medical insurance is required for all competition members. Emergency room-only insurance is not acceptable.

Fees and Cost

License & entry fees go to Membership info > Fees

Gate fees are generally \$10-\$15 at each event.

Other expenses are all dependent on the bike you run and how far you travel.

Including a race bike, and "consumables" like fuel, fluids, tires, chains, along with travel expenses.

New Race School

See rule book section 8.0 - 8.5 for equipment requirements of all motorcycles.

The NRS is a one-day class that will be offered through AFM designated providers. You use your own race-prepared motorcycle and all your own racing gear. You may take the school on any bike as long as it is fully race-prepped, meets the AFM's safety requirements and it passes Tech inspection. If you pass the NRS, you may begin racing the next day. AFM approved providers are: Pacific Track Time (530-223-0622 www.pacifictracktime.com) Keigwins @ The Track (650-949-5699 www.keigwins.com) or Z² Track Days (888-929-9666 www.zoomzoomtrackdays.com). Fees are determined by the provider.

The NRS covers: Classroom...racing lines, braking & cornering theories, AFM rules, practices & race day procedures, warning flags, safety equipment; Riding Sessions...some riding is supervised or observed, some is open practice; and there is a written test. You must pass the school to be able to enter AFM races if you have no road racing experience with other clubs.

Does going through the Superbike School, STAR, dP School, CLASS, etc. qualify me to race?

No, you still have to pass AFM approved NRS. The non- approved schools are great for giving you track experience, but the AFM NRS is focused on preparing you to compete in real AFM races, including teaching you about safety flags, bike prep, mental & physical prep, what to expect and do while racing with other people, AFM logistics, etc. Also, the AFM must carefully evaluate students for on-track safety and competency. This involves both classroom and riding sessions. BUT...before going racing, we do recommend getting lots of track time and track experience at track days or track schools.

What kind of motorcycle do I need to race?

See rule book section 6.0-6.1 for class information

Almost any kind of motorcycle will do, since the AFM offers classes to bike sizes from 125cc to over 1000cc, and for bikes with little/no modification up to those made for racing only.

What safety equipment is required to race?

See rule book section 7.0-7.2 for general equipment required for all motorcycles and riders.

One-piece or zip-together leathers in excellent condition (no holes, rips or tears); a full-face helmet with 2005 or later Snell sticker inside or a BSI 6658-A or ECE 22-05 certification sticker on the shell and is in excellent condition, boots at least 8" high; gloves in excellent condition; a back protector (either built into the leathers or separate) that consists of impact-resistant material and impact absorbing padding, and covers the spine from the shoulders to below the waist. Leathers and protective gear are an exceptionally good investment for anyone intending to ride at speed on a motorcycle be it on the street or track…do not scrimp on safety gear!!

What do I need to do to my motorcycle to make it legal for racing?

See rule book section 9.0-9.5 for Rules for classes and 8.2 for number plates.

Remove street stuff; turn signals, mirrors, license plate and bracket, passenger foot pegs, side & center stands. Headlights and tail lights need to be removed or taped over. Aftermarket side cases are required on certain bikes. All 4-strokes must have a "belly pan" installed or incorporated into the fairing lower; even bikes which didn't come with lowers must have an AFM legal belly pan. Cooling systems CANNOT HAVE ANY ANTI-FREEZE (GLYCOLS, ETC.) AT ALL…ONLY WATER. Approved additives are Redline Water Wetter or Prestone Water Pump Lube…all glycols (ethylene-, propylene-, etc) are NOT OK. You will need to install number plates (rule 8.2 for specifications). Novice number plates must be yellow with your assigned AFM number in black. Plates need to be securely fastened. Finally, certain bolts, nuts, and fasteners need to be safety wired or have locking devices (i.e. nylock, locking tabs, etc). You do not have to remove all items but some people choose to remove as much "costly-to-repair" bodywork as possible while they are on the steep portion of the learning curve. See rule book Appendix A, Tech inspection, for a complete list of the tech inspection requirements. The Tech Check List is listed on the Rules and Form pages as well.

How do I find out about setting up my motorcycle for racing?

There are a number of good ways to get such information; 1) Best way…go to a race, browse through the pits, look at the bikes, and talk to people about their setup. Most racers are friendly and willing to tell you what they run; 2) Call one of the AFM's technical info people for tips (see Contact Info tab, Tech support, for contact information); 3) Read the roadracing newspapers for technical articles and race bike info; 4) Make friends with an experienced racer and pick his/her brain; 5) If you have money, hire the services of an experienced and successful tuner/mechanic to help you get set-up.

If I was going to buy a motorcycle for racing, what type should I buy?

While the type of bike you like most is largely a personal preference, we usually suggest something that will allow a new rider to get the most racing time & fun for the least money, and that isn't so large that it is either intimidating or overly difficult to learn to ride in the turns. Bikes like 250 Twins (i.e. Ninja 250, Aprilia RS250, etc.), Thumpers (single cylinder 4-strokes), 500 or 650 Twins, and even 400 fours are thought to be good starting places.

Where would I find a good bike to race that's already prepared?

One of the best places is from roadrace oriented classified ads, like those in the AFM Forums, in the back of Roadracing World, or by browsing the pits on a race day for "bike for sale" signs.

How many races can I enter on a race day?

As many as your bike(s) legally fits into, BUT due to race day space limitations (i.e. more entries than we have grid spaces for) be aware that you may not get into all the races you want or sign up for.

Can I race more than one bike on a race day?

Yes, but you should consider costs, effort required, and whether there is room in those classes. This is especially important to consider when just starting out, as there is REALLY a lot to learn with one machine, much less the extra distractions of multiple bikes to prepare, maintain, pay for, and most importantly, switching between them without losing some of the close feel for each.

What do the flags mean?

See rule book section 4.0-4.1 for flag meaning and uses.

The Race Director will cover flags in each Rider's Meeting at race and practice days. Flags will also be covered in depth at the NRS.

Entering my first race:

Go to the Race Entry page for entry, practice times, & transponder information & requirements.

When can I become an expert status rider?

See rule book section 2.2 for information.

You can petition for a status change once you have completed 6 races over the course of 6 individual race dates. You will become an expert automatically the next season if you are a Novice Class Champion. You will stay a Novice until you either petition for the change or check the expert status box on the next years application.

Where do I get sponsorship for my racing?

Ask at your local bike shop, your parts suppliers, etc. Your success will depend both on how well you do on the track and how well you can present yourself to prospective sponsors. Think about what you can do for them before asking for their support; present yourself in a professional manner; follow through on what you say you will do. It does take some time and effort to track down sponsors, but many riders have found it to be worth the expenditure.

Results and Trophies

See the Race Results page for results and point placements.

Trophies are given at the track to the first 3 finishers in each class after the results are final, 30 minutes after posting of the un-official results. If you did not get a trophy, you do get the satisfaction of having raced successfully and having finished wherever you finished…no small feat in an activity that most people would not even attempt.

What if I want to race at another track?

You can race in AFM events at Thunder Hill, Button Willow and Infineon. Most clubs accept the AFM competition licenses under a reciprocity license agreement (i.e. with small licensing fee we accept theirs, they accept ours). It's a good idea to contact the other organization for details on specific fees, registration, classes and tech requirements.

What if I get a license and then don't race?

Of course, we think that the best thing you can do with your license is to go racing. However, if you can't go racing for some reason, you still get our other benefits. After you get an AFM license, you'll get our email blasts, any special mailings, and a discounted subscription from Roadracing World magazine. You also are a voting member. A request for a license fee refund must be received in writing and received prior to the last scheduled race event of the year. Other restrictions apply, see rule book Appendix C, Refund Policy for complete details.