

Rider Category Upgrades – Additional Explanations

from the USAC Technical Director, March, 2008

A couple of explanations/interpretations are also necessary to address questions that always come up.

Stage Races

First, stage races only count for upgrading from 3 to 2 or from 2 to 1. Second, an omnium is not a stage race. There is no General Classification for an omnium and no points are awarded for overall omnium placings. The stage race can be on points instead of time, but must be a true stage race, which means a rider must ride all stages in order to continue. That is the easiest way to determine if it is a stage race or not. A long series of criteriums where there happens to be an overall prize does not count.

Mixed Categories

The question always comes up about how you handle mixed categories. Here is a play by play to explain how to interpret it if a rider wants to know whether a race counts for upgrading and how:

Let's say the rider rides a men's category 1,2,3 road race that is 50 miles and has 72 starters. The rider gets 5th place. Does the rider get upgrade points and how many? Well, there is no single, simple answer to that question. The answer depends on the category of the rider requesting the upgrade and the composition of the field.

- Rider is a category 3 – Yes, the race definitely counts for upgrading. For a cat 3 to 2 upgrade, the RR need only be 50 miles, so we would use the road race points table. Since the field is a mixture of category 1,2, and 3, all of the riders qualify as starters for this rider, so we would use the road race table with 50+ starters. Did you get 5 points? If so, you did it right.
- Rider is a category 2 – Hmm. Alas this is more difficult. For a 2 to 1 upgrade, a road race must be 80 miles, so this race does not qualify as a road race. However, a criterium need only be 30 miles, so this race qualifies on distance for the criterium table. How many starters do we use? This is even more difficult and puts the burden on the requestor and on the administrator to know the composition of the field. This is why many administrators in the past just refused to use combined fields for upgrades. That is not the intent of the process, however. If of the 72 riders, 55 of them were category 1 or 2, then you would use the criterium table and 50+ starters. You should get 2 points. What if the 72 riders consisted of three category 1 riders, one category 2 (the guy looking for the upgrade), and sixty-eight category 3 riders? That race then had only 3 other riders that were the requestor's peers or higher. Alas, that race did not count for upgrading as the table has a minimum of 5 to earn points.

Those two examples are the extremes, of course. There would be race scenarios intermediate between those two extremes.