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In 2003, BikeNZ was created to act as an umbrella body in servicing all national bike and cycling organisations including, but not limited to, BMX NZ, Mountain Bike NZ, Cycling NZ, NZ Schools Cycling, NZ Masters Cycling and the Cycling Advocates Network.

As a new national umbrella organisation, BikeNZ is now providing a strategic framework from which cycling development will be delivered nationally. Centralised operations have been established in Wellington that will service the sport of BMX nationally. BikeNZ is committed to working with BMX NZ in delivering development programmes nationally, including the Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Programme.

BikeNZ supports BMX NZ's work to introduce this programme into every region. Through securing support from the Southern Trust and creating a Coaching Development Manager position that holds part-responsibility for supporting the national implementation of the Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Programme, BikeNZ has demonstrated our awareness that BMX as a sport offers children the opportunity to develop fundamental cycling skills for life.

Many of New Zealand's World Cycling Champions have started their careers within BMX and it is BikeNZ's mission, through working in support of BMX NZ, to ensure that Kiwi Sprocket Rocket is an overwhelming success.

Nathan Tau
Coaching Development Manager
BikeNZ

1. INTRODUCTION

Kiwi Sprocket Rocket is the name given to the modified form of BMX for riders 7 years and under. The concept was originally developed within BMX in 1994 by BMX NSW as a competition based program, but has since been expanded very successfully into a skill development program by Bicycle Motocross Australia Inc. in conjunction with the Australian Junior Sports Policy. BMX New Zealand Inc. has further adapted the program for introduction into New Zealand with reference to the SPARC's KiwiSport guidelines as adopted by more than 30 other national sporting bodies.

The Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Program is made up of three (3) major programs being;

- The Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Club Program;
- The Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Participation and Skills Award Program, and
- The Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Coaching Skills Award Program.

The Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Program presents young BMX riders with the opportunity to become involved in a skill based BMX program that caters to their size, skill and interests. Most importantly the program aims to lift the profile of the modified form of BMX and its benefits in terms of psycho-social and physical development of junior BMXers.

More specifically the program is aimed at:

- Providing a strong foundation within the sport by changing the **focus** in the 7 years & under classes to
 - Skill development, including general bicycle skills to lay the foundations for sport specific BMX skills.
 - Enjoyment and 'want' of participation,
 - Understanding of Fair Play and rules at their level, rather than promoting the win-at-all costs culture.
- Reducing the pressure involved in competing week in week out, (normally living the parents dream), to reduce burnout in junior competitors.
- Providing direction to coaches and officials of junior programs through resource development.
- Effectively promoting the junior classes to their target market whereby setting the target for substantially increased memberships



To help achieve these aims this guide book has been developed to provide information to clubs and other associations on how to run the Kiwi Sprocket Rocket program.

The success of the Kiwi Sprocket Rocket program will depend heavily upon the quality of the resources and the personnel who are directly involved in running the program within the Regions and Clubs.

This guidebook along with the supporting programs and resources, are therefore designed to provide quality resources and personnel in the delivery of the Kiwi Sprocket Rocket program.

2. MODIFIED BMX

Philosophy

The introduction of children to BMX should be gradual and is best achieved through coaching development and modified participation programs based at club and interclub level.

Kiwi Sprocket Rocket allows young BMXers to participate in an environment where the emphasis is on the pleasure of participating and the joy of learning new skills.

The adult rules and structure of BMX are inappropriate for young riders. Modified BMX takes into account the age, skill and maturity of your BMXers.

The rules and modifications for Kiwi Sprocket Rocket have been designed to align the sport of BMX with the physical and psychological capabilities of riders 7 years & under.

The modifications have also been structured to take into account the current facilities and resources BMX has to offer and provide minimal impact upon those resources and facilities.

Why Modify?

BMX for young participants is modified to prevent many of the problems that have plagued young riders in BMX since its inception in the late 1970's. Some of the problems include:

- the unsuitability of the complex adult rules for young riders.
- the emphasis on competition rather than skill development.
- the failure of many young riders to adequately develop skills because of emotional pressure induced through competition.

- the focus of coaches and administrators on talented children to the exclusion of those who really need more practice and development.
- the hostility of some adults to the idea of changing sports rules to suit children, on the grounds that it will not longer be a proper sport.
- the excessive physical demands made on young riders using adult philosophies.

When we look specifically at why we should modify BMX there are many concerns which need to be addressed. The following summary sets out many of the concerns and the answers to those concerns.

It is a competitive world, how are young BMXers ever going to learn to deal with it if they are placed in an artificial environment?

Modified BMX does not totally do away with competition, it merely changes the focus of competition according to the capabilities of the maturing child. By modifying BMX, the emphasis is being put back on the fun elements to help increase enjoyment, which in turn will help speed up skill acquisition.

Young BMXers will not learn the correct skills if performing a modified version.

We all acquire skills by breaking them down into their components to help develop the whole skill. All modified BMX does is break the sports specific skills required for BMX down to their component parts and provides a progressive approach to skill development (not a sink or swim approach).



There will be difficulties for your BMXers transferring to the adult version of the sport.

By modifying BMX it will provide a graduated approach to transferring into the adult version of BMX. The modified version lays a better foundation during the rider's junior days to help meet the challenges of the adult version of BMX.

Modified BMX will hold back advanced performers.

Most of the advanced performers in the junior ranks are early developers (those that have matured physically earlier). Many of the early achievers don't go on to the adult level as they are burnt out in the junior ranks or drop out once they lose for the first time. By modifying BMX we are able to develop programs which will teach these riders how to cope with losing and the demands they will face when entering the adult version of BMX.

Modified BMX will be harder to organise for the officials and administrators.

It is not that it will be harder to organise, but that organising modified BMX will require officials and administrators in BMX to develop an understanding of the requirements of young riders and their developmental needs, rather than applying the adult models.

Young BMXers will want the adult version of the sport or they will drop out of the sport.

The modifying of junior sport is now occurring in all sports, so if they drop out of BMX, they will be moving to another sport and its modified version. So why are all sports developing modified versions? It's simple. Because sports administrators around the country understand that young athletes are dropping out because they are placed under too much stress to perform at too young an age.

Modified sports give some competitors an unrealistic view of their abilities.

It is true that modifying BMX may give some competitors the chance to achieve who have never had that opportunity before. By giving such opportunities, BMX may retain some of the average performers who may go on to become good club volunteers in adult life.

What to Modify.

To modify BMX, it is important to maximise the use of the current facilities and resources in such a way, as to cause minimal levels of impact on the sport.

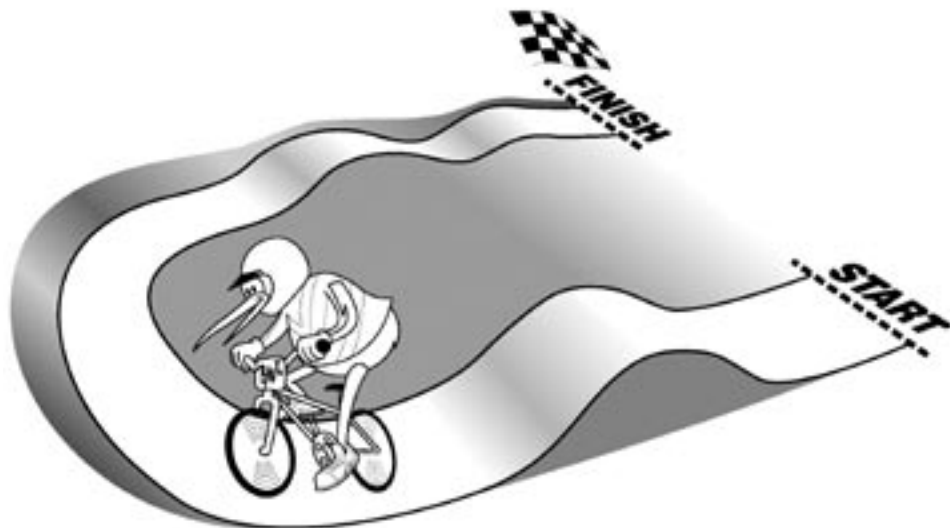
This will allow the modified programs to be easily integrated into the current structures. The physical modifications that are required for BMX to run the modified programs are:

Bike - The bikes in BMX are already modified to cater for junior riders, as they have smaller frames and components developed specifically to cater for young BMXers.

The bike should be designed to handle the demands of young riders trying to learn new skills and not to be made of such fragile materials that they will bend on the first obstacle they negotiate.

It is worth noting, that when selecting a junior frame and equipment, care should be taken not to build a bike that resembles a small road bike rather than a BMX bike. This style of bike makes it difficult for junior riders to develop skills due to the handling characteristics of the bike.

Tracks - The development of two separate tracks to meet the needs of both junior and senior riders would place too big a strain on resources. It is therefore important that clubs consider track designs using simple design principles that will provide a good competition and training facility for both junior and senior riders.



Some possibilities and suggestions for Track design principles include;

- Build the larger jumps that cater to senior riders on the first half of the track and the smaller jumps that cater to the juniors on the second half.

Why?

- Larger jumps are not as dangerous as speed humps if built correctly on the faster sections of a track.
- Allows the track to be divided into two sections for training nights. (i.e.: juniors on small jumps, seniors on large jumps)

- Re-introduce senior sections to tracks

Why?

- So the more technical jumps which may be required to help develop the skills of senior riders are not a danger to junior riders.
- It may also allow a shorter track to be developed for junior riders that is more suited to their physical capabilities.

- Develop side-tracks around some of the bigger jumps with steep lips.

Why?

- Rather than remove the jump, which may promote skill development for intermediate and senior riders, side-tracks offer a viable alternative to the demolition of the jump (and sometimes club harmony)

When Designing!

- Always build the side-track to the inside of the track, to help reduce the distance and make it more obvious.
- Make the side-track wide and maybe add a little jump.
- Ensure an official is stationed to direct riders until they become familiar with the direction of the track.

Duration - Consider the track length for riders 7 years and under should be half the length of the adult version.

Why?

- With young riders' bodies still in the early stages of maturation and having a very poor tolerance of lactic acid, it is more beneficial for young riders physical development to participate in short fast events rather than longer slower events.

Rules - Under the modified rules which are outlined in section 5, the concepts of protesting and recognition for places over the line have been removed and replaced with the recognition of skill improvement and sportsmanship.

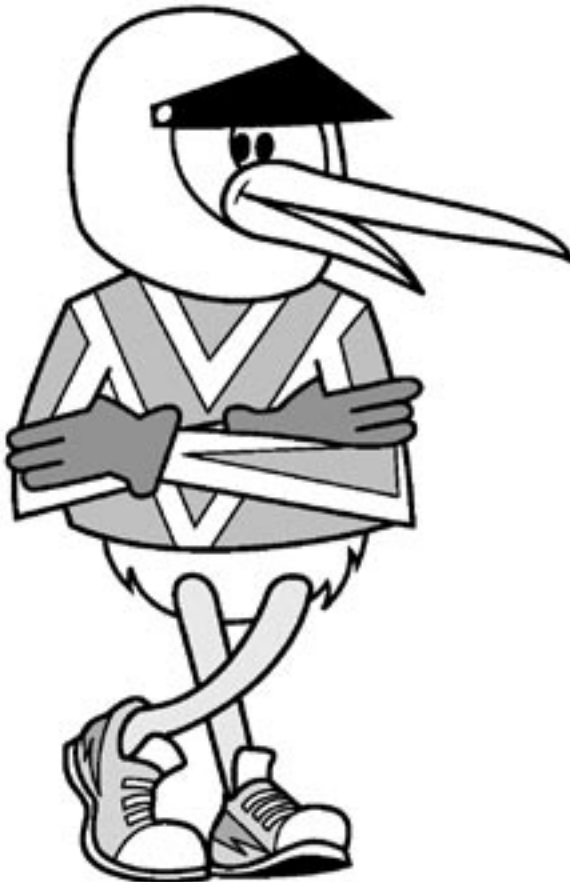
Why?

- Under these early stages of child development where many attitudes are developed that carry on into adult life, it is important to promote the development of skills and sportsmanship.

How To Support The Modified Program

- Ensure your club has an accredited club coach who is conducting the Coaching Skills Award program.
- As an official, ensure the Participation and Skills Award program is being conducted according to the guidelines outlined in this manual.

- Distribute the promotional posters, stickers, brochures etc. to schools, bicycle shops and around the community to increase community awareness.
- Ensure BMX members adopt the philosophy of the program to focus on fun and skill development.
- Be actively involved in modifying local facilities as outlined above to ensure BMX facilities can cater to modified BMX.
- Seek to further educate yourself and those around you on the principles of developing young athletes and the promotion of long term participation in sport.
- Try to prevent other coaches, officials and administrators applying adult principles of training and development to young riders.



3. THE KIWI SPROCKET ROCKET CLUB PROGRAM

The Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Club program is exclusive to riders aged 7 years and under. It provides young riders with their own identity and access to the other Kiwi Sprocket Rocket programs, such as the skills awards for coaching and participation.

How to Join?

To join, a rider simply needs to fill in a BMX NZ membership application form (which is available from your local club) and return it, along with the membership fee and a photocopy of proof of age (e.g. birth certificate, passport), to their BMX club. Provided the rider is 7 years or under, and their membership application form is accepted, they qualify as a Kiwi Sprocket Rocket member.

You will then receive your membership card, which can be collected from your club, and a Kiwi Sprocket Rocket kit will be forwarded by BMX NZ to the address provided on your membership application form.

The Kiwi Sprocket Rocket kit includes the following:

- Jersey Patch (to be sewn to rider's jersey)
- Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Number Plate)
- Kiwi Sprocket Rocket sticker
- Coaching Skills Award Logbook
- Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Guidebook
- Rule Book (if available)
- Welcome letter

Benefits of Membership

Once a rider has become a member of the Kiwi Sprocket Rocket club, they will receive the following benefits:

- Subscription to the National Publications (if applicable).
- Insurance coverage.
- Access to the skills award programs for coaching and participation.
- Access to the BMX event participation program.
- Access to any Kiwi Sprocket Rocket programs conducted on the National website and/or events if entered.
- Kiwi Sprocket Rocket kit.

The Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Club will be co-ordinated by BMX NZ Inc. at the National level, using BMX NZ's registration database. This will help streamline the co-ordination for many of the club programs.

4. KIWI SPROCKET ROCKET PARTICIPATION & SKILLS AWARD PROGRAM

This program runs in conjunction with BMX competitions at club and interclub levels. When riders participate at BMX events in the Kiwi Sprocket Rocket class, they will be awarded firstly for their participation and secondly for the performance of particular skills.

How does the awards program work?

1. Awards for Participation

At the end of the event/series each participant in the Kiwi Sprocket Rocket class must receive an identical award representing their participation in the event/series. The awards should be inexpensive, so nomination fees may remain relatively low for this class, but still cover the costs for the event/series.

Some examples of awards for participation are:

- i) Contemporary Awards
 - Competitors Ribbons
 - Medallions
 - Small Trophies
 - Certificates

- ii) Useful Awards
 - Minor Bicycle Parts
 - School Equipment
 - Clothing (t-shirts, caps)

2. Awards for skill improvement

In addition to the award for participation, event/series organisers may offer skills awards which represent skill 'improvement' for the following skills:

- Starting
- Jumping
- Cornering
- Passing
- Sportsmanship

It is envisaged the participation skills award program is only suitable to club level series and a small number of interclub level events. It is important to maintain the integrity of the awards by not offering them too frequently.

It is also important when offering the participation skills award that judges are familiar with all riders current level of skill, if they are to judge for skill improvement.

How to Judge?

To ensure judging is an easy process, a simple judging sheet may be found on page 18 of this guidebook with easy to follow instructions.

Who Judges?

The skills awards should be judged by the finish line judges in partnership with the Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Co-ordinators (who should be familiar with which Sprockets are improving their skills.)

Do's & Don'ts of Judging

It is important that when judging the awards for skill improvement, judges follow these simple rules:

Do Share the awards around the riders from week to week
Award only skill improvement
One award per rider
One award per skill
Keep a diary record of who has received awards (optional)

Don't Award the same rider the same skill award over and over.
Award for skill excellence instead of skill improvement.
Overrule the opinion of the majority of judges.
Discriminate against riders due to personal biases.

How to achieve a Skills Award?

If a rider shows marked improvement in a particular skill, they should become a prime candidate for a skills award. For example:

Skill	Type of Improvement
1. Starting	First ever balanced start. Marked improvement in timing the gate.
2. Jumping	First time with wheels off the ground. First attempt at particular jumps. First time clearing a particular jump
3. Passing	First attempt at swoop passing. Marked improvement in timing passing moves.
4. Cornering	Marked improvement in lines taken. Marked improvement in pedalling into & out of turns.
5. Sportsmanship	Friendliness to other competitors. Shaking competitors hands after the event. Stopping to help a fallen competitor.

Note: This table should be used as the basic guidelines for judging criteria for the participation skills award.

What type of awards are presented?

For the participation skills award, BMX-NZ has designed certificates which may be presented. Examples of these certificates are displayed in the appendixes section in this booklet.

Clubs may wish to develop their own types of awards for this program which could be:

- Ribbons
- Small Trophies
- Plaques
- Medallions

However, clubs may not develop new categories of awards without written approval from BMX-NZ.

5. RULES FOR CONDUCTING THE KIWI SPROCKET ROCKET CLASS AT BMX EVENTS

BMX NZ Competition Rules and Regulations apply to the Kiwi Sprocket Rocket class, except in the following areas:

1. Race Format

- 1.1 Motos will be run in accordance with the normal race program.
- 1.2 A final moto (being the repeat of the first moto) will be run prior to the finals series commencing.

2. Classifications

- 2.1 Riders aged 7 years and under will be classified into the Sprocket Rocket classes using age and/or gender participation divisions.
- 2.2 Riders aged 7 years and under are not permitted to ride up on an age in the interest of competition.

3. Protests

- 3.1 No rider in a Sprocket Rocket participation class has the right of protesting finishing position.

4. Scoring

- 4.1 No scoring of placings is to occur.

5. Commentary

- 5.1 Focus on excellence of skills performed not simply rider placings.
e.g. "What a great jump!", "Look at those Sprockets light up their cranks!"

6. Finish Line

6.1 Riders are to be applauded as they cross the finish line.

7. Awards

- 7.1 All Kiwi Sprocket Rockets participating in an event/series must receive an identical award that represents their participation.
- 7.2 Awards for participation will not represent a riders finishing order in the event/series.
- 7.3 Participation skills awards are an additional award for club and interclub events/series only.
- 7.4 Presentation of awards should occur in alphabetical/class order.
- 7.5 Presentation timing is at the discretion of the event organisers.

6. THE KIWI SPROCKET ROCKET COACHING SKILLS AWARD PROGRAM

The Coaching Skills Award program is aimed at developing the basic skills required to ride a bike: Pedalling, Balance, Cornering and Braking.

The skills award is a 24 week program that requires riders to complete skill tests at three levels of difficulty on each skill to achieve a skill award.

Who Co-ordinates?

The club coach or appointed sprocket co-ordinator to conduct the skills award program.

The co-ordinators responsibilities will include completing the sprocket logbooks and awarding the skill certificates.



How Does it Work?

All the information to run the skills award is outlined in the logbook, which is set out in order from week 1 to week 24.

What Resources are Required?

The resources required for the skills award are:

- Skills Award Logbook
- Skills Award Certificates
- Skills Award Logbook Stamps

What Equipment is Required?

The logbook outlines in each test the equipment required, with the basic equipment being such items as: Marker Domes, Stopwatch, Tape Measure, etc.

Awards

Riders will be awarded achievement certificates and a stamp in their logbook upon completion of level 3 for each skill. The award certificates and stamps will be issued by the club coach of sprocket co-ordinator, depending on who is appointed by the club to co-ordinate the program.

7. ROLES OF COACHES, OFFICIALS AND CO-ORDINATORS

Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Co-ordinator Responsible for:

- The overall co-ordination of the program nationally.
- Overseeing Kiwi Sprocket Rocket section in the national publications and/or website.
- Keeping Kiwi Sprocket Rocket co-ordinators up-to-date.
- Promoting the Kiwi Sprocket Rock program nationally.
- Ensuring the program is being implemented in accordance with the guidelines outlined in this guidebook.

Regional Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Co-ordinators Responsible for:

- Liaising with the National Co-ordinator.
- Promoting the program Regionally.
- Keeping Club co-ordinators up-to-date.
- Ensuring the program is being implemented in accordance with the guidelines outlined in this guidebook.

Club Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Co-ordinator of Coach Responsible for:

- Conducting Coaching Skills Award Program.
- Judging Participation Skills Award.
- Local promotion of the Program to the community.
- Assisting the Club to Modify existing facilities.

Club Officials & Event Organisers Responsible for:

- Conducting the Participation Skills Award.
- Liaising with Kiwi Sprocket Co-ordinators.
- Being informative and constructive when delivering instructions to Sprocket Rockets.
- Assisting in judging the Participation Skills Award.



8. CODES OF CONDUCT

To ensure all participants maintain the spirit of the Kiwi Sprocket Rocket Program, the following codes of conduct developed by KiwiSport should be adhered to.

Sprocket Rockets' Code of Behaviour

1. Play by the Rules.
2. Never argue with an official. If you disagree, approach the official during a break or after the event.
3. Control your temper. Verbal abuse of officials or other riders, deliberately distracting or provoking an opponent is not acceptable or permitted.
4. Be a good sport. Applaud all good performances.
5. Treat all riders as you would like to be treated. Do not interfere with, bully or take unfair advantage of another rider.
6. Co-operate with your coach and fellow riders. Without them there would be no program.
7. Participate for the fun of it, and not just to please parents or coaches.

Parents Code of Behaviour

1. Remember that children play sport for their enjoyment, not yours.
2. Encourage children to participate, do not force them.
3. Focus on the child's efforts and performance rather than winning or losing.
4. Encourage children to always participate according to the rules.
5. Never ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake or losing a race.
6. Remember that children learn best by example. Applaud good performances by all riders.
7. Support all efforts to remove verbal abuse from sporting activities.
8. Respect officials decisions and teach children to do likewise.
9. Show appreciation of volunteer coaches, officials and administrators. Without them your child could not participate.

Coaches Code of Behaviour

1. Remember that children participate for pleasure and that winning is only part of the fun.
2. Never ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake or losing.
3. Be reasonable in your demands on young riders' time, energy and enthusiasm.
4. Teach your riders to follow the rules.
5. Whenever possible, group riders to ensure that everyone has a reasonable chance of success.
6. Avoid focusing on the talented riders. All Sprockets deserve equal time.
7. Ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to the age and ability of the riders.

8. Develop respect for the ability of other riders and for the judgement of officials and other coaches.
9. Follow the advice of a medical professional i.e. doctor, when determining when an injured rider is ready to recommence riding.
10. Keep up to date with the latest coaching practices and the principles of growth and development of children.

Officials Code of Behaviour

1. Modify rules and regulations to match skills levels and needs of children.
2. Compliment and encourage all participants.
3. Be consistent, objective and courteous when making decisions.
4. Condemn unsporting behaviour and promote respect for all opponents.
5. Emphasise the spirit of BMX rather than errors.
6. Encourage and promote rule changes which will make participation more enjoyable.
7. Be a good sport yourself. Actions speak louder than words.
8. Keep up to date with the latest trends in officiating and knowledge of growth and development of children.
9. Remember, you set an example. Your behaviour and comments should be positive and supportive.

Spectators Code of Behaviour

1. Remember that children play sport for their enjoyment, not yours.
2. Applaud good performances and efforts from each rider. Congratulate all participants upon their performance regardless of the outcome.
3. Respect officials decisions and teach children to do the same.
4. Never ridicule or scold a child for making a mistake. Positive comments are motivational.
5. Condemn the use of violence in any form, be it by spectators, coaches, officials or riders.
6. Show respect for your rider's opponents. Without them there would be no program.
7. Encourage riders to follow rules and the officials' decisions.
8. Do not use foul language or harass riders, coaches or officials.




PARTICIPATION SKILLS AWARD & JUDGING SHEET

(Please photocopy)

Tick the box corresponding to the rider you have judged to receive an award in improving a skill.

Note: Only one award is to be awarded (i.e. Total of 5 awards)

SPROCKET'S NAME	SKILL				
	Starting	Jumping	Cornering	Passing	Sportsmanship
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					



Kiwi Sprocket Rocket



ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

for an
IMPROVED SPORTSPERSON
award to

(Name)

(Date)

by

(Event Co-ordinator)

(Date)





Kiwi Sprocket Rocket



ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

for an
IMPROVED PASSING
award to

(Name)

(Date)

by

(Event Co-ordinator)

(Date)





Kiwi Sprocket Rocket



ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

for an
IMPROVED JUMPER
award to

(Name)

(Date)

by

(Event Co-ordinator)

(Date)





Kiwi Sprocket Rocket



ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

for an
IMPROVED STARTER
award to

(Name)

(Date)

by

(Event Co-ordinator)

(Date)





Kiwi Sprocket Rocket



ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

for an
IMPROVED CORNERING
award to

(Name)

(Date)

by

(Event Co-ordinator)

(Date)



