

## Air Academy MTB Team is Colorado High School Mountain Bike League Crystal Region Champion



*Air Academy MTB Team Regional Champions*

An exciting weekend of hard racing in Eagle Colorado resulted in the AAHS MTB coming home as the Colorado High School League Crystal Region champions. This Championship was hard fought and didn't come without drama. Mechanical mishaps with our top riders put the championship in question, but the team came through with break through races for many of our sophomore and freshman riders. The gaps were filled through the incredible depth of a team that knows how to "Dig Deep" and "Never Quit".

### **JV Girls**

Our lone JV girl, sophomore Kylie Moerk, came into Eagle sporting the series leader's jersey. To keep it, she needed to keep Thunder Ridge's Alba Costa, an exchange student from Spain, in check. The first lap proved this was going to be a tight race as six girls came through in the lead pack with just 2 seconds separating first from sixth. Once they came to a passing lane, Kylie attacked and scorched the second lap in just over 28 minutes, crossing the finish line 20 seconds over second place to keep the leader's jersey and earn the Regional Champion Title. She will be representing Air Academy High School and the Crystal Region, wearing the regional champion

jersey at the State Championships in Glenwood Springs, Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup>. Congratulations Kylie!



*Kylie in a tight Lead Pack First Lap*



*Kylie Moerk Regional Champion!*

## Sophomore Boys

In a field of 62 Sophomore boys, Air Academy filled three of the first 10 places. Cooper Markley led the team with a fourth-place finish. Jacob Weber also made the podium after winning a close sprint for 5<sup>th</sup>. Keenan Swanson had a brilliant finish coming from the back of four, taking the inside corner, and winning a four-way sprint to take 10<sup>th</sup> place. Our fourth Air Academy sophomore, Creed Anderson finished in 34<sup>th</sup>, thus qualifying for the State Championships.



*"Coop" Railing the Corners*



*Keenan Coming from the Back – Takes the Sprint!*



*Jacob Sprinting for the 5<sup>th</sup> Podium Spot*



*Creed Rips a Corner*

## Freshman Boys

In the Freshman boys race Ethan Allen had a breakthrough race. Ethan rode negative splits with laps of 28:50 and 28:41 to take 13<sup>th</sup> in a field of 54. This was by far Ethan's best race to date. Jackson Lorigan had a solid race coming in at 15<sup>th</sup>, while Jacob (Jake) Lane came in at 34<sup>th</sup> and Alex Winslow close behind in 36<sup>th</sup>.



*Ethan at the Front End of the Race*



*Jake in the Mix with Cheyenne Mountain Rider*



*Jackson Finishing in the Top 15*



*Alex off to a Great Start*

## JV Boys

The JV boys race typically has the largest field and today was no exception with 103 riders on the starting line. Ben (Zim) Rechart went into this race wearing the series leader jersey and was

aiming to finish as the Regional Champion. However, it was not to be. Zim was right where he wanted to be when his rear cog set broke leaving him with only one gear. Losing time trying to fix it, Zim eventually got back in the race riding essentially a single speed. Despite losing time and then riding practically the entire race with one gear, Zim did not give up and finished in the top half of the field in 50<sup>th</sup> place. He did however lose the leader's jersey and will be going to State with the resolve to settle the score. With Zim out of the mix the depth of the Air Academy's JV racers was more than enough to fill the gap with all four finishing in the top 16. Keegan Hale in a tight race up front made the podium in 4<sup>th</sup> place. Lawrence (Eli) Rawe and Braun Deighton came through with a sprint finish at 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, while Simeon Scheid was close behind at 16<sup>th</sup>. These were all valuable points to help the overall team score and keep the team in the running for the championship. These guys know how to dig deep and leave it all out on the racecourse.



*Eli and Braun Sprinting for 13th & 14th Place*



*Simeon Also at the Front of the Race*



*Keegan in a Battle up Front*



*Zim Finishing in the Top Half of the Field Despite only having one Gear*

## Varsity Boys

The varsity race saw some drama as Austin Leigh lost a pedal in the first of three laps. Luckily one of the race photographers out on course saw it and contacted the team coach. He was able to describe the make and brand of the pedal as well as which side, the right. The team was able to get a pedal from another bike and have it ready for Austin as he finished the first lap. The pedal was installed and Austin, now in dead last place, was off and riding. Austin did not let the

mishap deter him as he hammered the next two laps finishing 19<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately, he was penalized 5 minutes for receiving outside assistance which relegated him to 32<sup>nd</sup> place. With Austin out of the mix, Reed McAfee rode his best race of the season, finishing in the top ten, and Trevor Kornmesser followed at 20<sup>th</sup>. Reed and Trevor combined to score enough points to keep the team in the overall lead. Carson Pevoteaux rounded out the team scoring by finishing in 33<sup>rd</sup> place.



*Austin Does Not Let a Missing Pedal Stop Him*



*Trevor Heading Out on Another Lap*



*Reed On His way to Top 10*



*Carson Getting Speed on the Descent*

## Varsity Girls

The varsity girls' race was a very tough race for junior Avery Harris. Like the varsity boys, the girls race three hard laps. Avery got off to a great start with the lead group of six that opened a gap on the rest of the field. Three riders were able to open a gap on Avery, while Avery opened a gap on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> place. The race up front remained like this with Avery racing alone in the space between, "No Woman's Land". This can be very tough mentally to push hard while riding alone practically the entire race. But Avery is tough as nails with a positive mindset. She was able to "Dig Deep" to hold her position, finishing 4<sup>th</sup> and locking down AAHS as the Crystal Region Champions.



*Avery third Wheel Down on a Fast and Furious Start*



*Avery Finishes 4th Locking Down the Overall Win for Air Academy!*

What an exciting weekend! And again, Air Academy showed their depth and tenacity in the face of adversity. As with the mishaps in other races, there were no panics, no quitting, no temper tantrums. Our riders saw each issue through, did what it took to fix the problem and kept going. The Team came together, dug deep, and as a TEAM won the Regional Championship. They have worked extremely hard since July and proudly represent Air Academy in the Colorado High School League. Being a small and relatively new team, we have a huge challenge at the State Championships competing against well-established teams such as Durango. But Air Academy has worked hard and is up for the challenge! **Go Air Academy – Dig Deep!**