

AAHS First Place Division 1 at the “Cloud City Challenge”



Last year the AAHS Mountain Bike Team finished the season as Division 2 regional champions and second in the state of Colorado. This year, with a 45% increase in riders, AAHS moved up to the big leagues and is now a division 1 team. Air Academy showed they were up for the challenge by taking first place at the “Cloud City Challenge” in Leadville Colorado! At 10,000+ feet it was a real lung buster!

JV Boys. The JV boys started the day with Creed Anderson, Charley Weitz, and Conner Pietrzak representing Air Academy High School. Creed started in 75th position based on his scoring from last year, bettered his best time by almost 10 minutes and finished 16th overall. That is a lot of passing on singletrack! Conner and Charley, in their first ever race, started at 100th and 102nd spots respectively. Like Creed, Charlie caught and passed almost 50 racers to finish 54th while Conner move up 20 places to finish 80th. A great start for AAHS!



Creed Making His Way Through the Crowd



Charlie - Welcome to the Jungle!



Conner Finishes his First Race!

Varsity Boys. In a field of 50 Varsity boys among 29 teams, Air Academy filled 10 of those slots. Junior Austin Leigh soared to the front in a group of five that opened a gap on the rest of the field. At the end of the first and second laps they were still together. It was anybody's race. On the third and final lap Austin attacked hard on the longest climb and went on to win by over a minute. His final lap at 24 min 52 sec, was the fastest lap of the day. Alex Snider, a sophomore who started in 50th position was the next Air Academy rider, coming in 8th place. Junior Zim Reichart and Senior Keegan Hale followed shortly after in 11th and 12th. Junior Jacob Weber came in at 16th resulting in five Air Academy varsity riders finishing in the top 20. All varsity riders finished within state qualifying places with Trevor Kornmesser 21st, Cooper Markley 32nd, Lawrence "Eli" Rawe 38th, Simeon Scheid 39th, and Keenan Swanson 40th.



Austin Leigh Dueling for the Lead



Alex Snyder Sailing the Singletrack

Varsity Girls. The varsity girls followed the varsity boys. The girls got pretty spread out as gaps began to open after the second lap. Senior Avery Harris finished 3rd over all with Junior Kylie Moerk right behind her in 4th. Junior Maddie Mager came in at number 9 resulting in all three varsity girls finishing in the top 10.



Avery Harris Wheel to Wheel with Salida



Kylie Moerk Holding 4th Place



Maddie Mager Flying through Singletrack

Sophomore Boys. Jackson Lorigan led the way for Air Academy Sophomores finishing 10th in a field of 64. Jacob Lane followed at 20th and Alex Winslow 42nd. Luke Pajak, in his first race ever, flatted on the second lap. The tire came completely off the rim and the wheel would not roll. Luke hiked and ran, carrying his bike on his head and shoulders for the last mile, demonstrating Air Academy's "Never Quit" ethic, and finished 63rd.



Jackson Lorigan Heading to a Top 10



Jacob Lane Screaming Down the Descent



Luke Pajak "Never Quit"

JV Girls. Our lone JV Girl, Junior, Sandrine Tremblay, had an exciting race, finishing 2nd overall, beating out third place by 6 seconds.



Sophomore Girls. Nora Bots and Georgia Swanson, in their first race ever, took 5th and 11th in a field of 18. They are both off to a great start!



Nora Bots Leading Just Ahead of Cheyenne Mountain



Georgia Swanson - The Smile Says It All

Freshmen Boys. The freshmen boys' and girls' races were an individual time trial vs a mass start. This is because there is no race history to establish starting positions. Air Academy riders, both in the boys' and girls' races, were the last to start. Despite starting in last position Freshman Justin Tremblay passed 44 riders that started before him. Justin finished in 1st place with almost five minutes over second place. Justin will race in the JV category in the next race. Dylon Hudson and Chase McAfee also had great races finishing 4th and 12th. Starting last was a huge disadvantage, as much of the course is singletrack with very limited passing opportunities.



Dillion and Chase Railing the Corners



Justin Tremblay Takes 1st Place Freshmen Boys

Freshmen Girls. Like the freshmen boys, the freshmen girls rode individual time trials with Air Academy starting last. This did not stop them however, as all three AAHS freshmen girls finished in the top 10. Ruby Harris made her way to 4th, Elora Walkup 5th, and Katelyn Markley 9th.



Summary: The Air Academy High School Mountain Bike Team is continuing from where they left off last year. A weekend of team camaraderie, support for each other, esprit de corps, determination, resilience, and leadership made for a special weekend. This team proudly represents their school and district, making Air Academy a team to be reckoned with. Three more regional races are on the schedule, leading to the Colorado High State Championships on October 19 in Glenwood Springs. This team is united and motivated to be their best in Glenwood!

A special thank-you to our sponsors. This program would not be what it is without your support: **Criterion Bike Shop, Bailey Orthodontics, Cost Plus Anesthesia, Rocky Mountain Properties, My Dental Company, T2 Leadership, Mountainside Builders, Ostroy, and AllAboutEndurance.**