

## Air Academy Mountain Bike Team Wins Division 1 Colorado High School Mountain Bike League “Lazy Ranch Rally” in Fountain, Colorado

**Air Academy**, for the third time in a row took first place in another Colorado High School League regional race. This week, the action took place at Fountain Valley High School near Fountain Colorado. The racecourse was deceptively hard. It was relatively flat with no big climbs which made for a blistering fast course with no opportunity for recovery combined with high wind exposure.

**Freshmen Boys:** The Freshmen boys started the day off racing two laps of the approximately 6.5-mile course. A group of four separated themselves from the rest of the field with a chase group forming 10 seconds behind. Air Academy riders Chase McAfee and Dylan Hudson came through on the first lap towing two Taos NM riders in a tight pack. Chase led the group to the second lap then crashed. He recovered quickly and became a lone chaser fighting a stiff head wind. Dylan Hudson was able to open a 30 second gap on the two Taos riders before crashing 200 meters from the finish line. He was quickly back on his bike crossing the line 12 seconds ahead of the Taos riders. Chase followed at 30 seconds for fourth.



*Chase Leading through the Feed Zone Lap 1*



*Dillon Takes Over the Lead Lap 2*

**Sophomore Boys:** A starting field of 52 Sophomore boys were next. Jackson Lorigan led the way for Air Academy finishing 11<sup>th</sup>, just 6 seconds from the top ten. This was a remarkable result given that Jackson had just received the “return to play” green light from his doctor after suffering a concussion from the previous race. Jacob Lane was next at 31<sup>st</sup> place after crashing twice during the second lap. Alex Winslow rounded out the Air Academy sophomore boys rolling in at 39<sup>th</sup>.



*Jake coming through in a Crowd*



*Jackson focused through the Woods*



*Alex Hammering the Singletrack!*



**JV Boys:** The biggest field of the day was the JV boys with 108 on the start. By the end of the first lap, three riders open almost a minute gap on the rest of the field. Owen Frazier of Gunnison led the way, with Air Academy freshmen Justin Tremblay on his wheel, followed closely by Temple Robertson of Crested Butte. These riders continued to battle back and forth throughout the second lap until Justin was able to attack and open a six second lead which he held to the finish, taking first place. Charley Weitz was the next Air Academy rider at 49<sup>th</sup> with Creed Anderson just seconds behind at 59<sup>th</sup>. Conner Pietrzak rounded out Air Academy JV boys at 70<sup>th</sup>.



*Justin in the Lead Group*



*Charlie Flying down the Singletrack*



*Creed in the Mix!*



*Conner on the Descent*

**Varsity Boys:** On a blistering fast course, hampered by the wind, the varsity boys race turned into tactical game of chess. The end of the first lap saw eight riders tightly packed come through approximately 25 seconds ahead of the chasing group. Air Academy's Austin Leigh was in the lead group that represented seven schools. Air Academy's Zim Reichart was in the chasing group with Keegan Hale close behind. The wind and pace took its toll, and the lead pack was whittled down to four by the end of the second lap. Austin picked up the pace on the third lap resulting in the fastest lap of the day, opening 10 seconds on Jack Higley of Thunder Ridge to take the win. Zim Reichart (11th), Keegan Hale (13th), and Jacob Weber (19th) had excellent races to place four AA riders in the top 20. Keenan Swanson (37), Eli Rawe (38), Cooper Markley (40), Trevor Kornmesser (42), Braun Deighton (43), and Simeon Scheid (45) all finished within minutes in a very competitive field. In addition to the great racing by our varsity boys, the hero of the day was varsity racer Alex Snyder. On the very first pedal stroke at the start, Alex's chain broke. Alex remained calm while the rest of the field rode away. It took approximately eight minutes to replace the chain plus a 5-minute penalty for receiving outside assistance. Once his chain was replaced, Alex rode like he was competing for first place. He never gave up and showed the true heart of a champion. In the end, with his 5-minute time penalty Alex finished 50<sup>th</sup>. Alex's response; "At least I got a good workout!"



*Austin in the heat of Battle*



*Zim Railing the Corners*



*Trevor Clean Handoff in the Feed Zone*



*Coop and Keenan Working Together*



**Varsity Girls:** As with the varsity boys', the wind made for a tactical race. Laura Carlin of Highlands Ranch and Ella Kearney establish a lead of 30 seconds over Air Academy's Avery Harris and Kylie Moerk, as well as Salida's Emery Kelley. The wind played a huge because the rider in front had to work hard fighting the wind while those behind got the benefit of a draft. Kylie and Avery worked together taking turns battling the wind while the Salida girl drafted behind them. This went on for the entire three laps which came down to an exciting three-way sprint for third place. Salida's Emery Keely took the sprint with Avery coming in 4<sup>th</sup> and Kylie 5<sup>th</sup>. Only two-tenths of a second separated the three. Maddie Mager got caught between groups in "no woman's land" and had to deal with the wind over the three laps alone, coming in at lucky 13<sup>th</sup>.



*Varsity Girls Sprint for Third!*



*Maddie between Groups, Battles the Wind*

**JV Girls:** Air Academy's lone JV girl, Sandrine Tremblay, displayed the team's motto "Dig Deep" with an incredibly gutsy and exciting finish. Sandrine came through the first lap with Crested Butte rider Brie Bender approximately 30 seconds behind Cheyenne Mountain's Maddy Elliot. Sandrine and Brie went back and forth throughout the race. As they rounded the corner to the last 50 meters, Brie passed Sandrine, and it looked like it was decided, and Sandrine would settle for third. Somehow, Sandrine dug way deep, came back, and just nipped the Crested Butte rider at the finish line by less than two-tenths of a second!



*Crested Butte rider makes the pass 50 meters from the Finish*



*Sandrine Digs Deep and takes her at the Line*



**Sophomore Girls:** Georgia Swanson and Nora Bots took on the Sophomore girls representing Air Academy. Georgia had her best race of the year finishing 9<sup>t</sup>, while Nora finished just 12 seconds behind in 10<sup>th</sup>. Evann Strange, and independent racer who trains with Air Academy, also ripped the course finishing 13<sup>th</sup>. Georgia and Nora's top ten placing scored valuable points to help secure Air Academy's top spot on the podium.



*As always - Georgia races with Smile!*



*Nora racing with Pikes Peak in the Background*



*Evann Independent Racer having Fun!*

**Freshmen Girls:** The freshmen girls were the final race of the day with all three of Air Academy's Freshmen girls finishing in the top ten. Evergreen's Sara Lally opened a small four second gap by the end of the first lap, with Air Academy's Ruby Harris in a chase group of four. The chase group started to string out during the second lap with Ruby and Salida's Olivia Paysen pulling away. Ruby and Olivia battled back and forth with Ruby coming out on top by two seconds in yet another sprint to the finish line. Elora Walkup got caught up in "no woman's land" forced to battle the wind alone as did Katelyn Markley, but still making the top ten at 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> respectively.



*Ruby in the Chase Group*



*Elora Pushing the Pace*



*Katelyn Focused in the Singletrack*



**Summary:** The Air Academy High School Mountain Bike Team comes away with another victory in the Colorado High School Cycling League regional series of races. Air Academy's student athletes through good and bad, displayed grit, determination, teamwork, sportsmanship and grace. They are proud to represent Air Academy High School and the District with honor and humility. At the end of the day, Air Academy was singled out by the league director for its sportsmanship for assisting riders on competing teams in need.

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*Dig Deep!*