

## Air Academy MTB Team Takes First Place Division 1 at the Haymaker Classic in Eagle, Colorado

The Air Academy Mountain Bike Team showed their team depth this past weekend by winning the Haymaker Classic in Eagle, Colorado. AAHS traveled to Eagle missing four key racers due to sickness, injuries and other commitments. The team's spirit and depth were fundamental as all riders stepped up to fill the holes. Riders "dug deep" while parents, coaches and the Colorado High School League worked like a well-oiled machine to put together yet another magical weekend.



*Air Academy Takes the Top Step on the Podium*

The Eagle racecourse is a long-time staple and was specifically designed for the Colorado League. It includes several moderate climbs, a few bridges, winding berms, fun rollers, and a crowd-pleasing slalom descent. The course is a 6.0-mile loop with 600 feet of climbing per lap. Freshman, Sophomore, and JV race two laps, and the Varsity race three.

**JV Girls:** This week, Air Academy JV Girls Ruby Harris, Nora Bots, and Georgia Swanson led off the action. The racing was intense as Sophomore Ruby Harris and Colorado Rocky Mountain School's (CRMS) Finley Nolan entered the second lap wheel to wheel. A large chase group followed at about 30 seconds, along with a second chase group close behind that included Nora Bots. Georgia Swanson came around the first lap in a tight battle with riders from Coronado and Cheyenne Mountain. Ruby, with her hard-earned endurance was

able to increase the pace on the second lap, open a small gap and take the win. Nora held her spot in the chase group coming in 12<sup>th</sup>. Georgia had a strong second lap, opening a gap of 40 seconds on Coronado and two minutes on Cheyenne Mountain to finish at 23<sup>rd</sup>.



*Ruby in the Battle for 1<sup>st</sup>*



*Nora in the Chase Close Behind*



*Georgia Always with a Smile!*

**Sophomore Girls:** The Sophomore Girls started five minutes behind the JV Girls. Elora Walkup was the lone representative for Air Academy. Right from the start it was a battle between Elora and Delaney Olmstead of Gunnison. They both came through the first lap almost three minutes ahead of the rest of the field. The Gunnison girl opened a small gap to take first place, while Elora took second almost eleven minutes ahead of third place.



*Elora on her way to 2nd Place*

**JV Boys:** A field of 66 JV Boys followed, that included Air Academy's Jacob Lane, Dylan Hudson, Creed Anderson, Jackson Lorigan, and Merrick Mattix. Jacob Lane led the charge for Air Academy, coming around the first lap in 3<sup>rd</sup> place, with less than 2 minutes between first and 10<sup>th</sup>. Dylan Hudson was in the mix coming around in 6<sup>th</sup> just 19 seconds back, followed by Creed Anderson 30 seconds behind Dylan. Jackson Lorigan came through in a large chase group about 90 seconds back, and in his second ever race, Merick Mattix was holding his own in another large group about 5 minutes from the lead. Jacob went on to finish 4<sup>th</sup> and Dylan just missed the podium in an exciting sprint to the finish that placed

him in 6<sup>th</sup>. Creed came in right behind at 7<sup>th</sup> while Jackson and Merrick rounded out Air Academy JV Boys at 24<sup>th</sup> and 46<sup>th</sup>.



*Jacob Lane taking a Bottle in the Feed Zone*



*Jackson on the Hunt*



*Dylan Ripping the Corners*



*Creed Blowing up the Dust*



*Merrick Getting it Done*

**Varsity Boys:** The JV/Sophomore Girls and JV boys got Air Academy off to an incredible start. The momentum continued when the Varsity Boys and Girls took to the course. Air Academy's Austin Leigh, Justin Tremblay, Zim Reichart, Jacob Weber, Keenan Swanson, and Cooper Markley were fit and ready to take on the best in the region. As always, the varsity boys stormed off the start, fighting for position to the singletrack. Zim Reichart starting in 40<sup>th</sup> position, blasted through the field to grab a spot near the front going into the singletrack. The first lap saw Jack Higley of Thunder Ridge open a gap on a large chasing group that included Austin Leigh and Justin Tremblay. Jacob Weber and Zim Reichart were close behind in a second chase group. Keenan Swanson, having a breakthrough race, was not far behind making up almost a dozen places from his starting position. Cooper Markley came around the first lap in yet another group of eight. The second lap started to stretch out as the Thunder Ridge rider opened his lead over the chase group, which was now down to two riders: Austin and Justin. Zim had moved from 40<sup>th</sup> to the top ten in a wheel-to-wheel battle with Emmett Frozley of Palmer High School. Zim would go on to take 7<sup>th</sup> finishing just 1 second ahead of Emmet in a sprint finish. Austin continued to push the pace finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> and Justin followed at 3<sup>rd</sup>, just ten seconds ahead of 4<sup>th</sup> place finisher Quinn Carpenter of Roaring Fork. Jacob Weber rounded out the top ten which placed four AA riders in the top ten. Keenan Swanson having a breakthrough race, moved up 20 places finishing 23<sup>rd</sup>, and Cooper Markley was not far behind 36<sup>th</sup>.



*Jacob Weber Refueling for the Long Haul*



*Austin Leigh in Hot Pursuit*



*Keenan Swanson Putting the Hammer Down*



*Justin Tremblay Takes 3rd Place*



*Cooper "Coop" Markley through the Feed zone*



*Zim Reichart Left it All on the Course!*

**Varsity Girls:** Kylie Moerk, Sandrine Tremblay, and Maddie Mager took their positions in the starting chute. The start was fast and furious with Sandrine Tremblay shooting past the entire field and taking the lead. Sandrine wanted to try something different and put everything on the line right from the beginning. Eventually Hazel Lazar of Colorado Rocky Mountain School (CRMS) and Kylie Moerk caught her, and Sandrine's fast start began to take its toll. The CRMS rider came around the first lap approximately one minute ahead of Kylie, who was still recovering from illness. Kylie held on for second place despite not being at her best. Maddie Mager had a steady race filling out the top ten. Sandrine showed her toughness and ability to really dig deep. The fast start burnt a lot of matches on the first lap, and she went into survival mode over the next two, possibly the most miserable laps of her life. Despite all that, she hung on to finish 13<sup>th</sup>, scoring valuable points for the team and showing just how tough she is.



*Varsity Girls Start with Kylie and Sandrine on the front*



*Sandrine Tremblay Hanging Tough*



*Maddie Mager Cooling Off*



*Kylie Moerk Chasing Hard*

**Freshman Boys:** For the Freshman Boys, this was the first actual head-to-head race of the season. The first race in Frisco was a time trial to establish starting positions. Up and coming racers Steel Starkey, Jake Leigh, and first-time racer Michael Lowery were on start representing Air Academy. Michael, not having a previous race was positioned at the back of the field. Unfortunately, the race was stopped twice due to crashes needing medical attention. In each case riders were stopped at various checkpoints and then re-started as a group, canceling any lead that a rider may have had on other riders. Despite the holdups the racing was fast and furious. Steel Starkey broke into the top ten finishing 7<sup>th</sup>, with Jake Leigh at 26<sup>th</sup>, and Michael Lowery who has only been on the team for approximately two weeks, made his way from the back to 41<sup>st</sup> overall.



*Steel Starkey Railing the Corners*



*Jake Leigh Giving his All*



*Michael Lowery Starting the Descent*

**Sophomore Boys:** Last but certainly not least the Sophomore Boys were on the line. Carsten Varcie, Chase McAfee, and Jackson Wroten after a long day's wait were revved up and ready to go. The Sophomore boys lead group of about 25 broke into two groups going into the second lap. Carsten was in the second group of about 12 riders with only seconds between them. Chase followed in a third group after crashing and leaving some of his skin and blood on the course. Carsten was able to maintain his speed on the second lap finishing 10<sup>th</sup>. Chase maintained a steady pace as did Jackson finishing 19<sup>th</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup>.



*Jackson Wroten Hitting the Descent*



*Chase McAfee in Pursuit*



*Carsten Varcie on his way to Top Ten*

**Summary:** Air Academy came through on the top step again relying on the depth of the team. At 28 riders (24 this weekend) Air Academy is among the smallest division 1 teams. Every rider pulls their weight to make these results happen. Division 1 teams are scored by counting the top 15 riders from each team. As mentioned above, four riders, three among the team's top scorers were missing this weekend. The cumulative point average for those three is around 1,300 points. Varsity Rider Keenan Swanson had a breakthrough race and Freshman Steel Starkey, along with JV Girls rider Nora Bots all stepped it up and had a cumulative score of over 1,300 points to fill the void. However, it's not just the riders in the top 15 that contributed to the team's success. Riders that may not have scored in the top 15, placed ahead of riders on other teams that were top 15 scorers for their team, therefore reducing their total points. This race highlighted how everyone contributes to the team's success. Air Academy riders raced their hearts out and left everything out on the course. They are proud to represent their school, district and sponsors and they show it with their work ethic, teamwork, and sportsmanship. We are looking forward to race number three in the high-altitude land of no air, Leadville, CO on Saturday, September 20!

Thanks so much to our sponsors. This team could not exist without your generous support: Criterium Bike Shop, My Dental Co, Ostroy, Rocky Mountain Properties, Mountainside Builders, Cost Plus Anesthesia, T2 Leadership, Bailey Orthodontics, AllAboutEndurance

Thank you! **Dig Deep!**