



ECHS MTB
Parent & Rider Handbook
2020 – 2021

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What is ECHS MTB?

In 2001, two riders approached the high school PE coach and inspired him to enthusiastically lead the El Cerrito High School mountain bike race team (ECHS MTB). Today, ECHS MTB is a fully developed program. Even though we are considered a club on campus, the team operates much like any other sports team at the high school. Being a member of the team involves a serious commitment of time and energy.

ECHS MTB is a co-ed cross-country mountain bike team. Cross-country mountain biking is a specific form of cycling which is set apart from road riding, downhill racing, dual slalom, trials, BMX, cyclocross, and track racing. Cross-country mountain biking uses a broad range of skills and team members often bring with them backgrounds and skills gained from the other sports. The team's training and activities are focused on preparing for NorCal high school league races, but the team also practices bike-handling skills, plays on-bike games, and learns bike maintenance.

ECHS MTB is an inclusive team. We do not hold tryouts and we do provide scholarships to riders to ensure the sport is accessible to any student interested. If you are a committed rider, the coaching staff will support you, provide appropriate training and help you develop throughout

the season. Our riders learn bike-handling skills and gain endurance quickly with weekly on- and off- bike work outs. Our coaches combine work with fun, so personal improvement comes naturally and steadily. If riders are committed to the training program, they will show steady improvement in fitness over the course of the season. While we are a team and receive team scores, riders should strive to do their own personal best.

Our coaching staff is comprised of dedicated volunteers. Our ride leaders, mechanics and coaches are team parents and community volunteers who are dedicated to the kids and passionate about the sport. All coaches and rides leaders are NICA licensed, which includes a background check and training. Level 2 and 3 NICA licensing also includes CPR and Wilderness First Aid training certifications. ECHS MTB coaches strive to create an environment that supports personal development coupled with safe and positive competition.

Practices are four times per week. The team uses a training plan and the coaches work with a professional trainer throughout the season to ensure that riders maximize their training results. There are designated days for workouts and rest.

Early in the season, riders will do what is called a time trial to determine ride group placement. Time trials are a timed run on a specific hill climb. This is not a test. The information simply helps the coaching team make up ride groups, which are skill and fitness-based, for practice rides. During the season there are periodic time trials to ensure riders are in appropriate groups. This also allows riders to see their progress throughout the season. Riders should be challenged, but not overwhelmed.

During practices, all groups will do similar rides. Sometimes rides include features (sprints, hill repeats, etc.), but a group's exact ride may vary based on time and skill. **Students are expected to attend all practices unless they have made previous arrangements with the coaching team.** We understand that our student riders have school responsibilities (homework, exams, etc.), which are a high priority, and they may have other activities (clubs and sports) that might conflict with a day of practice. There is some flexibility in training, but the coaching staff needs to be aware of any conflicts with practices and riders should RSVP (via TeamSnap) to all team practices and events at least one week in advance. No changes may be made to the RSVP 24 hours in advance of any event.

Our ride leaders are volunteers who are giving up their personal time (i.e., leaving work early or giving up part of a weekend) to attend our training sessions - students should be respectful by being on time and committed to the practice schedule. The safety of our riders and our ability to break into ride groups is dependent on the number of coaches and ride-leaders who are present. We value and respect the commitment and volunteerism of our ride leaders. RSVPing on TeamSnap ensures that we have the appropriate ride leader to rider ratio.

Parents or others who are interested in being a ride leader are welcome to ride with us. Our riders range from beginners to advanced, so we welcome every level of ride leader as well. If you would like more information about riding with the team, please contact Coach Doug.

How do we communicate? We use TeamSnap (www.teamsnap.com) for our team communications. We also use SignUp Genius (www.signupgenius.com). Through these apps and websites, we are able to text, email, rsvp, and volunteer for events, bring food, and carpool. Please sign up for TeamSnap as soon as possible so you can easily communicate with parents and

coaching staff. Parents/guardians as well as riders are encouraged to have the TeamSnap app on their smartphones to make communication easier and more efficient.

Riding is a privilege. The volunteers that run the team spend a lot of time and energy to make sure ECHS MTB is a safe and fun environment for our kids. In order to keep riders safe and keep the team running smoothly the team rules must be followed. On the rare occasion that rules are not followed disciplinary action will be taken. Depending upon seriousness of the infraction, steps to get riders back on track would typically follow this format:

1. Reminder or warning from the coach, with clarification of the broken rule
2. Meeting with parents, written contract requiring rider to adhere to team rules and policies and/or other consequences
3. Possible suspension or dismissal from the team

If a rider is suspended or dismissed from the team due to his or her noncompliance with rules or expectations, no fees will be refunded.

Our team website, www.echsmtb.com, has a lot of valuable and up-to-date information. Please explore the website for additional team information, valuable links, up-to-date race day and general information.

Support Our Sponsors & Team Bike Shop

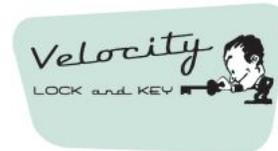
The generosity of our team sponsors and bike shop afford us the ability to run our team and offer students loaner bikes and scholarships. Please support these businesses and thank them for their generosity towards our riders.

Mike's Bikes on University Avenue in Berkeley is our preferred bike shop. They offer our team members bikes and services at a discount. Other area bike shops also offer NorCal discounts, so remember to mention you are a member at checkout! Our relationship with Mike's Bikes is really positive, so let's show them we value and appreciate them by:

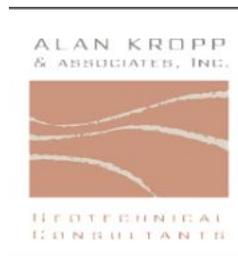
- Always bringing in a clean bike
- Being courteous and polite
- Never being rude, using bad language, or showing impatience. This behavior reflects poorly on the team as a group and could jeopardize the team's relationship

If you ever have any concerns about your bike or it's service, please address them with our team mechanic Bill Lindsay or Coach Doug

Our list of sponsors is growing... do you know of a business or individual who would sponsor our team? Please let us know so we can get them a sponsorship letter!



[Bicycle Trails Council of the East Bay](#)



General Information Regarding Mountain Bike Racing

What is NorCal?

NorCal is our High School racing league and is one of many high school racing leagues in the country. NorCal is split into two conferences: North and South. The ECHS team is part of the South conference. In each conference, teams are split into two categories (D1 and D2) depending on how many racing riders they have. D1 teams have 12 or more racers, while D2 teams have 11 or fewer. The ECHS team is a D1 team.

Racers are broken into the categories of Freshman, Sophomore, Junior Varsity, and Varsity, with boy and girl categories for each. There are five regular season races with the North and South conferences racing on different days (Saturday or Sunday). The venue changes for each race, although this can change due to weather (we raced at Fort Ord twice last year as it “drains well”).

Is Participating Dangerous?

In cross-country bike races, the average race speed usually ranges from ten to fifteen miles per hour. However, faster speeds are attained. This is an endurance sport where fitness is required and most races are won on the uphill.

Every effort is made to minimize risk to the athletes. Risky behavior is discouraged and we teach riders bike-control skills early in the season to minimize the risk of crashing. However, risk cannot be entirely eliminated. Despite our best efforts, crashes and injuries can occur. All team members are required by law, by the League, and by the team, to wear a helmet whenever they ride a bike - whether they are with the team or not.

Our coaches and ride leaders are knowledgeable about the trails and rides are planned in advance. Each group has at least one adult ride leader who is equipped with a first aid kit and cell phone on every ride.

What is the financial expectation for a season?

We try to keep costs down, but the team is fully self-supporting, with no school funding. We do some modest fundraising (Golden Gate Fields, Direct Appeal, Solano Stroll Raffle, CycleBar Spin Class), but it is primarily our team dues and sponsors that afford us the possibility to run this team. Team dues include a kit (jersey and bib shorts), water bottle, team t-shirt and a Tamaracho pass for the season.

Additional fees during the season include:

- Pit Zone Registration \$50
- NICA Membership \$25
- Race Fees \$50/ race (scholarships are available)
- Travel to Races 4-5 Weekends \$ 240-300 (1night hotel, gas, food approx. \$60 each). Same-day travel and carpooling may help minimize costs. We have no overnight costs traveling to Petaluma, one of the race venues.
- Bike Maintenance – We have a team bike mechanic, but riders are encouraged to learn to do a lot of this on their own! (Mike’s Bikes and Sports Basement offer free bike maintenance workshops)

If these fees present a significant financial burden, please speak with Coach Doug ASAP to arrange assistance. No rider has ever been turned away from a race or event for financial reasons.

How do I maintain my bike?

If your bike isn't ready to ride on practice days and races, it just isn't fun! Our team mechanic, Bill, is available to help keep your bike in race ready condition but you have to monitor your bike and get it to him in a timely manner when it needs maintenance. There is a link on the team website to contact Bill and set up time with him. If you'd rather take your bike to Mike's Bikes, they are usually very accommodating and give our riders discounts on parts. Just let them know you ride for ECHS MTB.

What is the expectation for parent participation?

Your participation is critical to run race days! Please see the Tasks & Descriptions sheet to sign up for a support job for the season. In general expectations are:

Fundraising: The mountain bike team is self-supporting and receives no funds from the school district. We rely on grants, donations, fundraising and dues to have enough money to pay for all the team needs during the season. As such, every parent should expect to participate in fundraising for the team.

Transportation: We carpool whenever possible, but that means that everyone needs to bear the burden of transporting the riders to and from practices and events. Please drive when you can.

Pit Zone / Race Day: The ECHS MTB team has a tent at each race that serves as our home base. Our parent volunteers staff the tent and provide seating, shade, and food to our riders and their families during the day. Our team mechanic is often there to provide technical mechanical support to our riders. This is a group effort that requires major help from parents to keep our team healthy, prepared and race ready. We realize that it is sometimes impossible to attend a race, but parents/guardians should make every effort to be a part of supporting **every** race day (there are only 5).

Prior to each race, requests are sent out (via SignUp Genius and TeamSnap) to parents/guardians for food and work volunteers. At the end of the day the start/finish area is taken down and the podium begins, starting with Freshman girls D1 and ending with Varsity boys. After all of the single rider categories have been called, the team awards are given. Podium usually takes about 30 minutes, and then we finish packing the booth up. We stay together as a team to support each other from the start of the day with the first race to the end of clean up.

We are only successful if each family volunteers to participate and support the team. Please find a job that works for your family. Some people like to do the same jobs every race, some people like to mix it up and try new things. Please be generous with your time. Our riders truly appreciate it and you get the added bonus of getting to know the kids and their families!

Some race day volunteer areas are:

- Trailer hauling
- Team Pit Zone (food prep/serving)
- Recycling and garbage disposal
- Dishes
- Feed Zone water
- Feed Zone spotter
- Team photographer
- Team pit area set up and clean up – EVERYONE
- Trailer reorganize/restocking after each race

NorCal also needs parent volunteers for course set-up and takedown, parking coordination, course marshals, registration, scoring, sweepers, etc.

What equipment MUST a rider have on team rides?

- **Helmet** – Make sure that it fits properly. Two fingers maximum should fit in the slack under the chin when it is buckled up.
- **Gloves** – Gel padding can help prevent numbness. Full fingered gloves are recommended for mountain biking to protect fingers better in case of crashes.
- **Glasses** – Sport-specific. Do not wear glasses made with actual glass; this can be a hazard in a crash. Great options can be found on Amazon for under \$20. Ask others what they're wearing and where they got them.
- **Trailside repair toolkit** – Build a kit: spare tube; patch kit; inflator cartridge or hand-held pump; multi-tool; and tire levers. A small saddle bag can be hung under your seat. Riders need to be self-sufficient, coaches assist when necessary but riders need to carry their own gear and be able to fix a flat (don't worry, we can teach you!).
- **Lights** (front and back for early season midweek practices).
- **Hydration** pack or water bottle(s)
- **Snack** food like a bar, dried fruit, or nuts that can easily be eaten on the ride.

What should a rider eat?

Mountain biking is an endurance sport and as such good nutrition is very important. Athletes are expected to be responsible about their eating habits. While this is not a weight-loss program, fat loss and increased lean muscle-mass are typical results of consistent training. Athletes will need additional lean protein and high quality calories from fruits, vegetables, and complex carbohydrates than is required for a sedentary lifestyle. A poor diet will put the athlete at a disadvantage compared to those who are eating well. After workouts athletes should eat lean protein and quality carbohydrates within 30 minutes to help refuel their bodies and rebuild their muscles. *See the section on nutrition for more detailed information.*

How are races scored?

Mountain bike racing is both an individual and a team sport. Please see the NICA rule book and/or the section on scoring for a more detailed description of how scores for individuals and for teams are calculated.

ECHS MTB Code of Conduct & Safety

- **Wear a helmet. Always.** Helmets must be worn whenever you ride, whether or not you are with the team. This rule applies to Coaches, Parents, Guardians, and anyone associated with the team as well.
- **Do not take unnecessary risks.** We are committed to safety and require each rider to always ride in a safe and controlled manner. This means riders should control their downhill speed, not jump, and not perform other free-ride dangerous maneuvers during team sponsored rides - this puts the whole team at risk as well as yourself. Aside from potentially causing you a lot of pain, there is the liability factor and the team's image in the community.
- **Always yield.** Remember that bicycles in the backcountry can be an unwelcome experience for horses and hikers. Being sensitive to how others perceive you will assure a positive image for our sport.
- **Pass with care.** Let others know of your presence well in advance. Use a bell or audible greeting to avoid startling others. Be especially careful when passing a horse, as each will react differently. Stop and ask the rider for instructions. By asking if the horse is easily spooked, you show an awareness of the rider's needs. Sometimes it may be necessary to dismount and remove your bike from the trail to allow others to pass.
- **Stay on trails.** Riding off-trail damages meadows and other fragile ecosystems. Never skid on trails or cut switchbacks as this accelerates erosion.
- **Control your speed.** Safe speeds are relative to terrain and your experience as a rider. Be able to stop safely without skidding in the distance that you can see ahead. Approach switchbacks and turns in anticipation of someone coming around the bend.
- **Respect wildlife and livestock.** Do not frighten animals. Close gates as you pass through.
- **Do not litter.** Pack out what you pack in. If possible, carry out more than your share.
- **No illegal trail riding.** Stay off trails that are closed to bicycles. We as a cycling community are working very hard for expanded trail access. Not following the trail access rules not only affects us as ECHS MTB team members, but the cycling community as a whole.
- **Communicate.** Always communicate with your coaching staff. We cannot read minds and it is important for us to know how you are feeling physically and mentally. Read your email and your texts. Email and text is the only effective way for us to reach all of you with information concerning everything from events to race day logistics. Last minute changes in schedules and new activities are inevitable, so it is up to you to stay informed. If you need a ride, send a message to the team early and so we can make arrangements to get everyone there. There is always a seat somewhere, but you have to be proactive and communicate.
- All riders must communicate in advance if they will miss practice. Communication must occur within at least 24 hours of practice – we line up ride leaders based on expected participation and last minute cancellations are not respectful of our volunteers' time.
- *And it should go without saying...* No put-downs, even if you really know the rider who is the target of negative comments, whether you are joking around or not, they may take your ribbing the wrong way. There should be nothing but support between all riders regardless of skill level or gender.

Rider Behavior Expectations

The El Cerrito High School Mountain Bike team aims to help riders develop through athletic accomplishment, respectful teamwork and personal responsibility through mountain biking. Each rider is expected to uphold these values and represent the team in a positive way. This expectation should be carried out toward all coaches, ride leaders and other volunteers, teammates, parents, and the public.

If it is determined that a rider has not positively represented the team, has not upheld these values or has not followed team rules or procedures, the following steps will be taken (some steps may be skipped depending upon severity):

1. **Verbal warning** - sometimes a simple warning from the coach will remind the rider what is expected of her or him.
2. **Written email or Phone call with follow up email to Parent/s and rider** - an email or phone call from the Head Coach to the parent/s and rider explaining what happened, and how this is not in keeping with the team expectations. At this time, the Coach will ask for the rider to commit to following rules and procedures, and for the parents to support their rider in getting back on track. The coach may also outline the next steps in case a similar or another situation arises with the rider.
3. **Meeting with Parent/s and Rider with possible temporary suspension from rides** - if the violation is severe or continuing, a meeting will be called and there will likely be a written contract outlining what actions have been problematic and what is expected in order for the rider to remain on the team. It is likely that the rider will be suspended for one or more team rides.

If any rider has a problem with another rider, ride leader, or coach, and needs help working out their problem, it is expected that the rider addresses the problem with the Head Coach directly (in person, email, text or phone call). While it is expected that each rider is supported by their parent/s, it is NOT the parents who should be addressing their rider's concerns with the coach. If the rider feels more comfortable, it is fine for their concern to be brought to another coach, ride leader or team captain. Talking to teammates about a problem with another teammate can create more friction and be demoralizing to the team, so it's best to avoid that whenever possible.

Caring for Your Gear

1) MARK ALL OF YOUR GEAR – especially clothing.

The whole team has the same thing! Make sure that you have everything that you brought before leaving the race venue.

2) Take proper care of your gear – it will last a lot longer!

Muddy Shoes: Clean shoes with hose, inside and out. Stuff wads of newspaper into shoes to wick out the water. Remove newspaper when it is saturated; repeat as necessary. Placing gear near a heater vent also helps speed drying.

Muddy Clothes: Pre-rinse in a basin—no soap. Fill basin with water, immerse clothing to rinse, repeat as needed with fresh water. Very muddy spots can be spot sprayed with Shout,

soaked in Oxyclean or equivalent, and scrubbed vigorously by grabbing the fabric on either side and rubbing back and forth. Then wash with mild detergent in warm water in the washing machine. To remove lingering odors, add ½ cup of white vinegar to the load. Hang clothing to air-dry or dry on medium heat, no fabric softener (it affects the moisture wicking abilities of the kit). Cold water and air-drying will also help the lycra fabric last longer. For bib shorts, mesh bags will keep them from getting tangled and stretched in washing machines. Gloves can also be washed in mesh bags to keep the Velcro from snagging the material of other gear.

Washing Tips for Bikes: You can spray off your bike with a garden hose with sprayer nozzle – but be careful. Hose down both sides of the bike. Do not direct water at any bearing seals: fork bearings, crank bearings, and wheel bearings. If in doubt, ask an expert (team mechanic or at the bike shop). After initial hosing, go over the bike with a soft-bristle brush to remove dirt or dried lube on the drivetrain. Hose off again. Bounce the bike to remove most of the water. Wipe cleaned bike down with clean towel. Towel-dry the chain and lubricate it immediately.

3) Keep your bike in peak race condition.

It is critical that your bike be in top condition for a race. There is nothing worse than putting out a great effort only to have it negated by a mechanical failure. Plan early to get your bike into Mike's Bikes, Bill (our team mechanic), or other repair shop for a tune-up prior to each race - and any other time during the season that you suspect something is not quite right with the bike. Don't wait until the day before the race to get your bike tuned up. Plan several days in advance. Our team mechanic (Bill) is available for emergency repairs at the race but cannot perform tune-ups and regular maintenance at races.

4) Racing

Race weekends can be a stressful time for riders and their traveling support crew. It really pays off to prepare in advance and to keep travel gear in one place. For a complete list, look through the Rider Race Check List found on the team website (www.echsmtb.com > Races & Travel tab > What to Bring), and create a travel routine that works for you.

If you are not coming to a race due to illness or other unexpected event, please let the coaches know as soon as possible ahead of time as we might need to adjust carpools and room assignments.

***Pro tip:** Use a designated cycling bag for the season. Check the website for a full packing list (look for the Rider Race Check List at www.echsmtb.com > Races & Travel tab > What to Bring).

The following will give you a basic idea of what you'll need to have packed for each of our 5 races. However, there is a detailed packing check list available on the team website.

1. Bike in proper working order: Derailleur adjusted & shifting properly, brakes adjusted and not rubbing, wheels true and tires in good condition, chain clean and lubed. Any mechanical problems should get taken care of before the race weekend
2. NorCal racing number plate (you only get one for the season – keep it in a safe place or you'll have to pay to replace it!)
3. Tube, pump, basic tools
4. Helmet
5. Cycling shoes/extra socks

6. Gloves
7. Glasses
8. Cycling clothes for pre-ride and race day (including current team kit - bib shorts and jersey)
9. A water bottle for pre-ride, filled with water
10. Race food (riders should bring what they are used to training with) along with pre-ride snacks.
11. Complete change of clothes (including shoes)
12. Large changing towel
13. Garbage bag (for wet, dirty cycling clothes)
14. A positive, "have fun" attitude

Nutrition

Hydration:

Good hydration helps your body to perform well in all aspects of your life. Whether it's on the bike or in the classroom, your mood as well as your mental and physical performance benefit from adequate hydration. Try to drink throughout the day, so that you never really get very dehydrated. Be sure to have a glass or bottle of water (8-16 oz) in the last couple of hours before riding, and another one in the few hours before that. In general, try to average about 12-16 oz every 2-3 hours that you're awake and a little more while you ride.

While riding in cool weather, you should have 1 bottle every 1-1.5 hours of riding. You may need up to 2-3 bottles per hour in warm weather. In cool weather, plain water or a sports drink mix are both fine. For shorter, easier rides just one bottle of water will be good, because you don't really need any extra electrolytes or calories for those easy rides. In warmer weather or during very hard workouts, it is good to have a drink mix with electrolytes and some sugar to help absorb and retain the water more effectively. You will also want to take in some fluids after riding. After racing, hard workouts, or longer rides in hot weather, you will be low on fluids and may want 2 bottles or more in the first 30-60 minutes after finishing the ride.

Most of the time when you're not riding, focus on drinking water. Sugary drinks like sodas or most juice drinks are high in empty calories and not good for you. During exercise, some sugary drinks may be okay, but usually most sports drink mixes are much lower in sugar than any soda. Except for the times that you are riding or immediately after you finish your ride, it will be good to mostly avoid extra sugars and focus on just drinking water.

Fuel:

Eat properly before training and racing to maximize energy and get the optimal benefits of training. Your body cannot adapt and get stronger and fitter from training if you do not eat healthy and appropriate foods before, during, and after your training rides and races. It's good to have a balanced mix of fats, protein, and slowly digested carbohydrates at every meal. This ensures that your body receives an evenly distributed amount of energy throughout the day, rather than quick highs and big crashes from a high sugar diet. Always try to include a lot of vegetables and some fruits in your diet. Try to avoid processed foods, and instead choose natural plant-based foods, whole grains, nuts, maybe some fish, poultry, or meat products. You will be healthier and fitter in the long run if you eat mostly unprocessed foods and avoid added sugars, refined carbohydrates, and artificially added fats.

After any moderate to hard training session, it is good if you can plan a snack or meal so that your body gets in calories and protein when it needs it most to recover, stay strong, and get fitter. If you won't eat one of your main meals for a few hours after riding, then just having a small snack with some protein and carbs within half an hour is a good option.

When you are training hard, you want to be sure to get enough protein in your diet. This should not be difficult if you eat a mix of different food groups and include beans, nuts, and some meat, fish, poultry, or dairy products every day. If you don't get at least a few servings of each of these every day, because you have certain dietary needs or restrictions, then you may consider adding a protein powder to your oatmeal or post-workout fruit smoothie. Soy, pea, whey, or other protein powders should all provide adequate amino acids for your needs.

Training day with 9 a.m. morning ride:

Prepare:

Eat a light breakfast 1.5-2 hours before riding that includes a little protein, carbohydrates and fat. Some examples:

- Oatmeal with nuts and berries
- Yogurt, granola, and a banana
- Eggs with toast and butter or olive oil

Take 1 or 2 water bottles with you on every ride (however many fit on your bike). Take a small snack (a sandwich, bar, banana, cookie, or other small solid food item that will sit well in your stomach while riding). Consider taking some gels, chomps, or a bottle of drink mix if your ride will be hot or exceptionally long or hard.

Ride:

You can burn anywhere from 200-600 calories per hour, depending on how hard you're riding, how fit you are, and your size. If you are only riding for an hour or less, then you don't need to worry about taking in extra calories. If you are riding 2 hours or longer, then most athletes will feel stronger and perform better if they take in some extra calories throughout the ride. It takes time to digest food and absorb calories, so don't wait until you're hungry or feeling tired and weak, start eating early in the ride. You can focus on solid foods earlier in rides because that will take longer to digest and will provide more sustained energy. If you are racing or riding very hard, then try to pay attention to your body and eat foods that won't upset your stomach.

Gels, chews, chomps, and drink mix get digested and absorbed quickly, so they work better for many athletes during hard workouts or races. Don't rely on these fuel sources, though, for most of your riding calories.

Recover:

Use the mantra; "Person first, equipment second." Take care of your needs for fluids, calories, and protein before worrying about cleaning your bike and gear. The sooner you eat the better you will recover. It's best if you can eat within the first 30 minutes after riding. If you can't, then at least get something before an hour has passed. If you don't, then your recovery will be much less effective. Not enough protein or calories keeps your stress hormones elevated. As soon as you step off the bike, the clock starts ticking for your 30-minute window. It's good to get 20-30 grams of protein and some carbs (with how much depending on the intensity of the workout) then.

You can eat real food or take a prepared recovery product. Milk or yogurt with some cereal or fruit can be good. A fruit smoothie with protein powder is great. A sandwich with some meat or toast with a couple of eggs can work. Pick anything that's available and includes 300-500 calories and some protein, or if it's time for a full meal, then that will work well, and you probably don't need to worry about making any special plans as long as you have several hundred calories and some protein in the meal.

If you have a small snack after riding, then try to plan a full-sized meal within the next 2 hours after that snack. As always, try to include some protein, fat, and carbohydrate, and avoid lots of added sugars and fats. *If you are not sure what nutrients are in your food, there are good resources online where you can look up the nutrition facts of any food.*

Training day with 4 p.m. after school ride:

Eat a normal (healthy) breakfast and lunch. Pay attention to your body and energy levels. Make sure you are staying hydrated, and pay attention to whether or not it will help you during your ride if you have a piece of fruit, a sandwich, or some other small snack 1-2 hours before the afternoon training session. Not everyone will need a snack at this time, but some people will feel best with a small snack between lunch and afternoon training. Again, always take some ride food and 1-2 bottles on your bike.

Race day:

Think of it the same as a training day, with some changes – read above. Always consider your training days as practice for race days. Your riding and your eating habits can be tested out in training before you implement them on race days.

Prepare:

Know the course ahead of time so you can plan ahead where you can eat and drink. Eat the same type of dinner and breakfast you always eat, don't change anything up on or right before a race day.

Race:

If your race is within 2 hours of breakfast, then there should be no need to eat more. Hydrate and fuel during the race. Leave sugar products to the end, giving you energy to attack and sprint at the end.

Prepare:

If your race is later, eat a snack within 2 hours of the race. For example, toast with butter, a sprinkle of salt, an avocado, or a small sandwich.

Race:

Hydrate in the first hour, then hydrate and eat real food during hour 2. Use glucose tablets or blocks in the last 15 minutes for quick energy to attack and sprint.

Recover:

Recover with the same schedule as a training day; protein within 30 minutes, followed by a real meal within 2 hours.

Limit or avoid:

- Processed carbohydrates or added sugars, except maybe during training or immediately afterwards for your recovery snack.
- Regular use of NSAID drugs (Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Naproxen). Basically, all pain-killers except for Tylenol/acetaminophen are NSAIDs. These drugs stop your body's inflammatory activities, which are instrumental to adapting to training. If you are always taking ibuprofen or naproxen, then you are preventing your body from responding naturally to training by adapting and getting fitter.
- New practices on race day. Always try out any eating or drinking strategy or product in training before you try something on a race day. This way you can avoid unforeseen problems with digestion. Nobody wants an upset stomach during a race.

Notes for women:

Hormonal changes can affect your bodies and may make hard training or racing efforts feel more or less difficult on different days. Just pay attention to your body so that you can know when to expect when you will feel normal or good and when you may not feel as strong on your bike.

- 5-7 days before menstrual period you might need a little extra carbohydrate if you are experiencing fatigue.
- Branched chain amino acids are also helpful if you are making hard efforts in the 5-7 days before your period.
- 3 grams before training, 5 grams after training.
- Increase your protein intake during your menstrual period.
- Consider taking a multi-vitamin with iron or an iron supplement if you do not eat much red meat. Even if you do eat meat most days, you may still benefit from going out of your way to add iron to your diet. If you take supplemental iron, it is a good idea to get your blood checked by your doctor a few times each year, maybe at the beginning and the end of the season.

Reach out to other women on the team if you need more support.

Scoring

ECHS MTB competes in Division I in the NorCal League in the Southern Conference. Division I teams have 12 or more riders while Division II teams have 11 or fewer. There is no distinction between divisions in terms of skill level. The divisions compete together, with staggered start times for larger fields.

Scores for Riders: Individual Races

A rider earns **individual points** for each race that he/she completes (no points if you do not finish). Medals are awarded to the top five finishers in each of eight fields: Girls and Boys Freshman, Sophomore, JV and Varsity. Points are awarded based on finishing place, with first place Freshman and Sophomore earning 500 points, JV 540 and Varsity 575. To see the points awarded for placing in each field, the race results are available at <http://www.norcalmtb.org/races-2/#raceresults>. Scoring officials post results as soon as they are available and they can be viewed live online. Results are posted to the NorCal site after about two days.

Scores for Riders: Overall Series

Each racer is also competing for an Overall (cumulative) NorCal Conference ranking. Five NorCal races are scheduled for the season and riders who complete all five races get 25 "Season Bonus Points." For NorCal's final overall ranking, the lowest score of the five is dropped. Thus, the rider's season score is a sum of their four best races plus bonus, if any. A missed race would be the lowest score dropped. During the season, the racers in each group get "call-ups" depending on their cumulative season points - positioning them in their field at the starting line (highest points are at the front). There are no call ups for the first Freshman races so get to the start line early!

Scores for Teams

Each team earns **team points** at each race. A Division I team's points are the sum of its eight highest individual scores and must include scores of **at least two girls** and **at least two boys** (possibilities are GGBBBBBB, GGGBBBBB, GGGGBBBB, GGGGGBBB, or GGGGGGBB). Top-scoring teams have strong finishers in a range of fields. At each race, team prizes are awarded to the 3 teams earning the most points. Because of the complexity of the scoring system, we usually can't tell what team won the race until the announcements are made. This makes the awards ceremonies exciting right to the end.

Overall Team Score

Teams compete for the NorCal Championships. The lowest team score is not dropped in determining the series winner.

California State Championships

This is a single day of racing. It is scored separately, both for individual rankings and for team rankings.

NOTE: During races riders must be autonomous. Other than receiving hydration or nutrition in the Feed Zone, a rider cannot be assisted during a race. If a rider receives any type of assistance outside what is allowed in the Feed Zone (e.g., water or nutrition outside of the Feed Zone or receiving tools, mechanical assistance, or replacing a bike) the rider will be penalized points during that race.

Glossary of Cycling Terminology

29er: A bike with 29" diameter wheels. In earlier years, the 26" wheel was the standard size. There is also a 27.5" wheel available, but only usually on xs sized bikes or downhill bikes.

Arm/Leg/Knee warmers: Cycling specific removable sleeves useful in changing weather conditions. Leg warmers extend to the ankle, knee warmers extend just below the knee.

Bib shorts: Cycling specific shorts with suspender-like attachments.

Bike Check: At the start of season every rider must have his/her bike inspected by a team approved mechanic who will clear the bike as safe or recommend service to bring it to standard.

Bonk: to completely run out of energy due to lack of food and/or proper hydration. Very bad feeling.

Cadence: Cadence refers to the number of pedal rotations a rider completes per minute.

Call up: A privileged and guaranteed starting position in a race that a racer has earned by way of previous results in races. "He has the 5th call up in the Sophomore D1 race."

Chamois (shammy): A pad sewn into cycling shorts to decrease chafing and sore spots in tender areas. In the distant past, these were made of chamois leather, hence the name.

Clipless pedals: Pedals that cycling shoes "click" into. The name is derived from the advance in technology from toe-clips, like little cages for your feet, that were used on earlier bikes to hold your feet onto the pedals. These newfangled pedals introduced in the 1980's were "clipless", yet you do clip into them. Sorry for the confusion!

D1 & D2: Division 1 and Division 2 are how teams of different sizes are grouped within NorCal conferences.

DNF: DNF stands for Did Not Finish. A DNF is not a badge of dishonor, it simply means a rider did not finish the race either due to a mechanical problem (e.g., a broken chain or flat tire), a crash, or because a rider wisely listened to their body, which was telling them to stop riding.

Feed Zone: Designated area on a race course where racers can get water bottles or food from designated "feeders". Feeders are the team volunteers who staff the Feed Zone area and give the water or nutrition to the riders as they pass through the area during the race.

Fork: The two tubes that come down and secure the front wheel to the rest of the frame. There are a few examples of a single fork (called a Lefty fork), but most bikes have a double fork.

Full or Dual Suspension: A mountain bike with suspension in the rear as well as on the fork.

Hardtail: A mountain bike with no rear suspension, only suspension on the front fork.

Hydration: Hydration refers to the amount of fluids that you lose and must replace while exercising. More often than not the main risk is becoming dehydrated, which can lead to heat exhaustion, bonking or worse. It is also important to avoid taking in too much fluid, which can lead to cramping, indigestion, and in extreme cases dangerous swelling.

Jersey: Cycling specific shirt made from synthetic fabric to wick moisture from the body, zipper to adjust ventilation, and pockets to store food and extra gear.

Kit: Cycling uniform with team logos for cycling. Kit items might include jersey, shorts, arm warmers, leg or knee warmers, socks. Jersey and bib shorts are required and are our team uniform. ECHS kit is made up of bib shorts and jersey.

Multi-tool: A tool that has multiple allen wrenches, screwdriver heads and other tools that folds up. For repairs or adjustments to your bike on the ride.

NICA: Founded in 2009, the National Interscholastic Cycling Association (“NICA”) develops interscholastic mountain biking programs for student-athletes across the United States. NICA provides leadership, services and governance for regional leagues to produce quality mountain bike events, and supports every student-athlete in the development of a strong body, strong mind and strong character through interscholastic cycling.

NorCal: The NorCal High School Cycling League was organized in 2001 to provide quality mountain biking programs for students in grades 9 to 12. Regardless of ability level, the NorCal League is committed to providing a positive experience for all student-athletes, and helping them to create a strong body, mind and character through the sport of cycling.

Pit Zone: Designated area for each team that is usually a 10x20 space. We set up our shade pop ups and include a food prep and serving area, seating for athletes, bag storage, waste management, and bike racks.

Team Snap: Online (www.teamsnap.com) and App tool used to communicate with riders, parents/guardians and track rider information.

Technical Riding: Refers to rides, trails, and trail section and features that require a higher level of skill, concentration, and effort to ride. Technical could refer to steep, rocky, sandy, narrow, twisty, and/or awkward elements of riding.

Time Trial: When riders are timed on the same segment of trail. This information is use to create ride groups and assess skill level.

Trainer: A stationary mechanism that a bike is attached to, allowing riding while staying stationary. Trainers are used to warm up for races, useful when there are no trails or roads available for warming up. They are set up in the Pit Zone and are provided by the team. Trainers can also be borrowed from the team and used at home.

Tubeless tires: In the beginning, bike tires had inner tubes that inflated inside the outer tires. When there was a puncture, the inner tube would be removed and repaired or replaced. Tubeless tires are installed without inner tubes. The tire seals directly on the rim, and a special fluid is put into the air-filled space. The fluid quickly fills any small puncture and seals it as the tire is rolling. Tubeless tires are lighter and less prone to flats than a standard tire/tube combination. Sometimes rims can be converted to tubeless, and sometimes not. Check with your local shop if you are interested in converting your wheels.