

Pine View Panthers



Mountain Biking Guide

Why Mountain Biking?

Welcome to the Pine View Panthers Mountain Biking team! We are thrilled that you have chosen to participate. You are now part of the National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) family.

Mountain biking is a sport that will strengthen you physically, mentally, and intellectually. You are probably already aware that cycling is exercise and that regular physical exercise will decrease your risk of acquiring most diseases. Additionally, your coordination and balance will improve as you become more skilled which improves the health of both your nervous and musculoskeletal systems.

Cycling can also prevent and improve symptoms of depression and anxiety. As you engage in the vigorous demands of mountain biking, your brain releases endorphins, serotonin, and other important neurotransmitters that help you feel good, give you energy, and help you sleep better. Participation in this sport will also boost your brain power! Studies have found as your cardio-respiratory fitness increases, your ability to focus on your studies improves as well as your test scores.

You will still need to study, but your studying will become more productive. You will find that there are many more ways that cycling will help you improve as a person and we hope you will share them with us as you discover the benefits of the truly awesome sport called mountain biking!

Equipment List

The following is a list of the equipment required during your participation with PVMTB

1. Mountain Bike (proper working order)
2. Bike Helmet - proper fit
3. Gloves (preferably full-finger)
4. Close-toe shoes (no sandals)
5. 2 x Tubes (right size for bike; even if riding tubeless)
6. Hand Pump
7. Patch Kit
8. 2 x Tire Levers
9. Multi-Tool (optionally w/ chain breaker)
10. Chain Breaker (if not on multi-tool)
11. Spare Quick-Link (specific to size of chain)
12. Hydration Pack with at least 70 oz bladder
13. Required Medications (If needed during ride)
14. Nutrition (granola bars, gummi bears, etc.)
15. Optional Items:
 - a. Eye Protection
 - b. Spare Derailleur Hanger (optional but recommended)
 - c. CO2 Inflator + Cartridges
 - d. Water Bottles (may supplement the 70 oz of water required to be carried)
 - e. Face Covering (bandana, mask, or buff)

Clothing

- **Helmet:** It is best to wear a helmet specifically designed for mountain biking. The visor will keep sun and rain out of your eyes and it helps deflect branches. The mountain bike helmet also sits lower around the back and sides of your head which offers better coverage than a road biking helmet.
- **Glasses:** Protective eyewear is also recommended for mountain biking. Purchase sunglasses with interchangeable lenses, this will allow you to ride in all conditions. Safety glasses sold at local hardware stores are a very effective and inexpensive alternative to traditional sunglasses.
- **Gloves:** Full-finger gloves should be worn while mountain biking to protect fingers from crashes and vegetation that may hang over the trails. Gloves also help with grip on the handlebar.
- **Jersey:** For daily riding, any shirt will do that is appropriate for the weather.
- **Shorts:** Padded shorts are a wise choice for mountain biking. Some riders prefer to wear only road-cycling style lycra shorts or bibs with a chamois while others are more comfortable putting baggy shorts on over the padded cycling shorts. In order to avoid chaffing and saddle sores, do not wear underwear beneath your padded shorts.
- **Socks:** Crew-length socks are recommended for mountain biking. They will protect ankles, shins, and calves from scratches from undergrowth or pedals.
- **Shoes:** There are two choices for shoes: flat pedal shoes or clipless pedal shoes. Flat pedal shoes should have a firm sole and grippy rubber. Clipless pedal shoes for mountain biking should have a recessed cleat and a chunky tread to allow the rider to walk normally.

Equipment Maintenance

Drivetrain: Your basic drivetrain includes the chain, cassette, chainring(s), and derailleur. Keeping everything clean is the key to a happy bike, as this prevents contaminants and abrasives from entering the moving parts of the drivetrain. Most of the trails in St. George are very dusty and depending on the lubricant you use on your chain, you may need to clean and lube your chain after each ride or at the very least wipe off the dust. We encourage you to also clean the dust off your cassette, chainring(s) and derailleur pulley wheels along with the chain. Using an old dry toothbrush is a very effective way to clean that cassette. Scrub away until it's clean and then use a clean rag to wipe down your chain. Follow the directions found on your lube to apply the fresh lube. There are several lubes we recommend you use that can be found at our local bike shops: SCC Slick, Squirt, Rock n' Roll Gold, and Boeshield T-9 are a few examples.

Suspension: Wipe down the stanchions of both your fork and shock with a clean dry cloth before every ride. If you see dust, clean it off and your suspension will be smoother and go a little further between services.

Brakes: Your brakes are a critical component of your bike and should be professionally maintained or serviced by someone who has a great deal of experience with bicycle mechanics. If you notice your brakes are not stopping as well as they should or are making unusual noises, have them checked out by a mechanic. Before and after each ride, be sure to check for any leaks from hydraulic lines or frayed cables for non-hydraulic disc brakes. Be very careful to never get any kind of grease or chain lubricant on the brake pads or disc rotors.

Keep an eye on brake pad wear and arrange for new pads well before they have completely worn out.

Tires: A flat tire will be the most common mechanical problem you will have as a mountain biker. There are some key things you can do to prevent flats and to be prepared when one does happen. If at all possible, set your tires up tubeless. We have rocky, unforgiving trails here in St. George and a proper tubeless set-up will prevent most flats. If you are unable to set up your wheels tubeless, the local bike shops sell tubes with sealant in them that are also effective at preventing flats from thorn punctures. Maintaining proper tire pressure will also go a long way towards preventing flats. Check your tire pressure every time you head out for a ride. The appropriate pressures for your tires and your weight will vary so talk to your bike shop or an experienced mountain biker to learn the ideal air pressure for your tires. If you are running tubeless, you will need to add more tire sealant to your tires periodically during the dry summer months as the sealant does dry up quickly. Add sealant monthly to be extra cautious. You will know you need more sealant when you find you are losing excess air pressure in your tires over night.

Bike Cleaning: Thoroughly clean your bike once or twice each month. Avoid the temptation to blast that dusty bike with your hose or pressure washer. When you do that you cause water and dirt to get inside the frame, bearings and other places where it does not belong. Water is corrosive and can cause damage to many of the moving parts of the bike when used excessively. The very best way to wash a bike is with a damp washcloth and a bucket of water. Rinse the dirty washcloth often and change out the water in your bucket when it looks dirty. It takes a little longer than using a hose, but you will find you will spend a lot less on repairs if you use this method. There may be times when using the hose to spray down your bike is necessary. Be very careful not to spray water into the openings on the frame or into the areas with bearings (hubs, pedals, headset, bottom bracket). Always use low pressure when spraying the bike. Thoroughly dry your bike after you are done cleaning and lube your chain once it is completely dry to prevent rusting.

Training

"Our goals can only be reached through a vehicle of a plan, in which we must fervently believe, and upon which we must vigorously act. There is no other route to success." - Pablo Picasso

It is often said when we fail to plan, then we have planned to fail. The key to effective training is effective planning and effective planning comes when we have a definitive goal in mind. Goals will give purpose and motivation to your training and racing. There is a great sense of accomplishment when we achieve our goals. In mountain biking your goal may be to ride up a hill, finish a race, increase your average speed, ride a super technical section of trail with "no dabs", and so on. Accomplishing your goals will increase your mental fortitude and reinforce your hard work, as well as bring lasting joy.

Sometimes, it is difficult to come up with goals and we are here to help! We encourage you to set three goals that you would like to accomplish by the end of the season. These goals should be SMART:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Realistic
- Timely

For example, instead of setting a goal to "*ride faster*" you should set a goal to "*ride each lap at the State Championships in Desert Canyons 2 minutes faster than last year*". This revised version is specific because it defines what "*faster*" means, measurable because lap times on the same course are easily measured, attainable and realistic because this can be achieved with proper training and timely because the goal is to be accomplished at a specific race; on a specific day.

Once you have defined your objectives for the season, it is important to acknowledge what is preventing you from reaching your goals. Focus on the areas you can control and set daily, weekly and monthly objectives for improvement. The rider with the above mentioned goal to ride faster at State Championships, for example, may feel that their lack of technical riding ability is holding them back. They may set a goal to practice their bike handling skills on days that they do not have practice. You can set as many of these process-oriented goals as you feel are necessary to reach your season goal. Also, share these goals with your parents, coaches and friends on the team so they can hold you accountable and give you opportunities and motivation to progress toward your goals.

Training Definitions

- **Heart Rate (HR):** A measure of exercise intensity, measured in beats per minute (bpm); a measure of how often your heart is contracting. During exercise, heart rate increases.
- **Resting heart rate (RHR):** Your heart rate when your body is at rest. This is a good indicator of fitness: a lower RHR generally indicates a higher level of fitness. A sudden increase in RHR can indicate overtraining.
- **Overreaching:** a condition that occurs when an athlete has pushed their physical limits too far in training. With rest, the body will be able to adapt and grow stronger.
- **Overtraining:** the next step after overreaching. When the body experiences a decline in fitness despite a high level of training. This happens when an athlete ignores symptoms of overreaching and continues with high-stress training with inadequate recovery.
- **Intensity:** refers to how hard you are working during exercise.
- **Duration:** The amount of time spent exercising.
- **Perceived effort or exertion:** A subjective measure of exercise intensity; ie: how hard you feel you are working. For our practices we will use a perceived exertion scale of 1-5.
 - **Zone 1** is a very easy effort and is the intensity of active recovery. You will not think you went hard enough, but this workout is the key to your improvement following a challenging workout.
 - **Zone 2** is your aerobic zone. It should also feel easy in the beginning but after 2-3 hours you will feel you have put forth some effort. You should be able to hold a conversation using full sentences in this zone but need to open your mouth to breathe.
 - **Zone 3** is the tempo zone. This effort will feel hard and your breathing will be audible. You can hold this pace for 2-3 hours.
 - **Zone 4** is the threshold zone. This is a very hard effort. You cannot maintain this pace for more than an hour. We often refer to this as race pace. Your breathing is labored and your arms and legs will feel heavy, you can still get out a few words at a time.
 - **Zone 5** is the VO2 max zone. This is an all out effort that you can only maintain for a short time as in a few seconds up to 6 minutes.

Phases of Training

Training is a gradual process that leads to peak performance. Your body must adapt to training and racing and this takes time and patience. In fact, to reach your true peak performance, you must train consistently for several years. You cannot rush fitness; you cannot force your body to get in shape faster than it is able. There are many models to training and we will use what is referred to as a linear periodization model with five phases.

As a team we will begin focusing our training on general fitness and cross training and as we get closer to race time we will become more specific in our training. This will allow your body to adapt and gain the strength and endurance it will need to obtain peak performance.

- **Preparation:** cross training, strength training, skills work, and general fitness.
- **Base:** Base training usually lasts 12 weeks. During this time you will be working on your aerobic endurance, biking skills, and strength. The key to success in this phase is long rides. Speed workouts will be introduced during the second half of this phase.
- **Build:** Race specific training begins in this phase which will last about 8 weeks. There will be two workouts a week that you will do intervals and will be all out efforts and the remaining rides will be active recovery rides that should feel very easy and fun.
- **Peak:** This phase will begin three weeks before your most important race. We will attempt to simulate the race every 3-4 days and all other workouts will be very easy recovery rides. There will be a reduction in your training volume each week by about 30%.
- **Race:** This is your last week! It is the week of your most important race. You will only do very short intervals this week to keep your legs feeling fresh.

Recovery

Training is all about balancing stress and recovery because **Stress + Rest = Growth**. During an intense workout, you are actually damaging your muscles. It is important to allow yourself time to recover after a very long or very intense ride so that your muscles have a chance to repair themselves and grow. It is really on the easy days that you get faster. When the training plan calls for a recovery ride or a ride in "zone 1" you need to ride **SLOW**. So slow you should be able to recite the pledge of allegiance without gasping while riding. If you go hard and race your friends on recovery days **YOU ARE NOT GETTING FASTER**. Hard workouts put your body in a state of overreaching; recovery days allow your body to rebuild itself and gain fitness without reaching a state of overtraining in which your body cannot repair itself and your performance deteriorates. Listed below are some symptoms of overtraining. It is very important to pay attention to how you feel. If there is a hard workout on the schedule but you notice more than one of these symptoms, tell your coach.

You may need to join a different group that day and take it easy.

Symptoms of Overtraining

- Resting heart rate higher than usual
- Sudden Weight loss
- Extreme hunger or loss of appetite
- Lethargy, chronic fatigue
- Restless sleep, insomnia
- Muscle and/or joint soreness prolonged (greater than 2 days) after workouts
- Cuts and bruises heal slowly
- For girls: menstrual cycle dysfunction
- Deterioration of bike-handling skills
- Workout performance greatly reduced
- Moody, grumpy and emotional
- Low motivation to train; general apathy
- Increased susceptibility to illness, allergies (if you feel sick, stop!)

Sleep

Adequate sleep is critical to health and fitness! While you are sleeping your body goes to work repairing all the damage you have done to it during the day. Do not give in to the temptation to shorten your sleep so you can fit more things into your busy lives. Sickness and injury will follow if you do! It is only during sleep that your body releases tissue-building hormones that will repair muscles and other soft tissues. Sleep also renews your immune system, builds bones, and allows your body to restock energy stores. As teenagers, you are still growing; therefore you need 9-10 hours of sleep every night. Add hard training to the equation and you may need even more. With early morning practices, this may be hard to achieve, but if you begin in May to try to go to bed just 15 minutes earlier every night, you will be ready by the time early morning practices begin. You may find that you need a short (30min) midday nap. Naps cannot substitute for a continuous 9 hours of sleep at night, but they can be a great addition to it.

Nutrition

Proper nutrition is as important as sleep when it comes to health and fitness. The nutrients found in the food you eat is what your body will use to build fitness and heal injuries. Protein, fat and carbohydrates are the basic building blocks for your body. Strive to eat a healthy balance of each throughout the day.

There is no substitute for eating nutritious, whole foods. Junk food will not help your body to heal.

Nutritional supplements cannot be used to make up for a poor diet. Begin each day with a healthy breakfast. Don't skip lunch and sit down with your family or friends to eat dinner. Make whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables a part of every meal and between meal snacks.

Race day nutrition should be similar to normal day nutrition. **Do not try new foods on race day!**

Race morning should consist of your typical breakfast 2-4 hours before racing. You will also need a simple snack shortly before the race. For those racing over an hour, you will need carbohydrates and sodium in your drink or a snack midway through the race. We strongly encourage you to try eating a simple snack such as a banana, apple, fruit snacks, or gel right before every ride to see how the food sits in your stomach. During a race it is difficult to eat whole food items and we recommend that you use a gel in your pocket or energy blocks that can be stuck directly to the top tube of your bike (aka "lick em and stick em").

Practice eating these snacks during your weekly rides to make sure they agree with your stomach. During vigorous exercise, the body consumes a lot of carbohydrates (sugars). For races over one hour aim to consume between 30 and 60 grams of carbohydrates per hour.

Hydration

Your body is 60% water and you are constantly losing it through breathing, sweating, and metabolic processes. You must drink regularly in order to maintain your health. While you are exercising you should drink 18-24 ounces of water each hour. However, drinking too much water can disrupt the balance of electrolytes in your body and often leads to feelings of nausea and bloating. Mountain biking season is a warm time of year in St. George so you will most likely need more than just water when you ride on hot days. Electrolyte drinks are a very effective way of helping you feel healthy and strong on those long rides. Use drinks that have around 300 mg of sodium per serving to stay safe on hot days or long rides.

Staying hydrated on race day is critical. Sip water regularly prior to your race, but avoid chugging a large volume of water all at once. The right amount of water for you to drink on race day will not necessarily be the same as other riders. Experiment during the weeks before the race to determine how much you need to drink to be hydrated but not waterlogged or bloated. As a rule of thumb if your

urine is clear, you are drinking too much, it should be pale yellow in color. Many riders benefit from an electrolyte-sugar combination drink during their race. As with nutrition, test out your chosen drinks on your weekly rides to figure out which one sits best in your stomach.

Injuries

Sadly, mountain bikers do get injured on occasion. Most injuries are minor scratches and scrapes, but sometimes more serious injuries may occur.

Cycling is a low impact sport so joint injuries are less common than with more traditional school sports. However, lower back, knee and hip pain will occur if your bike is not fitted properly, you fail to do core exercises, or you increase your training too quickly. When pain occurs, listen to your body and rest for 1-2 days. If pain does not improve, contact your healthcare provider.

Nationwide, the most common serious injury with which teens present to the ER each year is head injuries. Head injuries can occur in mountain biking as well. Helmets are required to be worn properly at all times when you are on the bike. However, head injuries will still occur with a helmet on securely. Concussions are the most common head injury for mountain biking. Your brain is floating in a sea of liquid, and when your head stops abruptly (as is the case with a crash), your brain bashes against the skull. When you sustain such an injury please see your healthcare provider as soon as

possible. NICA requires that a student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a league activity, or who is suffering the effects of a concussion sustained outside of league activity, shall be immediately removed from the activity for the remainder of the day, and shall not be permitted to return to the activity until he or she is evaluated by a licensed health care provider. Your provider will encourage you to avoid exertion for several days and may even want you to stay home from school. We assure you that if you comply, the long term effects of your head injury will be minimal. If you try to rush back to normal activities it will take several months to return to normal.

Signs and symptoms of a concussion requiring immediate medical attention:

○ One pupil larger than the other ○ Drowsiness or inability to wake up ○ A headache that gets worse and does not go away ○ Slurred speech, weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination ○ Repeated vomiting or nausea, convulsions or seizures ○ Unusual behavior, increased confusion, restlessness, or agitation ○ Loss of consciousness

Signs and symptoms (may occur 2-3 days after accident) of a concussion requiring consultation with a medical professional:

○ Can't recall events prior to or after hit or fall ○ Appears dazed or stunned ○ Forgets an instruction, is confused about an assignment or position, or is unsure of the game, score, or opponent ○ Moves clumsily ○ Answers questions slowly ○ Mood changes ○ Complains of headache or pressure in head ○ Balance problems or dizziness, or double or blurry vision ○ Bothered by light or noise ○ Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy ○ Confusion or concentration or memory problems ○ Not "feeling right" or "feeling down"

Cross Training

Cycling is a lifetime sport, and we hope you will ride well into your 90s! The best way to ensure a lifetime of fitness is to be balanced in your approach to training. Including cross training will help you maintain this balance. By definition, cross training is the practice of engaging in two or more sports or types of exercise in order to improve fitness or performance in one's main sport. For endurance sports like cycling, the two main purposes of cross training are to improve muscle strength, and to speed recovery.

When you mountain bike, you are constantly working your legs in a pedaling motion which can be considered a unilateral movement. If this is your only means of fitness, those pedaling muscles will become overdeveloped and imbalances will occur in your musculoskeletal system.

The unilateral movement of cycling means that you can become weak laterally, in your core, and your arms. Incorporating cross training into your weekly fitness will help you become a better cyclist as well as avoid injury.

There are countless ways you can strengthen your arms, core, and lateral muscles. We will give you a few suggestions, and encourage you to find the exercises you enjoy and add them to your week. Consistency is key, and you only need to spend 10-30 minutes

2-3 days a week on these activities to see real benefits in your fitness. It is very important to remember that with any exercise that is new to you, it will take about two weeks to adapt to that movement and you should be careful not to overdo it during that time. We suggest that you allow yourself 24-48 hours to recover between these new workouts. Also, avoid doing a high number of repetitions or weights until you have been doing the exercise at least two weeks. Make sure you use good form in all the exercises you do. If you are unsure how to do an exercise ask an adult to help you figure out the proper form. Listen to your body as you do these exercises, if you feel twinges of pain, or unusual soreness stop the exercise. Another caution regarding weight training is to strictly avoid doing any weight workouts on race weeks. If you are in a weight training class at school, please ask your coach for a note to excuse you from weight training during that week.

We have listed a few of our favorite exercises and stretches. Always begin with the basic exercise and after you master them try the variations. Do not try to do all the exercises at once. We are simply giving you ideas for Ways to work your core, lateral muscles and to build muscular strength. Begin by doing one set of 8 for any given exercise. Gradually increase over the first few weeks to three sets of 8.

Suggested Exercises

- Plank Variations-basic plank, side plank, plank rows, push ups, mountain climbers, plank with alternating knee to elbow, walking plank
- Bird-dog Variations- basic bird-dog, elbow to knee bird-dog, bird-dog plank
- Glute bridge variations- glute bridge, single leg glute bridge, glute bridge on a exercise ball
- Crunches-basic crunch, reverse crunch, bicycle crunches, russian twist
- Flutter kicks on back and on stomach
- Lunges-basic lunge, side lunge, weighted lunges
- Reverse hyper on an exercise ball
- Back extensions
- Supermans
- Squats-double leg squat, single leg squat,
- Deadlift
- Step ups
- Box jumps
- Jump rope
- Skipping
- Running
- Walking

Stretches

•Thoracic Mobility Stretch • Neck/Upper Trap Stretch • Upward dog • Downward dog • Cat-cow • Hip Flexor/Quad Stretch • Piriformis Stretch • Gastroc/Soleus Stretch or Standing Hamstring Stretch • IT Band Stretch • Seated Hamstring Stretch • Seated Pigeon Pose

Look up youtube videos on the above exercises and stretches to see proper form

Sample Workout:

MTB Core and Stretch Routine

Do these 6 core exercises 2-3 times per week	Do these 6 stretches 2-3 times per week
• Prone plank • Bicycle crunches • Mountain climbers • Super-mans • Side plank • Glute bridge	• Quad stretch • Standing hamstring stretch • IT band stretch • Downward dog • Seated pigeon pose • Seated hamstring stretch

Basic Bike Skills

- **Neutral & ready position** are dynamic standing body positions critical to maintaining balance and control over varied or challenging terrain.
- **Bike/Body separation** is getting up off the seat to allow controlled movements of the bike. This allows the bike to move as the terrain dictates while you remain stable and balanced.
- **Pedal position:** level pedals when not pedaling, this allows you to stay balanced on both feet. The foot should be positioned on each pedal properly: the ball of foot over the axle for clipless pedals, and slightly forward for flat pedals. Lastly, you can properly manage balance and control by rotating the feet on the pedals with ankle deflection: heel(s) down when braking and heels) up while climbing or performing lifting skills.
- **Eye movement** means your head should be up at all times with eyes scanning ahead. Scan further ahead as your speed increases. Commit with your eyes to the chosen riding line (don't focus on the objects you are trying to avoid). Also, look through corners and changes in direction. The bike follows the eyes.
- **Braking** is used to control speed and come to a stop. Brakes and brake levers need to be set up and functioning properly for effective use. Braking cannot be overstated as it provides confidence and safety as you progress.
- **Steering** is the turning of the front wheel. When used in conjunction with Bike/Body Separation, you will be able to maintain balance and stability while changing directions. At slow speeds, a lot of

steering is used to change the direction of the bike. At high speeds, leaning the bike is used to change direction while little or no steering may be involved.

- **Speed:** Many skills require you to be moving at an appropriate speed. It may be difficult to balance moving at speeds below your comfort level. Moving at speeds above your comfort level can cause you to lose control and risk harm to yourself or other trail users.

- **Gear selection** must be appropriate for the terrain, the skill, and your speed. For skills requiring pedal strokes, gear and speed are critical to success.

- **Cadence** is the number of revolutions per minute of the cranks. The ideal cadence for mountain biking varies widely based on the undulating terrain. For efficiency on flat, smooth terrain, use a relatively high cadence (80-90 RPM). When standing to climb, use a slower cadence, which allows you to surge and use momentum gained to ride over technical portions of a climb. Experiment with your cadence over different terrains to see what feels best for you.

- **Timing and Coordination** Small errors in timing and coordination can have disastrous consequences. Timing errors are easier to correct with repeated practice. Coordination errors are more difficult and time consuming to correct. Time in the saddle and practice will help you to overcome these errors.

- **Pressure Control** is used for maximizing or minimizing traction on either tire. With small movements, you can change the pressure or shift your weight from back to front to find a good balanced position on the bike. Pressure control is used at least subtly in most skills. Sometimes, pressure control is the key to success but often overlooked.

Trail Etiquette

- **Respect** your local trail builders and be a good steward of the physical environment. Keep singletrack single by staying on the trail. Practice leave no trace principles. Do not ride muddy trails because it causes rutting, widening and maintenance headaches. Ride through standing water, not around it. Ride (or walk) over technical features, not around them.

- **Share the trail.** Most of the trails we ride are multi-use. Mountain bikers yield to horses and foot traffic, and descending riders yield to climbing riders. There are some regional differences and unique rules on single-use, directional mountain bike trails--know the code where you ride. Be nice. Say hi!

- **Ride open, legal trails.** Poaching trails, building illegal singletrack, or adding unauthorized trail features are detrimental to our access. Poorly-built features could also seriously injure other trail users. If you believe there aren't enough trails or variety near you, it's time to get involved. Your engagement will be welcomed because it takes a village to create, enhance, and protect great places to ride.

- **Ride in control.** Speed, inattentiveness, and rudeness are the primary sources of trail conflict among user groups. If you need to pass, slow down, ring a bell or verbally announce yourself, and wait until the other trail user is out of the path. Use extra caution around horses, which are unpredictable. Be extra aware when riding trails with poor sight lines and blind corners, and make sure you can hear what's going on around you. Do not use headphones while riding. Plan ahead. Be prepared and self-sufficient. Every mountain biker should carry what they need for the ride they're undertaking, and know how to fix a flat tire and make minor repairs. Download a GPS trail app on your phone for navigation or carry a map in unfamiliar locations. Ride with a partner, or share your riding plan with someone if you're heading out solo.

- **Mind the animals.** When it comes to wildlife, live and let live. You will likely encounter snakes while riding. Do not kill snakes or any other wildlife. In some places, running cattle and disturbing wildlife are serious offenses. If you want to ride with your dog, first find out whether or not it's allowed by looking up the leash laws and trail restrictions. Be prepared to take care of your dog including cleaning up after

them. Ensure your companion is obedient enough to not cause problems for you, other trail users, or wild animals.

Race Day

Race day can be a busy and hectic day. It can also be a really fun day if you come prepared. Students, at your first race, you will receive two race plates with twisty ties and safety pins. You will need them at every race, so keep them in a safe place between races. We will instruct everyone where they will be placed at each race. If you forget them, you will need to pay to get new race plates.

To make the race day successful, we need parents helping out as much as possible. As coaches we have to be in certain places at certain times, and it helps your student rider out if you can help out with one of the following: • Pit zone • Feed zone • Finish line • Out on course

NICA Core Values

- **Fun:** NICA inspires friendship, joy, and adventure
- **Inclusivity:** NICA believes everyone should be able to participate in our programs and feel welcomed, respected and supported
- **Equity:** NICA is committed to fair treatment, equal access, opportunity, advancement and elimination of barriers to encourage participation for all
- **Respect:** NICA expects consideration for all others, oneself, and the outdoors.
- **Community:** NICA unites diverse people, families and communities through cycling by creating fun and welcoming experiences

We are all ambassadors for mountain biking and the way we behave does have an enormous impact on the future of cycling in general. The non-cycling community is watching you and is trying to decide how much to invest in this sport. We all need our community to see cycling in a positive light. We can assure you this will lead to more trails, bicycle lanes, and other infrastructure to support the sport we love.

Please be respectful and gracious to all you encounter. Not only are you representing all members of the cycling community, you are also representing NICA, and your high school team. Racing is exciting and obviously very competitive. We understand that it is tempting to view your fellow racers as opponents and sometimes even enemies. With every pedal you turn, we hope you will remember that we need each other to race. There is never a time that it is appropriate to criticize, ridicule, or bully fellow racers. Positivity will always help you perform better than negativity. If you want to race better, one of the most effective strategies you can have is to support and encourage your fellow racers no matter what place you come in at the end.

NICA Mission

We build strong minds, bodies, character and communities through cycling.

NICA Code of Conduct

Be Safe

- Always wear a helmet • Be prepared with additional safety gear: gloves, glasses, and extra clothes to match the weather • Be prepared with a working bike and perform an ABCDE bike check (Air, Brakes, Chain, Derailleur, Everything Else) • Ride within your limits • Ride with someone else in isolated areas • Never use any performance enhancing drug described in the NICA Handbook • Plan ahead and let your family or caregivers know where you are going and when you plan to return
- Avoid contact with wildlife • Understand the dangers of the native plants and avoid poisonous plants, stay on the trail

Be Responsible

- Be prepared with the water, food, and clothing that you need to complete the ride
- Come to practice with a clean and well-maintained bike
- Be accountable for your actions and choices
- Never consume alcohol or use any illegal drugs
- Ride only on designated and legal trails and routes
- Follow additional rules that may be associated with team's school or league affiliations

Be Respectful

- Respect coaches, teammates, competitors, trail users and other community members
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Avoid language and actions that may be perceived as bullying or harassment.
- Be inclusive and welcoming to new athletes, coaches, competitors, and other trail users
- Use appropriate language
- Move aside to allow others to pass you safely.
- Announce your passing, intention, and specify the passing side.
- Do your best when racing or riding your bike.
- Ride with courtesy at races, at practice, and in the community
- Seek consent before touching, hugging and otherwise embracing teammates and coaches.
- Slow down when approaching other trail users
- Provide right of way to pedestrians and equestrians and stop and ask for passing instructions from equestrians.
- Leave no trace or trash on the trail.
- Ride on trails when the weather and surface conditions will not cause damage.
- Perform trail maintenance on trails only with full permission and permits from the land owner/manager.

References

- heliosmtb.com
- pvmtb.org
- nationalmtb.org
- utahmtb.org
- imba.com
- www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/

"I fear not the man who has practiced 10,000 kicks once, but I fear the man who has practiced one kick 10,000 times" -Bruce Lee

"Little by little, a little becomes a lot." -Tanzanian Proverb

"One day or day one, You decide" -Unknown

"Today I will do what others won't, so tomorrow I can do what others can't" -Jerry Rice

"I never lose. I either win or learn." -Nelson Mandela

"Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going." -Jim Rohn

"Don't stop when you're tired. Stop when you're done." -Unknown
"All things are difficult before they are easy." -Thomas Fuller

"You would not worry so much about what others think of you if you realized how seldom they do."
-Eleanore Roosevelt

"Comparison is the thief of joy." -Unknown (Mark Twain possibly)

"The greatest accomplishment is not in never falling, but in rising again after you fall." -Vince Lombardi

"The only thing that hurts harder than a failure is not trying." - Apoorve Dubey