



DIRT DEMONS

Mountain Bike Team

Rider/Parent Handbook

2025 Season

Mountain Bike Team at GSHS – The Program at a Glance

Glenwood Springs High School provides the opportunity for riders to compete and/or ride in mountain biking as a team/club through the Colorado High School Cycling League (CHSCL). The League (coloradomtb.org) features a race series from August to October with over 2000 athletes from Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota and New Mexico competing. This is different from Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA) sanctioned sports or activities, such as football and soccer. The GSHS Dirt Demons Team offers multiple levels of opportunity to participate from the novice rider to the highly competitive experienced racer. Students can participate without racing, through practice attendance, going to races and supporting the team. We are a “no cut” sport and offer opportunities for kids of all skill levels. Coaches will work with riders to place them in the appropriate riding category based on their skill, riding ability, and commitment level. Riders from other high schools in the area that do not have their own team may join the Dirt Demons. Racing in the CHSCL is not a requirement but is highly encouraged. Finally, the Dirt Demons Team at its core is a race team. We are registered as a club at the school, but we function as a race team with the hope of racing competitively with other schools in the region. Regardless of results, our goal is for every student to participate at their comfort level, enjoy the race scene and have FUN.

The typical mountain biking season is in the Fall with four races about every other weekend, and a State Championship race that riders must qualify to participate in. Team training may start during the summer months, with a maximum of 8 rides allowed before the season. The regular season officially begins on **July 15**. Beginning in August we hold practices/training rides up to 3 times per week, with optional Saturday training rides in between race weekends.

To participate you will need to complete the team registration form, pay the team fee, register with CHSCL, pay the league fee, complete the league waiver, complete the RE-1 School District release form and then turn them into the Team Manager. The Dirt Demon team receives no funding from the school or the district. All funding comes from the riders, parents/guardians and fundraising efforts. If you plan to participate and race in the league events, you must also register and pay for the race events individually. Race fees are non-refundable but transferable to another event within the season.

Coaches' Mission, Philosophy and Vision

Coaches consist of teachers, parents, and friends - all who share a common love for mountain biking and working with kids to develop strong minds, bodies, and character. Every coach who works with your child has been highly trained and background checked. Every coach position is volunteer (minus the head coach) - Why the big deal? Please realize that every individual will have put in approximately 100 hours during the season, including 10 hours of training to become a Level 1 Coach to up to 50 hours to become a Level 3 Coach. Coaches pay all their own costs for transportation to practices and races, including lodging. At least one coach at every practice is trained in CPR and first aid. Coaches are also trained in mental health and concussion safety, etc. In other words, your kids are in good hands. *A final note about coaches as volunteers - our coaches have full time jobs, and we do our best to handle the sometimes-overwhelming job of running the Team, but we are all human and at times miss an email or struggle to get back to a parent in a timely manner. Please have patience and grant them some grace. Riders reading this please thank your coach every ride for being there for you and dedicating their time to your development; it really does make it worthwhile when we see your smiles and experience the excitement with you.*

Coach Certification

As a Division 1 team, we are required to have at least three (3) Level 2 coaches rostered. **Every practice ride must have a Level 2 coach.** All other riding coaches must be at least Level 1. If you wish to participate in any on-bike team activities you must be a Level 1 coach.

Expectations

As a member of the Dirt Demons, riders at all levels are held to high standards and expectations of conduct both on and off the trail/dirt.

Riders:

- Should be active in attending team rides and other team events such as team dinners and trail maintenance days. Attendance goes a long way in providing a team atmosphere!
- Provide their own bike, helmet, hydration system (water bottle or Camelback) and other racing gear.
- Should RVSP for practice on the Teams App one week in advance and communicated changes as needed
- Coordinate ride share needs on the Teams App
- Should show up “ready to ride” meaning their bike is in proper working condition, they have eaten something before, and have brought food and water for the ride. They also have the appropriate tools and supplies to do basic trail repairs, i.e.: change a flat, break and repair a chain, suspension adjustment.
- Follow the instructions of coaches and ride leaders to maintain a safe environment.
- Bring a positive and inclusive attitude to practice and events (high fives encouraged!)
- Follow all trail and road riding etiquette.

Parents:

- Will support their rider and the team by providing encouragement and generally positive energy.
- Will show respect for other riders, families, coaches, and race venues and facilities.
- Will not have unprofessional and/or inappropriate interactions with coaches or riders.

Team Communications

Official team communications will come through [Stack Team App](#). Please make sure you have TeamApp downloaded to your and your rider’s phones. Go to “Find your Team/Club” and search for Glenwood Springs Dirt Demons and join the team. **Notifications should remain ON.** It’s important for riders and their parents/guardians to register with TeamApp, since we are using this as our primary source of calendaring and communications for the team.

Coach and crew emails, team events, meetings, practices, as well as last-minute practice change notifications, will all come through TeamApp. You can access it through a computer or the app on your phone. General team information will always be available on our team’s Facebook page.
www.facebook.com/groups/GSHSDirtDemons

Rider Training

Spring/Summer Pre-Season Training – During a typical season, the league allows for 8 training rides during the spring and summer up until the official start of the season. Attendance is voluntary but encouraged based

on the rider's availability. Meeting times and places for rides will be announced on TeamApp. Rides may be rescheduled depending on weather and coaches' availability. Parent riders are welcome.

In addition, any rider planning on competing, should be riding (road and mountain), running, or cross-training 4-6 days a week throughout the summer months. You can talk to the coaches if you need help with developing your own schedule. Get together with your teammates or family to stay fit and work on riding skills over the summer. Fitness does not happen overnight!

Race Season Training – Official season begins July 15. An official practice schedule will be set when we get closer to the end of summer. The team typically trains 2-3 times per week, with additional practice opportunities during non-race weeks. Only Level 1 or higher certified coaches can ride with the team during season practice.

Off-Season Training – Off-Season training is neither considered official practice nor is required. Mountain Bike, Road, and Cyclocross (CX) races occur throughout the year and any rider can sign up to race as long as they meet the basic racing requirements (USA Cycling License and Junior Road gearing restrictions). Rides can occur in the off-season that are organized by riders for either fun or training. These rides will be advertised through text or Team App.

Riding Levels

Riding level is based on a combination of the rider's fitness level and bike handling/skills. The coaches have discretion to assess each rider's level, and divide the group appropriately to maintain safety and cohesiveness during group training rides. Communicate with your coach after practice to discuss joining easier or more challenging sub-groups on the rides.

Team Engagement Opportunities for Riders/Families

- **Pre-season Team Meeting**
- **Opening Season Team Meeting** – Meet in mid-August at the start of the season
- **Team Dinners** – Grade-based crews are encouraged to schedule meals and gatherings
- **Trail Maintenance** - As members of the mountain bike community we also want to be good trail stewards. One of the best ways to give back while learning more about trail stewardship is to volunteer on trail maintenance days.
- **Hauling the Team Trailer** - Coaches will be looking for volunteers to tow the team trailer back and forth from each race venue. It requires you to be the first car there for the weekend and the last to leave after tear-down. Contact the Head Coach or Booster Club President if you are willing and able to haul the team trailer for any of the race weekends (approx 1300 pounds.)
- **Race Weekend Volunteers for the League** - All the teams in the CHSCL are required to provide parent and rider* volunteers to sign up and help during the race weekend. For each race weekend, the League will designate a group of teams to be the "hosts" for that race. It is particularly important for the Dirt Demon parents to volunteer when we are one of the "host" teams, however volunteer opportunities will be available at each race. There are also plenty of different shifts, so you don't have to miss your rider's race. You will receive emails from CHSCL with info, times, dates, locations, and requests for volunteers. (*To earn a Letter, riders must volunteer for at least one 4-hour shift at any division race during the season.)
- **Race Weekend Volunteers for the Team** - Each race we set up pop-up tents to create the Team Pit Zone. We will need parents to help set-up, tear-down, and replenish rider and family snack tables. The week before the race, we will have sign-ups to bring healthy snacks and beverages to our team pit zone. Food and beverages for the riders must comply with current league rules. *For example: caffeine, in any form, is not allowed before or during races.*

- **Post-season Team and Family Picnic** - This family picnic is in the fall following the race season, typically in early November. It's a time to celebrate all the riders and their accomplishments for the season.

Colorado High School Cycling League (CHSCL)

The Colorado High School Cycling League CHSCL is the governing body for high school mountain biking. Please visit www.coloradomtb.org for detailed information on the league. CHSCL sets the race schedule and locations. They also administer rider and race registration. Every rider is required to be registered, sign the league waiver, and pay the league fees prior to riding with the Dirt Demons and racing in league events.

The mission of CHSCL is to inspire youth and build community one pedal stroke at a time. As a mountain biking community, we must all do our best to adhere to the following overarching code of conduct, always:

RESPECT:

- Race Host Communities & Private Property Owners
- Other Trail Users: Courtesy Counts
- Members of Local Communities & Business Owners
- All Staff & Volunteers
- Teammates & Competitors
- Land: No Littering On or Off Trail, Only Ride Open Trails

OBEY:

- All Posted Signs & Rules at Race Venues
- All Traffic Laws
- Come prepared & informed about every event: Read Race Flyers
- Know the [Colorado League Rulebook](#)

ACT WITH:

- Humility
- Kindness
- Gratitude

Race Schedule

<https://coloradomtb.org/race-schedule/>

The Dirt Demons Team is in the South Conference and Crystal Region of the CHSCL. Parents will receive notifications from the league when race registrations open. Riders will need to individually register and pay for each race. Race entry fees paid to the league are non-refundable but transferable to another event. Save \$ and stress by registering for the whole season at once.

For 2025, the first race for freshmen will be an Individual Time Trial (ITT). Why start the season with the Individual Time Trial (ITT)?

- Fair & Consistent Category Placement
- Safe Experience
- Inclusive Environment

Race #1 Sunday, August 23 Frisco Invitational Time trail format for freshman only, all others race mass start

cross-country

Race #2 Saturday, September 7 Eagle Haymaker Classic

Race #3 Sunday, September 20, Leadville Cloud City Challenge

Race #4 Saturday, October 5, Cañon City

Race #5 October 18-19, STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS CMC Spring Valley campus in Glenwood Springs *Rider qualification required*

*Always refer to the league website for updates to the schedule.

Optional lodging information is typically provided by the CHSCL. Each racer and family are responsible for their own transportation and lodging during race weekends (making reservations early is a good idea). Several race venues offer camping, families camp or drive up the day of the race. Race flyers are posted on the website, separately for each event by the league and have detailed information about the racecourse, lodging, timelines, etc. Included in this flyer are the times the racecourse will be open for a “pre-ride” by the races. Typically, the late afternoon/early evening prior to a race day, the course will be open for coaches and registered riders only to take an easy pre-ride on the course to be better prepared for the race, especially important for new riders.

At the Race

On race days, Coach John Leybourne is the Pit Zone Boss. He oversees the flow of the day and making sure every rider makes it to the staging area on time and ready to race. Please follow his instructions and especially report times.

Race Day Checklist:

- ✓ Jersey & bibs
- ✓ Hydration system
- ✓ Bike gloves & sunglasses
- ✓ Helmet (strap fastened!)
- ✓ Energy blocks or gels (no caffeine)
- ✓ Race plate
- ✓ Tools/spare tube

Important Details:

Safety: Any person whether racer, parent, sibling, or grandma putting a leg over a bike at a race venue must have on a helmet with a clipped strap. Failure to do so can result in team penalties by referees.

- **Prepare:** Eat well (no caffeine), sleep well, and hydrate. Bring all the things you might possibly need (i.e. Jersey, bibs, baggies, socks, shoes, sunglasses, helmet, bike gloves, race plate, tool kit, hydration system including an extra bottle, spare tire or tube, arm warmers or fitted shirt for layering, mask or buff, extra dry clothes.) Take good care of your bike. Keep it tuned and race ready; if you don't know how, ask the coaches or other experienced riders.
- **Mechanical Issues:** Neutral Support mechanics are provided at each race by the league. Important to note however, mechanics at races are not there to tune your bike or accommodate shop-type repairs. The volunteer mechanic's job is to do emergency fixes, so kids do not miss their race. Rider's bikes should be in a high state of tune on race day. Make sure the rider understands the rules and potential penalties of getting support during the race. The team can also provide mechanical support if needed.

- **Warm up:** Team pre-rides will be the day before a race. Try to make the pre-rides, it will help you get familiar with the racecourse. Times will be announced on TeamApp. Ask experienced riders questions. Ask your coaches questions. The day of the race, the coaches will provide each of the group's directions on how to best warm-up, but it is up to each rider to make sure they are ready to race.
- **Race Staging:** Each group (Varsity, JV, Fresh, Soph, both Boys and Girls, will race at different times and in different waves to spread the riders out along the course.) The race announcers are good about announcing times to get staged for the start of each race. Do not stress, listen to their instructions, they will get you into the right place. Returning racers will be staged based on their ranking from the previous season. For new racers, you are staged based on your race plate number (by random draw each season.) You will ride with the same #/race plate all season.
- **During the Race:** Drink water while racing, each rider is required to have at least half a bottle of water with them during the race. Use gels or blocks for energy (but remember you can't have caffeine and you shouldn't leave any trash behind on the racecourse.) Support the other riders on your team. Show good sportsmanship to riders from other teams. Remember the rules and etiquette for mountain bike racing. Ride hard. Have fun.
- **After the Race:** High five your teammates, hug your parents, immediately eat some protein and other snacks from the Pit Zone and then relax before heading back out to the course to cheer on whoever is racing next. Make sure to get your race results printout after you race. Wait until the race is complete so you can get your actual standings in the race, especially when there are multiple waves. Show good sportsmanship to riders from other teams. Limit cell phone use in the PitZone (only as needed for parent communications) Eat and drink for recovery in the team pit zone. Clean up your bike, if needed. Help cleanup and break down the pit zone, load the team trailer, and remove any trash, according to instructions from the race venue.

What parents and families need to know:

Safety: Any person whether racer, parent, sibling, or grandma putting a leg over a bike at a race venue must have on a helmet with a clipped strap. Failure to do so can result in team penalties by referees.

At each race venue, the Team is assigned an area near the racecourse to set up the "Pit Zone" - this is where the team trailer will be parked, the bike mechanics station set up, feeding and hydrating stations available for the riders and a place for team families to hang out between the races. Come ready for changes in weather and quite a bit of walking. Bring portable chairs, water, snacks, and sunscreen. Supporting and cheering for all the riders is highly encouraged. Make some noise with your cowbells. Encourage your rider with their race preparation and routine. Parents may be required to volunteer at the race. Sign up to volunteer through the emails sent by CHSCL. Parents cannot be in the racer staging area. You can be anywhere along the course, at the start or at the finish line to cheer on your racer. Talk to other parents about good places to view and take photos of the race. Ask any experienced rider parent for tips, they would be happy to help.

Earning a Letter

Activity letters will be available beginning this year. The lettering criteria is pending approval from the GSHS Athletic Director, an announcement will be made prior to the season start.

[Dirt Demons' letter policy](#)

Fundraising Efforts that Benefit the Dirt Demon Mountain Bike Team

Fundraising for high school activities and sports has become a critical component for the success of any high

school team and/or athletic program. We continue to be open to suggestions for low effort/high yield fundraisers. The Team needs your ideas, effort, and energy. Feel free to propose an idea and a plan.

Sponsorships

Sponsors are organizations or individuals that donate funds directly to the Team in return for the right to advertise during the activity or event via an agreed upon medium (i.e. logo on the jersey or banner in the team pit zone). Parents are encouraged to help cultivate sponsorships from organizations or individuals that align with the sport of mountain biking and/or the team's philosophy