



# THE PONY EXPRESS

## All-state champs



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY CHRIS LEMME  
Senior Rowan Malmberg pedals along the designated race trail. The team participated in a series of eight races this season.

### Season results

#### Rowan Malmberg ('22)

- Fourth at Lake Rebecca
- Eighth at Whitetail
- Tenth at Redhead

#### John Kubiak ('23)

- 13th at Lake Rebecca
- Fifth at Whitetail
- Third at Redhead
- Fifth at Whitetail two

#### Vincent Ramirez ('22)

- Second at Lake Rebecca
- Ninth at Whitetail
- Second at Redhead
- Second at Whitetail two

#### Jack Ralston ('24)

- Fourth at Lake Rebecca
- Fourth at Whitetail
- Third at Redhead
- Third at Whitetail two

## Mountain biking team competes at Mount Kato

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The mountain biking season closes out with a bang as racers head to the all-state race at Mount Kato, Oct. 30-31. With top finishers in all 6-12th grade divisions, the team is ready to compete in their last race of the season.

Even though a typical mountain bike race is split up into multiple divisions, the racers act as a team and support everyone across the rankings. This race is very similar to others, but the team is competing to be in the final top spot in the state.

"What's really cool about mountain biking is that everyone gets a chance to race even if you're not the fastest or you're new to the team," junior John Kubiak said. "You can still get an opportunity to race and represent your team."

The team is a co-ed riding program for all middle and high school students in the 834 district. The divisions and number of laps are determined by age and ability.

Coach Dan Ralston said the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth-grade boys and girls all race on Oct. 30. The middle schoolers ride one lap, and the freshmen ride two laps. The JV2s ride two laps, and JV3s ride a three-lap race. Varsity races four laps.

To prepare for the upcoming race, riders do intense practices to work on hill climbing, speed, recovery, and technical biking. For example, the forthcoming state race has 400 feet of hill climbing in each lap. To prepare for something like this, the team rides their bikes up beside a downhill ski run.

"We do a lot of training. We train from Tuesday to Thursday every week and it's usually really intense training, especially before a big race like this," senior captain Rowan Malmberg said. "It's not just physical training, it's being social with your teammates and getting that mental readiness."

Even though the team has around 150 riders, the captains can communicate with other team members about issues or requests.

"The captain's dynamic is like a middle ground for the riders and then the coaches. We can help the coaches and like the board members provide things that the kids are looking for," Malmberg explained. "We get that input and then actually make it happen for the team. We play a big role as students but then also administrators."

Upper class racers also plan to continue mountain biking after high school. Many racers have come to really love the sport, and find it a great way to stay active.

The mountain biking team interests Kubiak, and is something

that he thinks is really cool. He is "definitely going to continue after high school. Something I've learned on my team is how to balance sports, school, and friendships. I found that when I exercise I sleep better, and my routine overall is way better."

"My favorite thing about it is watching new riders experience something for the first time," Ralston

explained. "Whether it be the first time they get done with a race, or whether it be the first time they go through the rock garden at Valley View which is a challenging accomplishment or do something different. So kind of the first time that new riders or old riders do something, the first time they win a race or do something crazy fun like that."



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY CHRIS LEMME  
Junior Lizzie Smitten coasts down the race course. Smitten placed 11th in her division this season.