

Howdy Folks!

We are ten days into our official season, and there are enough moving parts right now to where we thought an update might be useful to Riders, Parents, and the greater [Drake MTB](#) community.

Riders and Parents, make sure you check your email and texts

If you are not getting emails and/or texts from us regarding last-minute schedule changes (like the time trial cancellation yesterday) please let DrakeMTBCoaches@gmail.com know. We try to keep the list up to date, but it is only effective if parents AND riders make an effort to at least scan the email and texts that come your way. Riders, we know email is old-school, but we also know that you can set your phones up to see your emails fairly easily... maybe Otis and I could figure out a way to run the team on SnapChat... (we would look silly with dog ears and rainbow tongues... but we could use some hair!)

Trail Permits, Access and Advocacy

Thursday night last week seven of the Marin high school coaches (including Otis and Rob) met with the head rangers of the Marin Municipal Water District and Marin Open Space for the annual Norcal permitting process. I bet you did not know that just to practice on fire roads we need permits from two to four local agencies! (MMWD, MOS, GGNRA and China Camp). Having more than 15 simultaneous users requires permits for *any* group, and this is part of what your dues pay for. Vanessa at Norcal has held this face-to-face meeting every year for the past eight years, and getting in the same room and talking through the issues with those who control the permitting process is much better than adversarial thinking... many of the rangers are natives to Marin and also bikers. Please be VERY aware that these team-use permits have to be renewed annually, and a surplus of negative mountain biker incidents reported to the rangers (or observed by them) can delay or even prevent permitting for following years. I would really love to see Serafina ride for the team, so having and following our team rules (which match NICA rules which match MMWD/MOS/GGNRA/China Camp rules) is pretty important to her, especially since she just started walking 😊



Dues and Piggybackr

Dues – we still have less than half of our riders who have [paid dues](#). If paying dues is a problem, please see [scholarship form](#). At some point, we simply cannot train or race as a team if dues are not paid.

Piggybacker – We are at 61% of our target: 18 riders have met their target, 26 riders are on their way, but we still have 12 riders who have not even set up a page and emailed folks ☹️

When will the Team ride again?

As soon as weather allows, for the rides that we need to do! The [time trial](#) on Loma Alta takes its own special one-day permit, and we can only use it if the conditions allow, so we need to be extra sensitive to weather when using that trail. We still have 20 kids who need to record a time on this [segment](#), and we will do that as soon as school schedule and weather allows. We still need to do the Forming Ride, where we gather at Deer Park and look over your bikes and do some nice team-building skills exercises in the field there (again, very weather dependent). Once we get the time trial and forming rides complete, plus get those pesky [dues](#) paid, then we can ride as a team worry a LOT less about the impact of weather on our rides.



Eldridge from this morning, and SF showing a little Cloud of its own

What have the coaches and Ride Leaders been up to?

This weekend many of our coaches and ride leaders spent more [time listening to other people talk about mountain biking](#) than he spent on a bike... maybe a first for all of us! Our coaches and ride leaders are working hard on getting through the [mandatory certifications](#) for participating as regular adults on team rides. Why all the training and certification? Mountain biking is a sport with inherent risk, so we work very hard to minimize that which is under our control to keep Riders as safe and happy as possible. Please note that we ask every adult who rides regularly with the team, even parents, to do the [background check](#) and the [concussion training](#)... kids are going to look up to you as leaders on the trail, so let us be ready for that.

The assistant coaches (Rob too) are all going through [mountain bike skills training](#) so that we can approach teaching new riders key skills with good ideas, tools, and mindsets. Look for some skills training rides put on by your assistant coaches in the near future! Mandatory for new riders, optional for returning riders.



today

Coach Greg Murphy, learning to teach, earlier

What routes will we ride this year?

We are still working on that, and will probably not have a specific schedule until early January. In the meantime, here is a list of many of the routes we have used in the past:

- <https://www.strava.com/routes/7175401> - Windy Ridge
- <https://www.strava.com/routes/7175417> - Loma Alta
- <https://www.strava.com/routes/3978508> - Fish Els
- <https://www.strava.com/routes/7175405> - Eldridge Rocky Ridge Bon Tempe
- <https://www.strava.com/routes/3978471> - Coastal
- <https://www.strava.com/routes/3978545> - Big Rock
- <https://www.strava.com/routes/3978488> - Porcu-Pine Mountain
- <https://www.strava.com/routes/7175410> - Tamarancho Loop (clockwise)
- <https://www.strava.com/routes/4500426> - Bolinas Ridge Jewell option
- <https://www.strava.com/routes/4500396> - Bolinas Ridge Shafter option
- <https://www.strava.com/routes/3978521> - Queenstone
- <https://www.strava.com/routes/3978535> - Pine Mountain SGR Whitehill

PLEASE feel free to make and suggest new routes via the Segment Builder on Strava. Matt McKinzie from Strava should be coming to our kickoff dinner in early February, so I will get some t-shirts from him for the ten best route suggestions for the team (not just minor variations on the routes above).

Be sure to thank your Director Lynn Valdivia, who keeps the parts moving, and Phil Nicol, who makes sure we keep our financial assets in order. Also Alexis and Margot who keep the Parents' activities in full swing, and the assistant coaches and ride leaders who are digging in and getting ready to go!

-Otis and Rob

