



The Georgia High School Cycling League
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Habersham Mountain Biking second in state championships

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The Habersham Central High School (HCHS) Raiders mountain biking team placed second place in the Georgia High School Mountain Bike State Championships Saturday at the University of North Georgia – Gainesville campus.

HCHS secured its place as 2014 State Team Champions, and came into the race in third place. The Raiders were able to push past Fannin County in points to finish second place. The Hall County Prima Tappa Team earned the state championship.

The Hall County team is a composite team made up of cyclists from several schools in the area. HCHS is one of a handful of high school teams and not a composite team.

In just the second year of competition, HCHS has been very competitive. Head Coach Kim Cantrell credits this to his talented riders.

“We have two very accomplished riders that race outside of the High School Mountain Bike League, senior Dylan Cantrell and junior Kate Holbrook,” Kim Cantrell said. “Dylan competed in road races all summer, traveling to California in June for the USA Road Nationals and then to Canada in July for the Tour de L’Abitibi. Kate competed in numerous triathlons this summer on the national level and also competed in numerous USA Cycling road races this spring and summer.”

Holbrook finished fourth in the varsity girls’ division. Scarlett Mayes finished in third place and Mary McCay finished in fifth place, both for the JV girls.

Kim Cantrell said seniors McCay and Mayes have both grown as cyclists. The two competed in the JV category and finished most all of their races in the top five.

“We have been blessed with riders that are dedicated and give 100 percent when they ride,” Kim Cantrell said.

HCHS would have had a better shot of keeping its state championship title had it not been for its first race of the year at the International Horse Park in Conyers.

Holbrook was involved in an accident on the first lap of the race that left her with a concussion. She was unable to finish the race.

Dylan Cantrell suffered a flat tire and was assessed a time penalty after accepting outside assistance for repairs. This caused him to place fifth in his race and left HCHS with a tall mountain to climb all year.

Two riders who are also band members, senior Brooke Cantrell and sophomore Micah Brown, were unable to participate due to a competitive band competition in Statesboro.

But Kim Cantrell is excited about the growth of the young program. This year was the first year the team had middle-schoolers. “We have been so excited this year to have added the middle school to the Mountain Bike League,” Kim Cantrell said. “We actually have two middle school riders that raced in the advanced category, Samuel Anderson and Devon Watts.”

HCHS will have to replace Dylan Cantrell, but plans on staying competitive.

“Looking to next year, we are expecting great things again from Kate Holbrook, Kirsten Brown and Mayson Nichols,” Kim Cantrell said. “Other new riders in 2015 were Cody Weyrich, Jonah Cantrell and Avery Garrett, along with middle school boys Samuel Anderson and Devon Watts.”



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Caption: Habersham Central High School's Dylan Cantrell prepares to start in the Georgia High School Mountain Bike State Championships. Cantrell placed second for the varsity boys.

WILL HESS/Staff