



SPC MTB Handbook 2026



Welcome to SPC MTB.

The SPC MTB team competes in cross-country, enduro and downhill races at Auckland region, North Island and national levels.

We aim to provide a safe, supportive, and fun environment to assist your son(s) in their cycling sport, and to support them regardless of their ambitions.

Team Manager

If you have any questions about Mountain Biking, please contact Neil Sheldon, on neil.sheldon05@gmail.com

Team communication

The **SPC MTB** team uses WhatsApp for communication. You will be added to the group once you have completed a registration form for your son.

Safety

The safety of our riders is our number one priority.

Unlike other sports that are contained within a defined field of play, training and races are often done on challenging mountain bike trails. As such, we do everything we can to ensure the safety of our riders.

SPC Mountain Biking Muster

The SPC MTB muster is held at the start of the school year. It is intended to enable all new riders to meet some of the existing team riders. At the muster, parent coaches and parents of existing team riders will be available to provide information on the club, training, and events.

The 2025 MTB muster will be held at **Woodhill MTB Park on Sunday 16 March.**

Parent participation

One of the great things about cycling is that, as parents, we can train with the

boys. Not only does this help our health and fitness, but it also gives us the chance to share something with our sons.

Parent participation also helps us manage group rides as some of the younger riders have not developed the trail sense required, so having shepherds and tail-end Charlies always helps!

We would not be able to hold training sessions without parent participation so if you are able to – then please come along.

Fees

The school charges minimal fees for mountain biking. These are listed on the Cycling Sports page and will be charged to the school portal. There are additional fees for competition entries.

Fundraising

Fundraising is carried out throughout the year to ensure that we have the funds to be able to subsidize equipment, tents and activities as required. We encourage as many parents as possible to assist in this regard.

If you are interested in helping with fundraising or have access to materials or services that could enable fundraising, then please let your team manager know.

We try to host a MTB event each year (BBQ) which allows the club a more significant fundraising opportunity.

Mountain Bike Training

The MTB team usually trains every Sunday morning during term times. The majority of training rides are held at Woodhill – although we do vary the location depending on upcoming races at other locations. Other locations may include Riverhead, Hunua, Waitawa, and Totara Park.

Training times and locations will be confirmed in the WhatsApp group.

We separate the boys into groups based on fitness and speed so that we can cover a range of abilities. Parent riders are crucial to making this possible. If you can ride, then please let us know so we can plan training sessions.

While these sessions are great support for the riders, we actively encourage you and your son to do training outside of this if time allows. The boys' performances will be directly proportional to the amount of training they do.

An important feature of training rides and racing is that each boy must take responsibility for themselves, their equipment and their bike. They need to carry spares to cover for any issues on the trail, the minimum being a spare tube, tyre levers, pump and speed link (for broken chains). It is important that the boy and their parents learn how to do basic maintenance, such as changing tubes in the

event of a flat tyre.

It is also important to maintain your bike between rides. This includes cleaning the bike, cleaning and lubricating the drive train (chain and derailleurs), checking for wear and tear on cables, tuning gears and checking for loose bolts and suspensions.

Mountain Bikes

For Mountain Biking it is important to ensure the bike is the correct type and size for the rider. This will enable comfort, control and speed.

Hardtail or full suspension types

Riders can participate in competitions on either a hardtail or full suspension.

Most school mountain bike competitions are classified as cross country (XCO). As such, a hardtail (i.e. front suspension only) is all that is required to participate. This is a great bike to get started with as it is lighter than most full suspension bikes.

You do not need a full suspension to compete – however full suspension bikes are able to be used for all competitions.

If you are new to the sport and thinking about purchasing a bike, we recommend having a discussion with the team manager before you commit.

Bike sizes

Bikes come in a variety of frame and wheel sizes, so making the correct choice can be a little daunting.

Frame sizes generally range from extra small (XS) to large. It is very important to try a bike before purchasing to make sure it is the right size for your son. Bike retailers have handy guides on their sites to help you understand what the right size for your son is.

Wheel sizes for Mountain Biking are typically 27.5" or 29". Given the nature of the racing the boys will be involved in, it is best to avoid any wheel size smaller than 27.5".

Frames

Aluminium is the most robust, lightweight frame material available and the most cost effective. Carbon fibre is becoming far more common, is far lighter but has a higher price point and harder to repair if it is damaged. For a starter rider, aluminium is likely the best option if buying second hand, as they are usually much cheaper and less likely to have been damaged previously.

Brakes

Disc brakes are standard kit on most mountain bikes and these are highly recommended.

Pedals

School riders can ride either clipless pedals (SPD) or flats in mountain biking.

Clipless pedals require specific shoes and allow the rider to be more securely 'clipped' into pedals (they are called clipless or SPD pedals and shoes to differentiate them from the toe clips that you used to find on bikes).

They can take some getting used to, but the benefits in terms of comfort and control are worth it. MTB clipless pedals have a different set up to road pedals (i.e.: clips on both sides of the pedals, greater degree of float, more robust soles on the shoes). You will need specific mountain bike clip pedals – it is not recommended to use road cycling clips.

If you are riding flats (standard shoes), we recommend ensuring that the pedals and shoes have appropriate grip for riding in muddy conditions. Flat pedals with pins are ideal.

Equipment

Recommended equipment for Mountain Biking.

Helmets

These are non-negotiable for all forms of cycling. Whenever a boy is on a bicycle, whether casually riding around or racing, they must wear a helmet.

If you are buying a new helmet for your son, it is also recommended that you purchase a helmet that is MIPS approved, as the technology in these helmets is superior. A few extra dollars is well worth it for your son's skull and brain!



Uniforms

There is an approved MTB specific riding jersey available from the school sports office.

Gloves

These are recommended for comfort and for safety on the trails. Good quality full-fingered gloves make riding on cold mornings so much more comfortable. There is also a safety implication, as frozen fingers are not that good for braking or changing gears.

Shorts

When buying cycling shorts for MTB, it is recommended to invest in shorts with chamois padding or chamois inserts for shorts. This eases discomfort on the more sensitive areas of a boy's anatomy, especially on longer rides.

Water and nutrition

All riders should have a water bottle (they can carry on their bike) or a hydration backpack to ensure they keep hydrated for training and competition.

For training rides, we recommend energy bars, bananas and other snacks to keep energy levels up.

Tools and spares

New parents do not need to invest in extensive equipment for racing. There will be a full tool kit available at all events should these be required.

A minimum that each cyclist needs for training and racing will be spare tubes, tyre levers and a pump. It is also recommended to also carry a multi-tool and a speed link (temporary replacement chain link). If you are a parent rider accompanying their son, then only one set of equipment is required.

Mountain Biking Events

Auckland Schools MTB series

[Auckland Schools MTB series](#) holds 5 races during the year - with the first race usually starting in March.

The races are usually held at Riverhead, Hunua, Waitawa, Totara Park and Woodhill. The dates of these events are timed not to overlap with other cycling events.

The Event calendar will be provided early in the season and individual race details are provided prior to each event. The races are typically held on a Sunday morning.



North Island Schools MTB Championships

In 2025, the North Island MTB Championships will be held in Tauranga from 11 - 15 April, and include XC, Relay, Enduro, and Downhill racing. Details will be available on WhatsApp.

National MTB Championship

This event is held from 29 September to 2 October 2025 in Nelson. As with the North Island champs, the Nationals are a multi-discipline event (cross country, enduro, and downhill). Details will be available on WhatsApp.

Other competitions

There are a number of competitions that are not affiliated with College Sports that students can compete in during the year. These include the:

- Whaka 25 / 50 /100 / October
- 2W Gravity Enduro series
- 440 Enduro
- WCRC Enduro

Competition details will be shared on WhatsApp.