

## GRiT is Changing the Face of Mountain Biking, One Camp and Ride at a Time

On July 11, over 85 female athletes and coaches gathered in Truckee, California for a memorable weekend of mountain biking as part of the second annual NorCal x Nevada North Interscholastic Cycling League GRiT Camp. “It’s a party!” said Emilia, a 7th grader from St. Helena. “I love being part of GRiT and NICA because I am able to meet new riders and work on my skills.”



For three days and two nights, athletes and coaches camped beneath a peaceful canopy of pine and fir trees in Tahoe Donner making new friends, exploring new trails, and learning new skills. GRiT (Girls Riding Together) brought athletes from over 20 different NICA teams in Northern California and Northern Nevada to camp. “Riding mountain bikes challenges me to get out of my comfort zone,” said Gracie, a freshman from South County Composite. “It’s a mental and





physical challenge that has helped build my confidence.”

Throughout the camp, athletes and coaches were split into various groups to practice skills while covering over 100 miles of Truckee’s trails. Led by coaches from all over the two leagues, athletes climbed to the top of Hawk’s Peak in Tahoe Donner, adventured down the infamous Emigrant Trail to Prosser Reservoir, and pushed their limits for a backcountry expedition out to Frog Lake.



Many of the coaches were former NorCal League or Nevada North League athletes, including Carina, from San Ramon MTB, who was also the camp botanist. “GRIT means togetherness through hardship and encouraging each other and being there for each other,” Carina said. “And trying things that are hard for you, even if they’re not hard for other people. Being encouraging all the way through that.”

While exploring Truckee’s unique biodiversity, high school athletes practiced



cornering skills by learning the Low, Look, Lean Dance, which they put to use on Tahoe Donner's new flow trails. Middle school groups sessioned rock gardens before playing games and catching frogs that were keeping cool in the snow-melt filled Prosser Reservoir.

Upon returning to camp, athletes and coaches were treated to delicious food expertly prepared by Chef Ann from Nevada North League and Chef Terry from the NorCal League. Riding over 1,000 cumulative miles of mountainous and challenging trails, athletes fueled themselves with pancakes, tacos, spaghetti, and an array of tasty snacks. Local Truckee bike shop, Pacos, supported the camp by sending out expert mechanic Kol to teach a bike maintenance clinic, which was followed by a team "fix-a-flat" session.



By the end of camp, no one was a stranger. "I love being part of GRiT because of the supportive community whether it's a coach, a teammate, a parent, an opponent, or a stranger," said Camille, a sophomore at Middletown High. Having spent all weekend hootin' and hollerin' down descents, cheering each other up the long climbs, and dancing the night away (until 10 pm) at the Taylor Swift Glow Party, the bonds between all the athletes and coaches were strong by the end of camp. This was definitely a GRiT Camp to remember and a

reminder of how transformative experiences can be when we support each other by embracing new challenges in the outdoors.

Through the GRiT Program, the NorCal League and the Nevada North League are empowering more girls and female coaches through mountain biking. The welcoming and inclusive environment, that is core to the GRiT mission, offers teen girls in Northern California and Northern Nevada to chance to build confidence and have fun while doing so.

Thank you to all the coaches and athletes who made this camp possible! We cannot wait for 2025 and the next GRiT Camp! While dates are still being finalized, be on the lookout for information and follow [@norcalgrit](#) and [@nevadamtb](#) on Instagram to stay up to date!



