



# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **IT'S A SWEEP - SLSMTB SECURES FOUR PODIUM FINISHES IN EXHILARATING HS MTB RACE**

[Wausau, WI, September 16, 2019] - As athletes approached the starting line, the feeling of focus, adrenaline, and excitement was palpable. Nearly half the starting line was filled with high school athletes from SLSMTB (Southeastern Lakes Scholastic Mountain Bike Association) with additional team members close behind. Their coaching instructions were clear; ride smart, go fast, have fun....and work together until the last stretch. FIVE, FOUR, THREE, TWO, ONE.....GOOOOOOOO!!!!

The blast of air as the riders sprinted off the line in the Division 2 JV3 race clearly indicated a force to be reckoned with. That force proved to be unstoppable, as points leader, Connor Buchanan wearing the white leader jersey (Lakeview Tech HS), Nathan Gowe (Warren Township HS), Rider Rainer (Burlington HS), and Alex Martin (Indian Trail HS) quickly pulled away and took control of the race from the start. These four boys in the lead negotiated a course full of challenging climbs, singletrack with rocks, roots, downhill berms, and slippery double-track conditions. For nearly twenty miles of challenging off road conditions, these boys held their pace and delivered a nail-biting finish that required official review to confirm race results as they crossed the line within two seconds of each other and a generous minute in front of the next athlete. They say football is a game of inches, but these riders clearly demonstrated that couldn't be more true in mountain bike racing. Nathan Gowe secured the top spot on the podium as he crossed the line just inches ahead of Connor Buchanan as they registered the exact same finish time of 1:27:56.87. "Nathan is new to the sport this season but has demonstrated natural talent for mountain biking from the beginning. He will continue to be tough competition in the JV3 field," said head coach Dave Bender. Connor Buchanan retains the white leader jersey with the highest accumulated points for the season. Rider Rainer and Alex Martin joined the two leaders on the podium beaming with excitement, pride, and a sense of accomplishment.

Don't be mistaken, mountain biking isn't just for boys. Nope - it's an all inclusive sport that offers opportunity for anyone that wants to get involved. Two female high school athletes on SLSMTB teams proved their tenacity and grit on this challenging course as well. The girls' races are just as competitive and impressive and both female athletes improved their standing over last week. Paula Urban (11th grade, Grayslake Central HS) battled her way to second place as she settled into a rhythm just behind the leader during the JV3 girls race. Samantha Brooks (10th grade, Wilmot HS) cinched third place in the JV2 race by giving it her all in the final double track and pulled a sizable lead over the fourth place finisher.

This sport is not just the leisurely bike ride that comes to mind as kids pedal from one house to another or through an empty field of grass. No, this riding is more than just pedaling. Cross country mountain bike racing challenges almost every inch of your body and mind. Sixty three middle school and high school athletes from Racine & Kenosha counties and Northern Illinois have found their niche in the dirt and the woods by practicing and competing under Head Coach Dave Bender on the SLSMTB team.

Eight athletes from SLSMTB celebrated podium wins this weekend. The team focuses on NICA's core mission of "getting more kids on bikes" while building strong minds, bodies, character, and communities through cycling. Two middle school athletes from SLSMTB joined their high school counterparts on the podium this weekend. Jon Olenick (7th grade, Trevor-Wilmot Consolidated) and Jack Bozych (6th grade, The Brompton School) pulled out the determination and pedal power in their fields. Jon Olenick maintained his position in the front of the seventh grade wave to defend his fourth place finish among 88 riders. Jack Bozych inched his way up from a 7th place starting position to procure a 3rd place finish.

Nathan Gowe	10th grade	Warren Township High School	D2 JV3	3 laps	1:27:56.87	1st place
Connor Buchanan	10th grade	Lakeview Tech	D2 JV3	3 laps	1:27:56.87	2nd place
Rider Rainer	12th grade	Burlington High School	D2 JV3	3 laps	1:27:57.45	3rd place
Alex Martin	10th grade	Indian Trail High School	D2 JV3	3 laps	1:27:57.49	4th place
Paula Urban	11th grade	Grayslake Central High School	JV3 Girls	3 laps	1:41:28.87	2nd place
Samantha Brooks	10th grade	Wilmot High School	JV2 Girls	2 laps	1:09:42.48	3rd place
Jon Olenick	7th grade	Trevor-Wilmot Consolidated Grade School	MS 7th grade boys	1 lap	34:58.38	4th place
Jack Bozych	6th grade	The Brompton School	MS 6th grade boys	1 lap	37:58.17	3rd place

Complete race results can be found at <http://www.wisconsinmtb.org/race-2-nine-mile-race-results/>

The next race will be on September 29, 2019 at Nordic Mountain in Mt. Morris, WI.

NICA, the National Interscholastic Cycling Association has been committed to developing interscholastic mountain biking programs across the United States since 2009. There are currently 26 states with active leagues throughout the United States. The momentum and interest in the sport is undeniable, as teams continue forming and growing throughout the United States.

Southeastern Lakes Scholastic Mountain Bike Assoc.  
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