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Purgatory Resort and Fort Lewis College Host the 2021 USA Cycling Collegiate Mountain Bike National Championships

Purgatory Resort will see student-athletes from all over the country compete for the stars-and-stripes and for the coveted overall collegiate omnium

DURANGO, CO — (Oct. 5, 2021) — The top collegiate athletes from around the country will head to Durango's Purgatory Resort for the 2021 USA Cycling Collegiate Mountain Bike National Championships October 14-17. Student-athletes will have the opportunity to compete on the 1990 UCI Mountain Bike World Championships course.

"Purgatory is excited to welcome the USA Cycling Collegiate Mountain Bike National Championships back to Durango," said Dave Rathbun, general manager for Purgatory Resort. "We are fortunate to have some of the best riding in North America to attract one of America's premier cycling events to Purgatory. We look forward to bringing more events like this to the Durango area."

The Fort Lewis College cycling team will be searching for its 25th team overall title up at Purgatory but will have stiff competition from Colorado Mesa University, Marian University from Indiana, Brevard College from North Carolina and Lees-McRae College from North Carolina.

Dave Hagen, director of cycling operations at Fort Lewis College and the technical director for the event, believes it will be an action-packed weekend for the collegiate athletes.

"Racers will be riding on spruced-up versions of legendary courses up at Purgatory," Hagen said. "The Cross-Country course is almost identical to the one from the 1990 UCI Mountain Bike World Championships and the World Cup Downhill from 2001 has been modernized – both the courses will be very challenging as the National Championship course should be. The entire Short Track, Cross-Country, and Dual Slalom courses will be visible from the base area and will make for some great action."

Racing begins on Thursday, October 14 starting with the Dual Slalom qualifiers. Friday will be a full day of action with early Cross-Country racing followed by Dual Slalom finals. Downhill seedings and Short Track will take place on Saturday, and the weekend will conclude with Sunday's Downhill finals and the ultimate collegiate omnium decider, the Team Relay. The Dual Slalom events on Thursday and Friday will be right at the base area—perfect for spectators—as will the Short Track on Saturday and the Team Relay on Sunday.

"We are excited to bring collegiate athletes from all over the country to see what is so special about Durango, Purgatory, and the community we have. They are going to be blown away with how many fans will be there cheering them on," Hagen said. "The Friday Cross-Country race is on the 1990 Mountain

Bike World Championship course that local legend Ned Overend won. It is 5.2 miles in length and climbs 1,100 feet per lap. The Sunday Downhill is on the venerable 2001 World Cup course that is still revered in the gravity world for being steep and rowdy. The main race venue at Purgatory will have great spectating opportunities with the majority of the action happening in the base area.”

“USA Cycling is excited to host Collegiate Mountain Bike Nationals in historic Durango, Colo. After two previous attempts were canceled, 2019 due to forest fires and 2020 because of COVID, we are excited that the third time will be the charm! Durango will host the best collegiate mountain bike athletes and we are set for a fantastic few days of racing,” said Justin Evans, USA Cycling’s Collegiate and Youth Programs manager.

FLC cycling has had a great conference season so far, using those results to determine its top six female and male riders across the four disciplines to represent the Skyhawks. Female Downhill rider Fiona Dougherty has been on fire for the Skyhawks so far this conference season and she’ll have strong backup with McKenna Merten, Kaia Jensen, and Barb Edwards. Will Farmer and Cole Fiene have won Downhill races this year for the Skyhawks and they have a slew of teammates that can also be on the podium at Nationals. Male Cross-Country racers Guy Leshem and Durango local Cobe Freeburn will anchor the strong men’s Cross-Country team with young riders Toby Hassett, Nate Colavolpe, and Kellen Caldwell, who have also been consistently on the podium this fall. Micheala Thompson has been the Skyhawks top female Cross-Country racer with Madelyn Roberson, Natalie Quinn, and Durango local Ruth Holcomb coming into great form leading up to Nationals. (see Roster below.)

“It’s really exciting to race at home,” Holcomb said. “Durango has always been supportive of the sport and to be on a home course with home fans is super special. The course has a lot of history and it’s one of the hardest courses we’ll race this season. It has a super steep climb and feels like a level up from the other courses we’ve been on this fall. I’ve never had a team to compete with for an omnium; I’m just so excited to be racing for this team and I think we have a great shot at the omnium.”

Volunteers are needed at Purgatory Resort Tuesday through Sunday for set up and tear down, course marshalling, parking, and more. Register for shifts [online](#).

Follow @USACycling and the event hashtag #CollNats for updates.

About Purgatory

Purgatory is tucked away between Durango and Silverton along the San Juan Skyway, on the southern edge of the San Juan Mountains. Purgatory’s biking roots run deep, from hosting the first-ever World Mountain Bike Championships World Cup in 1990 to an ever-expanding Bike Park with the Durango area’s only lift-served mountain bike park and gravity flow trail. Purgatory’s Bike Park features podium-quality terrain for all abilities and serves as the gateway to over 400 miles of high alpine singletrack and backcountry trails. One of Colorado’s most family friendly ski resorts, Purgatory features 1,605 acres of steep tree skiing and wide-open cruisers; plus year-round family friendly activities, lodging, retail, restaurants, bars, and signature events. Visit [Purgatory.ski](https://www.purgatory.ski).

Roster

Dual Slalom and Downhill

| Women | Men |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Fiona Dougherty (Junior) | William Farmer (Senior) |
| Barb Edwards (Senior) | Cole Fiene (Senior) |
| Kelsey Ent (First-year) | Shane Ellis (Senior) |
| Samantha Fanion (Senior) | Daniel Johnson (First-year) |
| Kaia Jensen (Sophomore) | Ethan Wright (Sophomore) |
| McKenna Merten (Sophomore) | Luke Villars (Sophomore) |
| Alternate: Callie Lamb (First-year) | Alternate: Keanu Smith (Senior) |

Cross-country and Cross-country Short Track

| Women | Men |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Michaela Thompson (Sophomore) | Kellen Caldwell (First-year) |
| Madelyn Roberson (Sophomore) | Nathan Colavolpe (Sophomore) |
| Ruth Holcomb (First-year) | Samuel Brown (Senior) |
| Natalie Quinn (First-year) | Cobe Freeburn (Sophomore) |
| Olivia Gordon (Sophomore) | Toby Hasset (First-year) |
| Aleah Austin (First-year) | Guy Leshem (Junior) |
| Alternate: Sabrina Hayes (First-year) | Alternate: Ethan Ash (First-year) |

Team Relay roster will be decided the week of the championships.