

Hemet High mountain bike team wins regular season championship

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Hemet High's mountain bike team won the season championship in the SoCal Interscholastic League Series, clinching it with a victory at the Cow Pie Classic on May 2 in Santa Ynez.

Hemet edged 2009 champion Newport Beach Composite, with Yucaipa High, Rim of the World High and Woodcrest Christian Cycling rounding out the top five for the day and the overall standings.

"We've been working toward this since a year ago right here, when Newport beat us," Hemet coach Peter Kirkham said in a news release. "It's been a fantastic series with the competition between us and Newport and Yucaipa and Rim and everybody else. We just happened to get it right this year. All the kids and coaches and parents have been really supportive."

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Phil Beckman / Special to The Press-Enterprise
Hemet High School's Zachary Valdez races to a victory at the Cow Pie Classic high school mountain bike race in Santa Ynez on May 2.

Zachary Valdez of Hemet High completed a four-race sweep of the varsity boys division to win the season title. Brady Kiss and Tucker Trotter of Yucaipa High finished second and third.

Defending varsity girls champion Tiana Row, an unaffiliated rider from outside the Inland Empire, won for the third time this season to retain her title.

"That first climb is really intense, with the switchbacks, but I was able to stay on my bike all three laps. The second lap was the hardest for me, but I was able to push through and give everything I had on the third lap," she said.

Row was followed by Newport Composite teammates Leila Carillo and Rachel Somerville, with Jasce Goldsmith of Hemet High fourth.

Casey Williams, an independent rider, won the junior varsity boys race and team title. Independent [Chris Johnson](#) was second and Hemet High's Brandon Kirkham was third.