

## Local Mountain Bikers Tackle Northstar's Toughest Mountain Bike Race

[HOMETOWN, STATE]—Since its humble beginnings in the hills of Northern California two decades ago, mountain biking has taken the world by storm. From college campuses and suburbs to inner city streets, these straight handlebar, fat-tired bicycles are the two-wheeled, self-propelled transportation of choice for kids, students, casual cyclists, and serious athletes. Top professional racers in the U.S. and Europe earn six figures to compete around the world. Some say the sport was born in Northern California, and today there is still a plethora of mountain bike racing in the region. On August 24th and 25th, Northstar-at-Tahoe hosts one of the largest--and most difficult--off-road bike races in the world: The 5th Annual 24 Hours of Tahoe Mountain Bike Team Relay, a unique event that pushes competitors to their mental and physical limits.

It's a 'round-the-clock relay race that starts Noon Saturday and ends Noon Sunday, with solo, duo, four- and five-person teams racing to complete the most laps. These teams will traverse some of the toughest, rockiest, steepest terrain Northstar has to offer. The faster you ride, the more laps you log. And once the sun sets, powerful handlebar and/or helmet-mounted halogen lighting systems (up to 80 watts—that's almost as powerful as the headlights on your car) are de rigeur from dusk to dawn as racers compete on the unlit 11.8-mile course.

The race sounds too crazy to be true but The 5th Annual 24 Hours of Tahoe has become legendary in just a few years—growing from less than 200 competitors (40 teams) in the Inaugural 24 Hours of Donner Pass in 1998—to more than 750 competitors (150+ teams) last year. This year's field limit of 300 teams will compete on a spectator-friendly course high in the Sierra Mountains. Coed Pro/Am teams at this year's race will be competing for a cash purse and amateur teams will be competing for prizes. And that includes Team [INSERT YOUR TEAM NAME HERE] of [YOUR HOME TOWN], a [SOLO, DUO, or FOUR/FIVE]-person team that will be racing in the event for the [FIRST, SECOND, ETC.] year. The team, led by Team Captain [INSERT CAPTAIN'S NAME HERE], will endure a course with nearly 1,500 feet of vertical climbing, sleep deprivation, broken equipment, and a kind of bone-tired weariness that comes from racing multiple laps over 24 hours.

Which raises this interesting question: Why do they do it? [INSERT YOUR TEAM CAPTAIN'S ANSWER HERE]. Other members of the team are [LIST NAMES, AGES AND HOMETOWN OF EACH RACER].

Inspired by the 24 Hours of LeMans auto race, The 24 Hours of Tahoe (and companion events, The 24 Hours of Snowshoe held in West Virginia and The 24 Hours of Moab held in Utah) will provide an exciting start as more than 150 competitors (one from each team) race on foot through part of the course before running to their bikes and completing their lap. It's a race that takes planning, an ability to race with little or no sleep, and a car full of bike parts to keep a team rolling through the afternoon, into the night and throughout the entire next morning of tough competition.

“This event is a game as much as it is a race,” says 24 Hour race promoter Laird Knight. “Strategy plays a big role in each team's final placing. Planning is crucial. Each team should have a master plan, complete with a contingency plan in case of trouble.” Each racer will complete one lap, grab a bite to eat, clean up, try to get a few hours sleep and then do it all over again. Under the Log Tent in front of The Northstar Village, a racer completing a turn on the course passes a baton to a waiting teammate who sprints out onto the circuit. [INSERT A QUOTE ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF LOGISTICS AND TEAM SUPPORT FROM A RACER OR SUPPORT CREW. MENTION THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FOLKS WHO WAKE UP THE RIDERS, FIX MEALS, OR WORK ON BIKES]

In this race a team needs a support crew and Team [YOUR TEAM NAME] is no exception. [MENTION HOW MANY SUPPORT PEOPLE THE TEAM WILL TAKE TO THE RACE, WHETHER YOU'LL BE CAMPING, STAYING IN A CONDO OR MOTEL, OR RENTING A SKI CHALET. IF THIS ISN'T THE FIRST TIME YOUR TEAM HAS RACED, GIVE YOUR PREVIOUS YEAR'S RACE RESULTS AND MAKE A PREDICTION ON HOW YOU'LL DO THIS YEAR]

The 5th Annual 24 Hours of Tahoe is one of the most unique off-road mountain bike events in the Tahoe area and one of the largest in the California, drawing up to 6,000 spectators. This renowned event attracts teams from as far away as New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia.

While more than 750 participants will be racing at The 5th Annual 24 Hours of Tahoe, friends, fans and support crews will find plenty to do during the race. It's not just one of the toughest competitions in California—it's also one of the most spectator-friendly. Spectators will be treated to a number of festivities, including a cookout in the Village and chair lift rides.

More hints on how spectators can enjoy this unique competition:

1. Don't miss the start. As the tension builds, thousands of fans start cheering in anticipation for the cannon boom at Noon;
2. Come out a day early to hike or bike sections of the course and you'll gain a greater appreciation of what racers endure at 4 a.m.;
3. Cheer for Team [INSERT YOUR TEAM'S NAME]—they'll appreciate it as they charge along on the demanding course;
4. Don't miss the finish. Often the race has been a nail biter, undecided until the final lap;
5. Be a volunteer and see the action from a front row seat. For more information, call (304)259-5533 or go to <[www.grannygear.com](http://www.grannygear.com)>.

Admission is free for spectators, but there are costs to participate. In addition to the registration fee, competitors need lodging, food, extra bike equipment and travel expenses. Many of these teams have sponsors that help out with these costs while others foot the bill themselves. [HERE'S A GOOD PLACE TO THANK YOUR SPONSORS FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND TO INSERT A "WRAP-UP" QUOTE FROM A TEAM MEMBER OR MEMBERS] The 5th Annual 24 Hours of Tahoe promises to be one of the biggest and most exciting mountain bike races of the year. This is a great way to spend the weekend with family and friends while enjoying breathtaking beauty around you. Make plans to be there. You'll be glad you did.