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# LAKE TRAVIS SPORTS

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Bentonville MTB



**MENTAL  
TOUGHNESS  
KEY TO BE A  
CHAMPION!**



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# HEY SPORTS FANS,

Every once in a while we have the opportunity to collaborate with fantastic community writers. This month, I'm excited to share our cover article written by Marty Hale. Besides being a volunteer coach for the Lake Travis Mountain Bike Team where he trains and mentors the athletes on peak performance, mental toughness, and creating winning strategies, Marty is also a motivational speaker, author, entrepreneur, and business coach. For three decades he has been sharing his success philosophy with the Fortune 500, celebrities, athletes and audiences around the world; and now he is sharing with us! He is the author of *The Trump Success System* series, *Transform*, *JumpStart Your Success* and several other personal and professional development books and programs. We know you will love his article about Samantha Campbell, and we thank him for his generous contribution!

Speaking of contributions...we are excited to announce the return of the beloved **LTEF Butterfly Brunch** (page 6.) Ladies, get your tickets now, because this event sells out FAST! In addition, the **Special Olympics Winter Games** is coming to our community for the first time in February. This is a great opportunity for the whole family to come out and show support for these amazing athletes or even volunteer to help at the event of your choice. Check out all the information on page 18.

Happy reading!



**Jamie Imber**  
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# MENTAL TOUGHNESS IS KEY TO BE A CHAMPION

BY MARTY HALE

Mountain Biking is one of the fastest growing sports in the world today. Bentonville, Arkansas, known as “The Mountain Bike Capital of the World,” has received over \$75 million investments and generates over \$150 million a year for the small town. The Lake Travis area has the perfect terrain to become a Mountain Biking Paradise and is home to some of the best riders in the state and even the USA.

Lake Travis mountain bike team member Samantha Campbell is one of the best in the country. Samantha has won multiple Texas state championships, finished in the top five in the USA, competed successfully in pro events, earned full scholarships and sponsorships, and is a Texas Devo member.

While Samantha has succeeded in other sports such as soccer, swim, and equestrian, she says, “Mountain biking is the best way to explore nature and stay fit. I like to be outside and enjoy an incredible view after a long hard climb. It makes me feel happy and free. I also love the excitement and competition at races. I meet great people, have lots of fun, and can enjoy the sport my entire life.”

It’s been said, “Families that bike together, stay together.”

Samantha began riding at age four, inspired by her parents Cheryl and Dave who are avid cyclists themselves. Cheryl began mountain biking in the early 90’s in New England before moving to Boulder, CO. She mountain biked all over Colorado as well as Moab, Utah. When Samantha began racing with the Texas Mountain Bike Race Association, or TMBRA, Cheryl was also racing in her own class. At some races all the women and girls’ classes would start together placing mom and daughter on the

same track at the same time. The mother daughter duo were putting themselves through the same disciplines at the same time. Cheryl says, “We had a lot of fun pushing and encouraging each other. In what other sport can you do that as a parent?” The two really connected through this experience.

Samantha’s father, Dave, started mountain biking while in college and soon got into ultra-endurance mountain biking. He and some friends won a 24-hour race at Rocky Hill Ranch in Smithville, Texas. He’s also competed in many classic events like Paris-Brest-Paris, a 1200- kilometer ride done straight through with minimal rest, the Colorado High Country 1200K, and many other TMBRA Marathon races. Dave is Team Campbell’s chief mechanic, trail route master, race planner, nutrition advisor, trainer, coach and photographer.

## OVERCOMING CHALLENGES:

While biking might be in Samantha’s genes, being a champion didn’t come easily.

At age 13 Samantha began racing in the TMBRA league. In her first year of racing, she was consistently finishing in the back of the pack; but she didn’t let that discourage her. She maintained a positive attitude and kept





Photo by Matt Roberts Photography

trying. She had fun with the other racers and enjoyed the atmosphere. She steadily improved throughout the season, finishing sixth overall in the series. She was happy and proud of that.

The following year as a 7th grader, Samantha became more disciplined, more determined, and was consistently finishing top three and eventually won first at the last race

of the 2018 spring season. This was a memorable win! In the final seconds of the race, Samantha was nose to nose with another rider, tunnel-visioned. She dug deep inside, tapping into her mental toughness, and launched an attack at the finish winning by milliseconds. Samantha's success continued into the fall season that year and Samantha took first place overall in that series. These wins motivated Samantha even more.

In 2019 as an 8th grader, Samantha won first place at every race of the spring season in both the TMBRA and National Interscholastic Cycling Association, NICA, leagues. She also went on to win every race in the TMBRA fall series where she advanced to Cat 2.

Samantha trained hard through the long hot summer preparing for the high school team. More determined than ever, super fit, and

so excited to be on the Lake Travis mountain bike team, Samantha faced her worst nightmare. On a brisk day in December, while enjoying a "family fun ride" at Pace Bend Park, just two days before official team practices were to start, Samantha went down on a loose corner and broke her ankle. She had to have surgery and was unable to put weight on her ankle for almost two months. Physically and mentally devastated, Samantha reached her lowest point as an MTB racer. Rather than riding her bike, she was rolling around high school on a knee scooter. Samantha would miss the first NICA race -- not the high school freshman's dream. Regret and disappointment set in.

In an effort to win this war in her mind, Samantha soon found herself tapping into the same mental toughness that helped her win her first race. She started riding the trainer bike in her garage, propping up her casted foot and peddling with her one good leg. Once she was cleared to weight bear and begin range of motion on her ankle, her mother Cheryl, a physical therapist, became her personal PT. Samantha progressed gradually from the trainer to flat road riding, to easy trails, and finally more technical race trails. After two months of extreme discipline, mental toughness, and hard work, Samantha was cleared by her doctor to race again.

More determined and focused than ever, Samantha won first place at her first race back. This was a pivotal point in her racing and life journey. Samantha's mental toughness, positive attitude, laser focus and determination proved that she could overcome physical and mental obstacles. Samantha was mentally stronger and more confident than ever. While no one ever wants to get injured, those with the right mindset leverage the experience to gain perspective and become better for having had to go through the struggle.

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## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Samantha went on to win the next two TMBRA races before the rest were cancelled due to COVID. As COVID was rocking everyone's world, Samantha didn't slow down. She thrived in virtual learning and kept riding her bike, even through the hot summer months. Samantha became faster, so fast that her Mom could no longer keep up; and her Dad was being challenged with all-out sprints at the end of rides. She was committed and consistent and improving steadily, even without formal training.

Then in October of 2020 Samantha joined the Williams Racing Academy.

Samantha began learning more about fitness and racing. She moved up in TMBRA to Cat 1 open women, racing against veteran pro riders. It's challenging, but she holds her own and finishes some grueling races making the podium at every race!

In 2021 she dominated the NICA spring series winning every race and was crowned the Texas State Champion in varsity girls as a sophomore. Then in April 2021 she competed in her first Pro US Cup race in Fayetteville, AR, placing 12th in short track and 14th in cross country against the best in the USA! She went to nationals in Winter Park, CO, respectfully finishing in the middle of the pack for the short track and cross country races. Samantha placed fourth overall in the sophomore girls' high school national championship race, one of her proudest moments as an MTB Racer.

Samantha set new goals and began training on a gravel bike around Castell, TX. In September 2021 she entered her first road race. It was the Texas Road State Championship, and Samantha placed sixth in Cat 4, and first in her age group, earning a State Championship in Road Racing.

Today Samantha is in top form and ready to take on the upcoming season of NICA to defend her State Championship title. She's also been accepted to Texas Devo, a youth development team of select Texas riders under 18 who will train and race together in the TMBRA series as well as select national races.

When asked what has been your biggest cycling accomplishment? Samantha says, "Racing my first Mountain Bike nationals 2021 in Winter Park, CO. The cross country race was the hardest race I've ever done, and I'm proud of my



performance. It was my first race at altitude, and after a strong start on the first long climb I definitely felt the lack of oxygen. All my muscles began to feel tense, and I lost a lot of ground on the following descent. After recovering, I proceeded to pass a lot of people on the final two laps. My last lap time ended up being faster than my first. This is my biggest accomplishment because I didn't quit and proved to myself that I can come back in a race when faced with difficult challenges."



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**Kyle Rhodes, M.D. &  
Tommy Dang, M.D.**



Samantha is a talented artist. She can draw, paint, and crochet. She is very creative, with an eye for color, design and graphics. Two of her projects in Art 1 in high school were entered in a high school art contest winning honors.

“Balancing academics and athletics is all about time management, and this is one of the reasons I’ve been successful at school and mountain biking,” Samantha says. “I’m very organized and enjoy a structured routine. When given a task, I plan, prioritize, and execute. Setting goals and sticking to your plan while keeping it fun would be my best advice to other athletes.”

As I interviewed Samantha Campbell I was reminded of some of the professional athletes, CEO’s, and corporations that I’ve been blessed to help with peak performance, mental toughness, and winning strategies. She is wise beyond her years. I also must confess that volunteer coaching kids on the Lake Travis mountain bike team and spending time with champions like Samantha has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my career.

**OFF THE TRACK:**

While Samantha loves mountain bike training and racing, she is just as accomplished academically. She has always been a straight-A student. She was in the national junior honor society in middle school, and her current GPA is 4.0. She enjoys math and science the most, especially anatomy & physiology, kinesiology, calculus and physics. She hopes to go to college to study fitness and biomechanics but remains undecided.

**SAMANTHA’S HIGHLIGHTS:**

- 2019 Texas Varsity State Champion
- 2021 Texas Varsity State Champion
- 2021 4th at High School National Championships
- 2021 3rd Overall TIMBRA Cat 1 Open/Pro Women State Series
- 2021 Texas State Champion Road Racing
- 2021 Williams Racing Team Member
- 2021 Texas Devo Team Member
- 2021 Full Scholarship to Marty Hale’s Peak Performance Program

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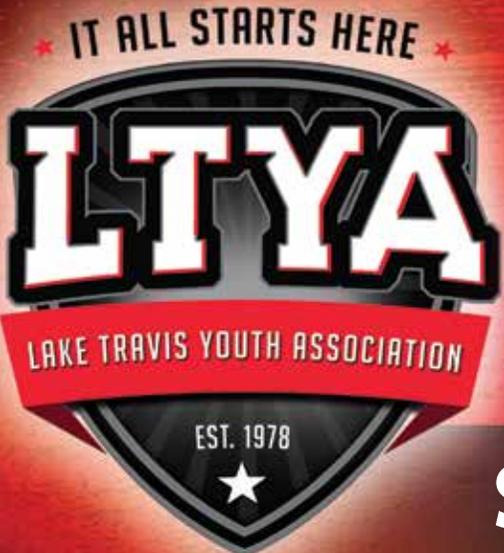
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