Crafted by Elyse Duffy

THE RUGGED ROUTE

Website Development Project

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

DEFINING THE SITE:

The Rugged Route **– a mountain bike club for Connecticut residents. It's a members-only club that offers classes as well as local trail maps, group meet ups, and news on the sport.**

The Clients: Since the site is fictitious, the clients are also. However, the site will be geared towards local mountain bikers that live in Connecticut and are interested in meeting others who share this hobby. The demographic expected is adults, typically between 21 and 50 years old. Bikers visiting the site can have a skillset level anywhere between beginner to advanced. This primary audience could be looking for challenging rides to do with others or could be a beginner rider looking for classes to advance their skills. While the club is members only, it still aims to be inclusive and welcoming to all that are interested in mountain biking.

Project Goals: My goal is to create a club community that has an online platform to supplement their real-life meetups.

Often times membership clubs are only for members that are advanced in the sport and as someone who is a part of various sports clubs this has always bothered me. The membership sites themselves are usually very old and outdated too. They don't usually advertise the club in a good light and often look as if they are no longer in business. With this site, I want the club to focus on bringing people of all skill levels together with a common goal- to ride more. I also want to create an example of how a modern website can help clubs promote themselves better. With this project, I also hope to gain skills in building a brand for the web.

Site Audience: The target users are current members of the club and people interested in joining. I envision the club/website to be endorsed by local bike shops in the state, so having a website to welcome newcomers will be important in making a good first impression.

On the site, new members will be able to sign up for a membership while also being able to view upcoming events to get them interested in the club. The website will be fully viewable for members and non-members, but only current members will be able to sign up for classes. Members will mostly be visiting this site to read about the latest club news, see when group meetups are and view local trail maps.

Site Message: The site's overall message is to bring locals together through the love of mountain biking by providing social events and group meetups. The site will be sure to focus on its community centered mission and providing premiere classes and group events around the state. Through the club's website, the audience will be able to gather trail information that would be hard to find elsewhere and a community that shares a common passion. As with most sports clubs, it will focus on developing skills and creating a supportive environment. The website will not only support the sport, but it will be the digital home base for enhancing the club's visibility, engagement, and overall success.

The site itself will have a membership sign up page, a list of classes offered, the club's history, trail maps and routes, and a news page. There will also be links for members to connect through the club's social media pages. The site's message should be clear that it focuses on mountain biking and how riding is better with a group of friends!

Development Path: I am choosing Squarespace's website builder since I have no previous web design experience and I'm hoping to learn on the fly, as I build this site. With Squarespace's Core plan I can input custom CSS and JavaScript if necessary. This way I will get a good balance of having a beginner interface with options to change and personalize my site to my specific needs. This combination works for me because I will be able to focus on designing while still being able to customize and edit

the interface as I gain more skill. Squarespace is an "all in one platform", meaning it offers hosting and creation of a domain name, which I find helpful as a first-time web developer. Since my background is in design, I am hoping this platform will help me create a portfolio piece that shows my design skills in the digital media while also allowing me to learn at my own pace.

Tutorial Notes: Before starting this project, I watched a few videos posted by Squarespace to see if the platform was right for this project and for my skill level. I first watched a video on registering a domain name and building templates. This was a great first video because it broke down the beginning steps into making an account and website. The platform first asks some questions about the site you want to create which in turn helps them tailor their services towards your needs. I also learned that you don't necessarily have to pick a template to start out, you can build your site piece by piece, which I am leaning towards. What I liked most, was that you don't have to stick with a

template but can choose to build your site using a grid system to lay out images and text. This works well for beginners who may have to edit and change parts of the site as they continue to build it.

I then watched the site editing and styling fundamentals video where I learned how to link pages, pick fonts and change page layouts. While this seemed easy enough, one piece of information stuck out to me, and it was how important it is to have the company name written out on the homepage, even if you have a logo on the page. The written name will help with SEO, especially if most people will find your site through googling.

I also learned what image types are supported. On this platform JPEGs, PNGs, and GIFs are all allowed, and images should be less than 500kb and between 1500 x 2500 pixels.

I then learned that editing mobile versions of your site is a breeze. If something doesn't look right when previewing the mobile version, I can change its size or placement without the desktop design being affected. As a beginner web designer this is probably the most frustrating part of designing for web, so this tip is quite the game changer for me.

Overall, the videos gave me more confidence in being able to build the site on their platform. After seeing the interface in action, it doesn't seem as overwhelming or confusing as I originally thought. The videos were easy to follow and I know I will be refering back to them during the design process.
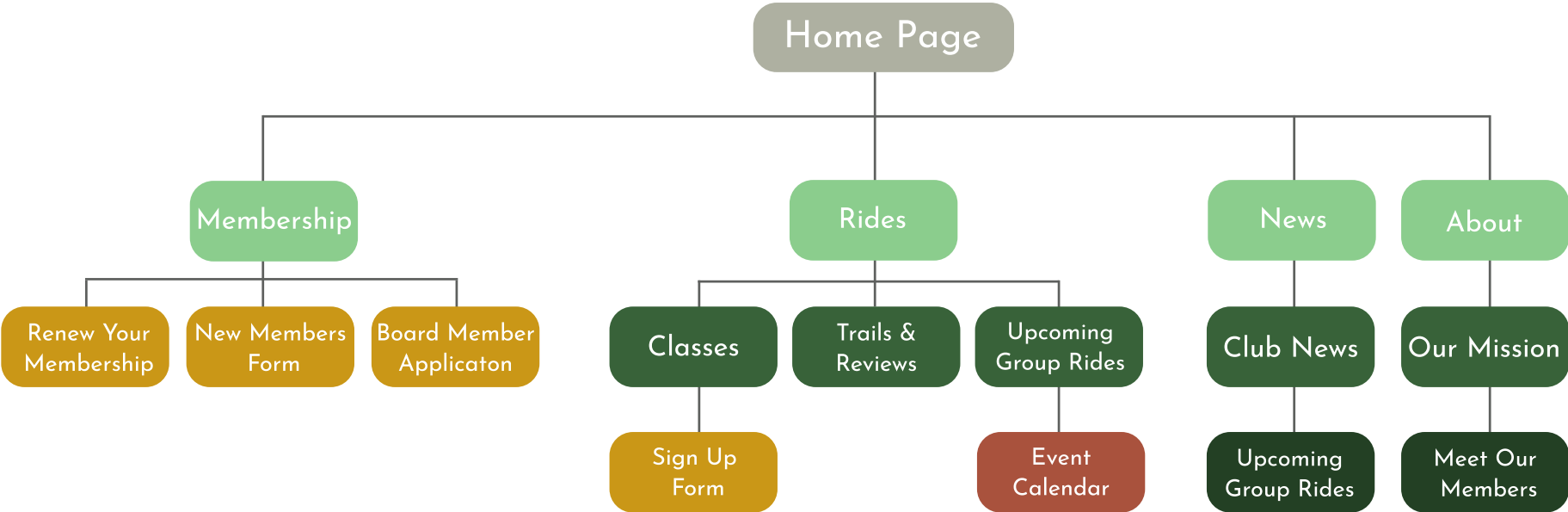
Site Map *(on next page)*: The site map I created is preliminary but was necessary to help me understand what content would go where and what pages would be in the top navigation on the homepage. I felt that having four top categories was just enough and that the rest of the content I envisioned would be organized within these four main pages. There is of course a section for memberships, news and club history. But there is also a broader *rides* page where once clicked on, members can then view classes to take, see upcoming group meetups, and look at trail maps. I also thought having an events calendar would be helpful to see events that are scheduled weeks in advance.

The site map also has the group rides page listed twice – once under the main rides page but also in the news section. I did this because I think it could be classified as news that members want to know about but others might try and find these details under rides. Both paths make sense and I want this information to be found easily since it's an important part of the club's purpose.

Some pages shown in gold, are forms to be filled out, and will bring you back to the homepage once submitted. But other than that, the website has a very simple navigation map.

Original Rugged Route Site Map

Home Page

Membership
- Renew Your Membership
- New Members Form
- Board Member Applicaton

Rides
- Classes
  - Sign Up Form
- Trails & Reviews
- Upcoming Group Rides
  - Event Calendar

News
- Club News
  - Upcoming Group Rides

About
- Our Mission
  - Meet Our Members

Legend:
- Main Navigation
- Form Page
- Second-Tier Page
- Calendar Page
- Third-Tier Page

The Process: With my website platform chosen, the site map created, and the purpose of the website defined, the next step for me would be to start imaging what the site would look like visually. I plan to create a logo for the club and chose colors that match the theme. This way the style of the website matches its content. I plan to look at similar club websites to see if I am missing any typical features and plan to gather some ideas on page layouts. Building the site beyond a homepage feels daunting so I hope to gather some good examples I can reference, to see what works visually. Once I have a few ideas, I plan to create some wireframes before I start designing in Squarespace, this way I can sketch out a few ideas to see which I like best. With the chosen wireframes, starting the site will be less intimidating and will provide an easy transition from initial idea to a fully fleshed out page.

PLANNING & DESIGN:

Content Collected: The content I gathered this week was the start of creating the club's visual identity. I started with creating the logo and made sure to create two options – one for white backgrounds and a second option that would look good on darker backgrounds. The club's logo takes inspiration from rough mountains and steep terrain.

From there, I expanded on the colors I used in the logo to create a larger color palette. This palette will be used throughout the website and its elements.

I then did some research on mountain bike companies and similar clubs in the area. After looking at their websites, I gathered ideas for how my own club's website should look. I tried to gather similar imagery that encompassed the nature trails they would frequent as well as group photos of happy riders. The photos are bright and taken in direct sunlight, giving them a vibrant look. I gathered all the large photos that will be seen on the homepage, the class page, trail maps, and group rides page. In addition to these main shots, I also found extra images I thought could be used in the homepage's carousel slider.

For the site, I still need to collect smaller images for a few internal pages. This includes the three images for the membership page and the three for the club news page. I also need three photos of board members on the about page. There is also some content that I am still thinking about how to fill, for example what classes will be offered, and how will those be described? Then what kind of stories will be included in the club news? Filling the pages with specific and meaningful content is important to me, and I'm still thinking about how to go about it.
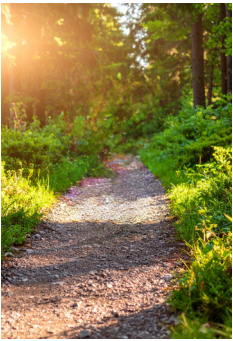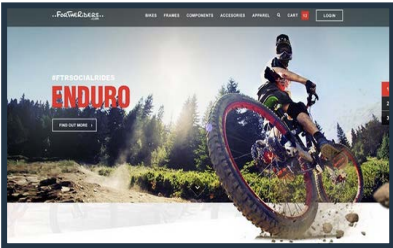
Mood Board

PRIMARY LOGO

RR THE RUGGED ROUTE
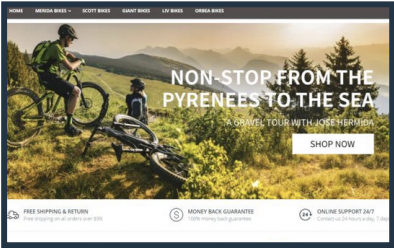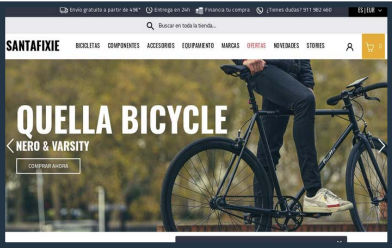
SECONDARY LOGO

RR THE RUGGED ROUTE

MOUNTAIN BIKE CLUB

COLOR PALETTE

RGB: 36/52 /69

RGB: 107/154 /193

RGB: 226/180 /47

RGB: 196/196 /196

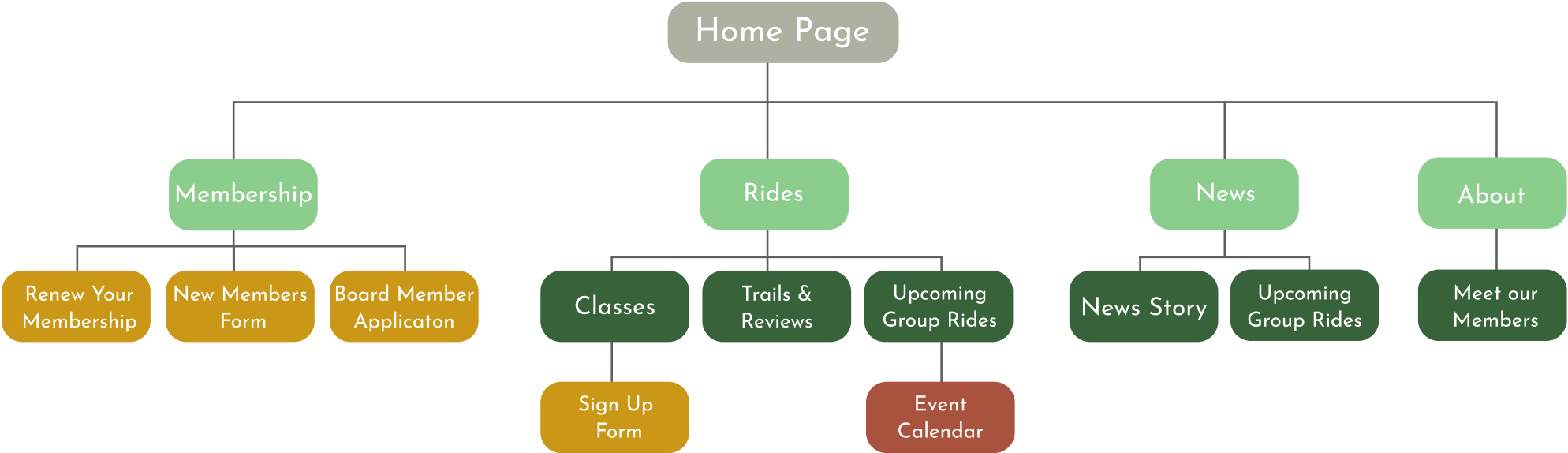## SIMILAR SITES

FONTS:

DIABLO STD

Adelle Sans Devanagari

Creating Wireframes & Revising the Site Map: Once the mood board was completed, I moved on to creating wireframes for the most important pages. As I went through this step it led me to start thinking deeper about the content and the users on the site, leading me to change the site map while I was in the middle of making wireframes. The first change was to the news page. I felt this page should bring you right to the headlines of the stories, rather than having to click to anther page to start reading. I made this change also due to the fact that I was unsure what to fill this category page with, if not for story headlines. Then when creating the about page, I had a similar idea to condense the number of pages since the main page needed more content. When creating the wireframe, I made room for the mission statement at the top and then below a "meet the members" area where visitors can read about board members. I felt this made sense again for the user to be able to read all of this on one page, rather than having to click over to another page, when the content isn't that long to begin with.

When creating the other wireframes I kept the top navigation pages (membership, rides, news, and about pages) looking similar. They all include a small blurb under the title with three smaller blocks of content that will lead them to other pages. The second-tier pages also share similar layouts by boasting a large image at the top of the page with content below it. Including large imagery is one way to sell the club to visitors who are thinking about joining and it showcases just how much fun this community is.

Keeping each level of navigation the same or similar helps the user understand where they are within the whole site. Making the user experience consistent and pleasurable, all while reducing confusion of where to go next.

Revised Rugged Route Site Map

Home Page

- Membership
  - Renew Your Membership
  - New Members Form
  - Board Member Applicaton
- Rides
  - Classes
    - Sign Up Form
  - Trails & Reviews
  - Upcoming Group Rides
    - Event Calendar
- News
  - News Story
  - Upcoming Group Rides
- About
  - Meet our Members

Legend:
- Main Navigation
- Second-Tier Page
- Form Page
- Calendar Page

Homepage

RR THE RUGGED ROUTE

Membership Rides News About [Search]

JOIN THE CLUB

Title Here

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Group Rides
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Trails
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Stay in Touch!
11 main street
Norwalk, CT 06850

203-000-0000

mountainbike@gmail.com

Membership Page

RR THE RUGGED ROUTE

Membership Rides News About [Search]

MEMBERSHIPS

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New Membership
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Renew Membership
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Board Applications
At vero eos et accusamus et iusto odio dign

< "Testimonial here about club sdfs afsaf saf safa" >

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RIDES

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Classes
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Group Rides
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CLUB NEWS

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Story Headline
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Story Headline
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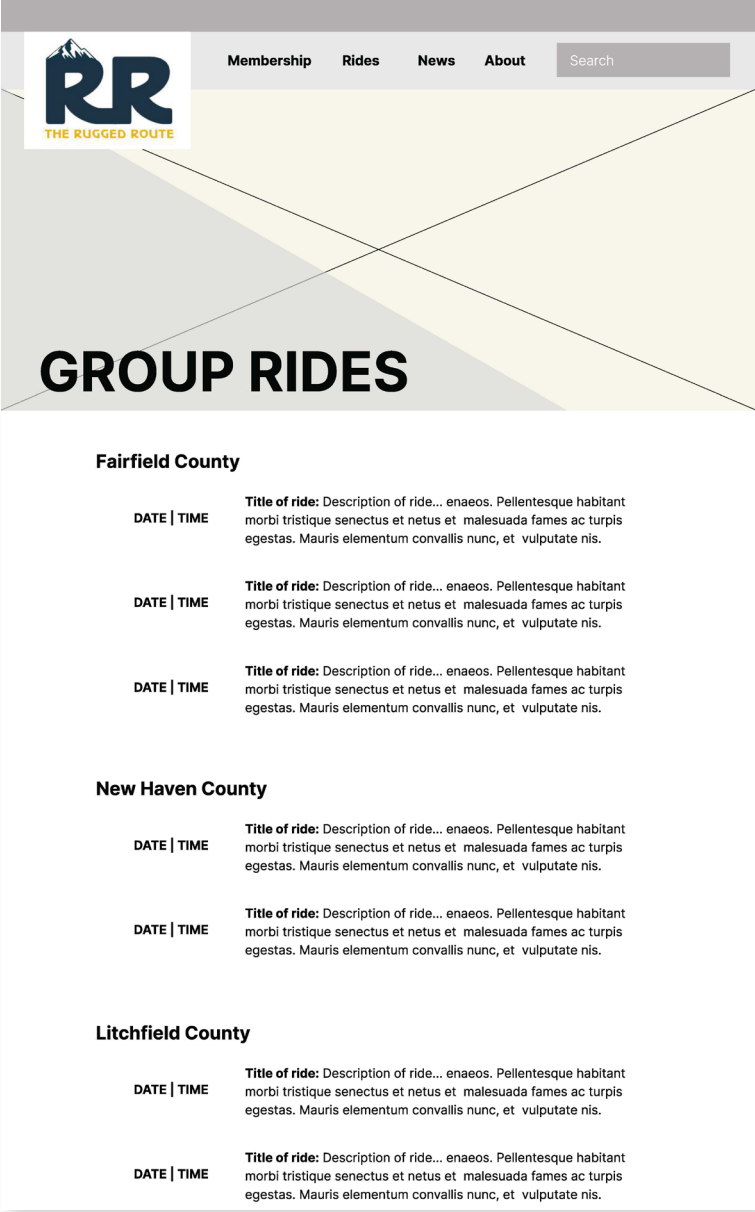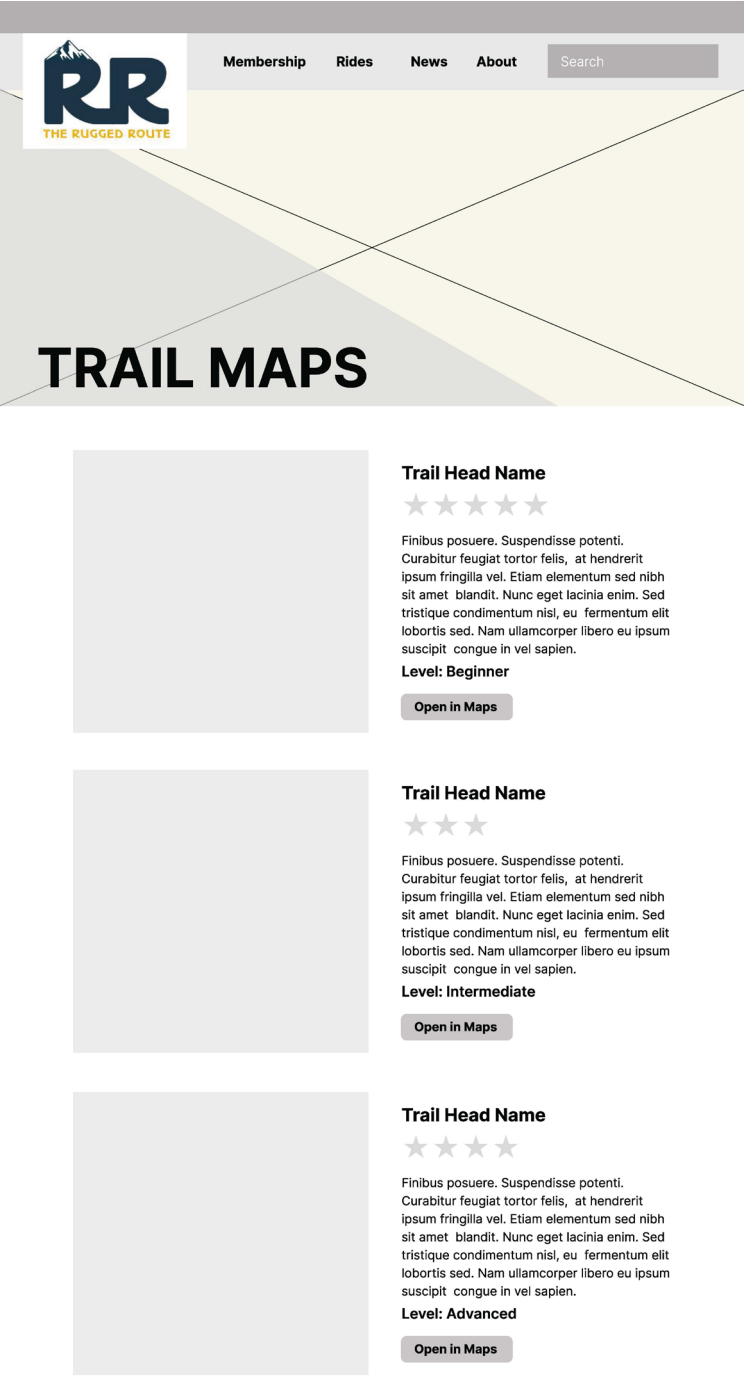
Upcoming Group Rides
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Meet Our Board Members:

Dan
Title
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Sherry
Title
"quote here Fusce nisi nunc, posuere aliquet tempus eu Fusce nisi nunc, posuere aliquet tempus eu"

Matt
Title
"quote here Fusce nisi nunc, posuere aliquet tempus eu Fusce nisi nunc, posuere aliquet tempus eu"

Memberships:

Join All Year Long!
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<membership forms>

Got Questions?
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<email>

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CLASSES

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Book Now

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Book Now

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TRAIL MAPS

Trail Head Name
★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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Level: Beginner

Open in Maps

Trail Head Name
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Level: Intermediate

Open in Maps

Trail Head Name
★ ★ ★ ★

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Level: Advanced

Open in Maps

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GROUP RIDES

Fairfield County

DATE | TIME   **Title of ride:** Description of ride... enaeos. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Mauris elementum convallis nunc, et vulputate nis.

DATE | TIME   **Title of ride:** Description of ride... enaeos. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Mauris elementum convallis nunc, et vulputate nis.

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New Haven County

DATE | TIME   **Title of ride:** Description of ride... enaeos. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Mauris elementum convallis nunc, et vulputate nis.

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Litchfield County

DATE | TIME   **Title of ride:** Description of ride... enaeos. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Mauris elementum convallis nunc, et vulputate nis.

DATE | TIME   **Title of ride:** Description of ride... enaeos. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Mauris elementum convallis nunc, et vulputate nis.

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NEW MEMBERS FORM

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Full Name

Street Address

Town

State

Zip Code

Date of Birth

Telephone

Email

Membership Fees   ● Half year **($20)**   ● Full year **($40)**

Card Type

Card Number

Exp Date

Total Amount: _____

Electronic Signature _____

Date of Submission

Submit Form

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203-000-0000
mountainbike@gmail.com

Functionalities: The site will of course have specific functionalities, that will allow it to stand out and attract new members. The first is an easy, online form for membership registration. This will allow anyone who comes to the site to sign up for a membership that day! In addition to serving new members, there will also be online forms to renew your membership and to apply for a board position. This will let the club track how many people are coming to the site and how many of those new visitors are actually signing up.

The website will also allow members to sign up for classes. They can read about the class, see the difficulty level and learn about all programs offered before committing and purchasing. Whereas most clubs ask you to mail in a form with payment or to physically show up to an event to register, *The Rugged Route* allows members to sign up anywhere and anytime.

In addition to the group rides page which lists upcoming events, there will also be a calendar page. This calendar page allows viewers to see events that may be months away and will allow them to filter by dates if needed. Being a club website, having an events calendar is a key organizational tool and sharing that with members will encourage them to return to the site often.

The trail maps page also has a great feature...the page lets you open the trail map within your device's maps application. This feature is especially helpful if viewing on a mobile device so that you can drive or bike to the exact location of the trail.

Some other functionalities I included are a search bar at the top of every page. Allowing users to search for something specific if they can't find what they are looking for. There will also be testimonials, showing positive reviews. Including all these functionalities will allow the site to stand out as a premiere riding club and attract members from across the state.

HIGH FIDELITY WIREFRAMES:

This week I finished collecting all of my content for my website. I gathered the rest of the images and figured out their placement. and then wrote the copy for each page. While time consuming, it felt necessary before I start designing in Squarespace. Knowing just how much copy I have helped me finalize placement and the brand's voice alongside the visuals. I specifically wanted to get the writing done this week, so that in the coming weeks I can focus on the design and changing anything if need be.

My main task was to turn my basic wireframes into high fidelity wireframes. This way I can finalize what images go where and to see if the copy I wrote fits well within the space given. As I went along in the design process, I decided that the homepage message should be changed to something fun, inviting, and appealing to the outdoor enthusiast. Alongside the main image is the tag line "Off-road is better together". It's a simple message but also shows how inclusive the club is and how important their community of riders is to them. The comradery should be evident in the overall site but especially when you visit the homepage.

Creating this homepage first made me realize that there may be some different headers I want to try out, once in Squarespace. Since I want the logo to be prominent, I made a second version of the homepage where the navigation bar is a bit bigger to accommodate the logo. I will probably make the final decision once I'm in the platform, but I wanted to start thinking about alternative ways of including the logo, with the navigation and search bar.

As I went along making the rest of the pages, I decided some images could be a slideshow or have some animation added to them when the pages load. My idea is to have the classes, trail maps, and group rides pages have the main image and title fade in, that way I can play around with motion and make the content more engaging. I'm hoping it will encourage visitors to further explore the site without slowing down any load times. I am also open to other animations and functionalities but of course will see what Squarespace offers.

My new high-fidelity wireframes stayed very similar to my original wireframes. There were only minor changes done to the copy and then a few buttons added to specific pages. One main issue I found when I was designing, was that some pages should link to others, rather than forcing the user to use the back button. Therefore, on the club news page I decided to add not only a group rides button but also a calendar button to help the user continue their journey in a seamless way. To me, both of these buttons make for an easy transition to the user's next move. If they are interested in reading about club news, they probably want to see when the next club meet up is.

I also added two buttons to the bottom of the about page. The first button is to reach the membership form page and the second allows you to send an email. I originally was debating if there would be room and how this page should look in general. But decided that if they are reading about the board members than they are probably new visitors and thinking about signing up for the club. Having these two buttons on the page will help users take the next step in signing up or reach out if they have

questions. I imagine the email button opening the device's preferred email app and then the membership button to take them to the new members form right away.

The rides page also does something similar and offers users the option to jump to the membership page. I envision this link to bring them to the main membership page since it seems like it would be a common next step. If someone is looking at the classes and rides information, they could be a new visitor or a returning member. The rides page will help continue the user's journey but also takes into consideration who might be viewing this page.

With my wireframes ready to go, I feel prepared to continue this project next week in Squarespace. I feel ready to take my wireframes and actually start building the physical website. With the content gathering complete I am really happy with the style and look of the brand and what it has become in just three short weeks. I hope next week I can focus more on tailoring the design for the users and looking in to more fun functionalities.

High-Fidelity Wireframes

RR
THE RUGGED ROUTE

Membership   Rides   News   About   🔍 Search

OFF-ROAD IS BETTER TOGETHER

Ride Together, Thrive Together.

If you're looking to get in more miles on your bike, a class to improve your skills, or a community that fuels your passion, you've come to the right place. We're Connecticut's premiere bike club offering classes for any skill level, group rides in your hometown, and local trail maps to help you get out and exploring on your own. Whether you're a seasoned rider or just gearing up for your first trail, our site is built to get you started on adventure with two wheels.

-The Rugged Route

Classes
Designed for all skill levels, from beginner basics to advanced trail techniques.

Group Rides
Join our exciting group rides close to home and connect with fellow riders.

Trails
Explore a variety of trails and read reviews for your next ride before heading out.

Stay in Touch!

111 Trailhead Lane
Ridgeview, CT 08023 USA

(555) 783-4621

RuggedRoute@mtnbkc.com

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THE RUGGED ROUTE

Membership   Rides   News   About   🔍 Search

JOIN THE CLUB

MEMBERSHIPS

Membership   Rides   News   About   🔍 Search

Become a member and become part of a vibrant community of riders who share your passion for the trail. As a member, you'll enjoy exclusive access to organized events, local bike shop discounts, and top tier clinics and classes. Whether you're looking to improve your skills, meet fellow bikers, or give back to the riding community, A Rugged Route membership is all you need to have the best season yet.

✓ Exclusive access to organized events

✓ Discounts at local bike shops

✓ Top tier clinics and classes

New Membership
Become a part of our riding community and start the adventure today.

Renew Membership
Renew your membership and continue enjoying all the benefits we offer.

Board Applications
Want to help shape the future of our club? Apply to join the board and make an impact.

‹ *"Joining this club has completely changed my riding experience."* ›

Stay in Touch!
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RuggedRoute@mtnbkc.com
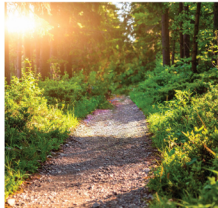
RIDES

Membership   Rides   News   About   🔍 Search

This page is your go-to spot for all things mountain biking in your area. Join local group rides led by club members who live near you and share your love for hitting the trails together. Looking to improve? Sign up for our skill-level classes designed to help riders of all abilities ride safer and stronger. Plus, explore our collection of reviewed and rated trail maps to find the perfect route for your next outing. You're that much closer to your next ride!

Epic trails and even better company — join and roll together!

Classes
Expert instruction for all levels. From bike basics to advanced trail techniques, our certified coaches will help you ride with more confidence and control. *Learn more...*

Group Rides
Join a local group ride and explore trails with a fun, supportive crew. Whether you're into cruisers or technical climbs, there's a ride for you. Good vibes guaranteed. *Learn more...*

Trails
Find the latest information on the most popular trails in the state. Find out what to expect from the terrain difficulty, to hidden gems and must-know tips. *Learn more...*

Not Yet a Member?
To sign up for classes or group rides, you'll need to complete a membership form and receive approval first. *Sign up...*

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Membership   Rides   News   About   🔍 Search

CLUB NEWS

Stay in the know! Keep up to date with the latest happenings in the club and the sport at large. From ride reports and gear reviews to training tips and member spotlights. Catch up on everything that keeps our community riding strong and staying connected.

Spring Ride Series Highlights

This spring, we had a record number of new members hit the trails with energy and enthusiasm during a series of unforgettable group rides. Relive the moments and see if you made the highlight reel! ***Read more…***

Top 5 Bike Gear Upgrades for 2025

Want to enhance your mountain biking experience? We've rounded up the top five gear upgrades that riders are talking about — from helmets to innovative suspension systems. ***Read more…***

Our Impact on Trail Conservation

Protecting our favorite trails is a priority for us. We're dedicated to improving trail access while preserving the natural environment. Find out how you can get involved and help make a difference. ***Read more…***

Upcoming Group Rides

Your next ride should be with us! Check out the club schedule and meet us at the trailhead!

Group Rides   **Event Calendar**

Stay in Touch!

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THE RUGGED ROUTE

We began with a small group of local riders who shared a passion for the trails and a desire to build a stronger biking community. What started as a few weekend rides quickly grew into a club focused on connection and outdoor adventure. We're a diverse group of riders—beginners to seasoned pros—who come together to ride, improve our skills, and support each other on and off the bike. Our mission is to grow the sport and create a welcoming space for all. Whether you're here to ride, learn, volunteer, or just connect, there's a place for you in our club.

Meet Our Board Members:

Dan
President

"What started as a simple idea to get a few people riding together has grown into something incredible. I'm inspired by the passion they bring to every event"

Sherry
Treasurer

"Hands down, the best club around — Riding with Rugged Route gave me the confidence to take on trails I used to avoid"

Jason
Events Coordinator

"Every event feels like an epic experience with the best people—I've met some of my best friends through this club"

Memberships:

Join All Year Long!

We're always welcoming new members! We offer two membership options designed to fit your riding style and commitment level.

Membership Form

Got Questions?

We're here to help! Whether you want to know more about memberships or want to volunteer, we'd love to hear from you.

Send an Email

Stay in Touch!

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CLASSES

We offer a variety of classes tailored to riders of all skill levels. Whether you're just starting out and want to learn the basics of trail riding or you're interested in mastering bike maintenance on your own, we have a course for you. Choose from one-time classes to multi-week clinics, all led by experienced instructors dedicated to helping you improve. Sign up today and take your riding to the next level!

LAST CALL!

Trail Basics 101

Perfect for beginners, this class covers essential trail riding skills including balance, braking and navigating obstacles. With our friendly instructors, you'll learn how to read trails and ride with control, helping you build confidence for your next adventure.

August 1-3, 2025   Book Now

NEW!

Trail Safety & Emergency Preparedness

Learn how to recognize potential hazards and handle common emergencies. You'll practice first aid basics and how to respond if something goes wrong. Practicing real world scenarios, this class is great for all skill levels.

September 7, 2025   Book Now

NEW!

Advanced Skills Clinic: Master the Technical Trails

This clinic focuses on advanced techniques like technical descents, jumps, and tight turns. With professional coaching you'll improve your control and confidence on harder trails, pushing your riding to the next level.

September 20-21, 2025   Book Now
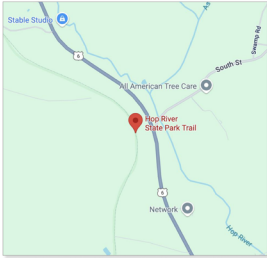
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TRAIL MAPS

Hop River Trailhead
★★★★★
Level: Beginner

This trail offers a mix of beginner to intermediate trails perfect for riders looking to enjoy some beautiful views. The terrain features gentle climbs, smooth single track, and a few technical sections that challenge riders without overwhelming them. It's an ideal spot for riders new to mountain biking or those seeking a relaxed but engaging ride.

Open in Maps
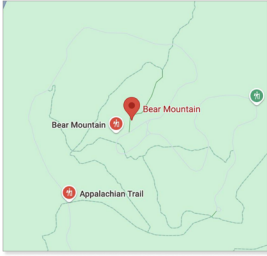
Bear Mountain Trailhead
★★★
Level: Intermediate

Set amidst beautiful woodland, Bear Mountain features miles of trails best suited for intermediate riders. With moderate climbs, some rocky sections, and technical turns, it offers a rewarding challenge without being overwhelming. The trail system has multiple entry points and is conveniently located just off I-95, making it easily accessible.

Open in Maps
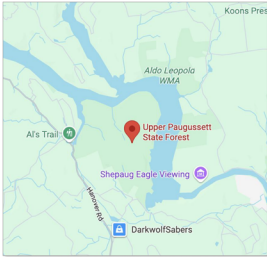
Upper Paugussett State Forest
★★★★
Level: Advanced

Eagle's Nest offers a thrilling ride with about 5 miles of intermediate trails that slowly become advanced as you ride farther. It features a mix of technical sections. Many riders note that one part of the trail is extremely narrow, demanding precise bike handling. This route is best suited for advanced riders with experience in tight, tree-lined sections.

Open in Maps

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GROUP RIDES

Fairfield County

8/26 | 6:30pm   **Wilton Cruise & Connect:** a relaxed group ride perfect for all skill levels. Join us for an easy 9 miles at Rockland Preserve.

9/13 | 8:00am   **Cruise & Connect Saturday:** we expanded our weekday group rides to Saturday mornings! This ride we will take the blue trail - a longer 15 miles down the Connecticut River.

9/21 | 11:00am   **Sunday Spin:** Our Sunday ride features 10 miles of smooth, rolling singletrack with medium elevation gain. Expect wide, well-maintained trails at Nutmeg State Forest..

New Haven County

9/17 | 6:00pm   **New Haven Cruise & Connect:** We will be taking the popular double track loop that overlooks the city. Full route takes about 1.5 hours.

9/24 | 6:00pm   **New Haven Cruise & Connect:** New Haven Cruise & Connect: Explore the new Naugatuck trail that was just built. We plan on stopping at one of the breweries nearby after the ride.

Litchfield County

9/7 | 11:00am   **Litchfield Cruise & Connect:** Meet some of our new members as we show them the legendary 5-mile loop: Mattatuck Trail.

9/27 | 10:00am   **Saturday Rollout:** Plan on doing a few laps at the Lake Trail in Washington, Connecticut. Randy's Bike Shop will be on site in the parking lot to talk bike safety with some giveaways.

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NEW MEMBERS FORM

Ready To Ride With Us? Fill out the form below to become a member... it only takes a minute! Once submitted, you should receive a welcome email within 48 hours with all the details you need to get started. If you have any questions during the process, feel free to reach out to us and we'll be happy to help.

Full Name

Street Address

Town

State

Zip Code

Date of Birth

Telephone

Email

Membership Fees: ○ **Half year** ($20)   ○ **Full year** ($40)

Card Type

Card Number

Exp Date

Total Amount

Electronic Signature _____

Date of Submission

Submit Form

Stay in Touch!

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INITIATE THE SITE ON SQUARESPACE:

This week marked a major milestone for my project - I started developing my site in the Squarespace platform and bought a domain name. These were big steps in my process since all of my previous work had consisted of gathering information and content. I felt comfortable moving forward with Squarespace, so I purchased the Core plan and then purchased the domain name for the site: *theruggedrouteclub.com*. This was all able to be done within Squarespace and I was pleanstly surprised that this domain name hadn't been taken yet and how well I was able to match the name of the club.

Once purchased, I answered some of the questions about the type of site I was trying to build and then was able to choose the look of the site. I quickly found out that Squarespace version 7.1, which is what I am using, no longer has themes to choose from, but instead has site styles. So instead of picking a theme, I took a moment to tweak and adjust the site style to the mood board I created. This meant adding my color pallet, picking fonts, button styles and line spacing. This way feels more customizable than picking a theme that is already laid out for you, so I hope this

means that my website will stand out and not look like a templated site.

After my site style was tailored to the Rugged Route look, I took a moment to optimize my images I had collected so that they would be ready for importing, once I start designing. Since my images came from Adobe Firefly, they were pretty large, so optimizing them brought them down in size but their great quality remained.

I was then able to start laying out my pages. Of course, I started with the design of the homepage. While I maintained the look of my wireframes, it was still a learning process using Squarespace for the first time. Since I want to ease into this and get to know the platform, my plan this week was to create the homepage and then the main navigational pages *(membership page, rides page, news page, and about page)*. I figured creating these five pages would help me use a lot of the features and help me get a sense of the tools available. I was able to successfully lay out the pages and the content and plan on leaving the smaller

details like shadows or motion for the later weeks, so I can grasp the basics first. I am also still learning how to adjust the line and paragraph spacing for certain text. Since I have a variety of copy styles it has been challenging to adjust the spacing for each content block and I am still figuring out how best to paste the copy in so that it can flow well, regardless of screen size. I know that at some point I will probably have to go back to these initial pages and adjust once I find the right spacing.

Of course, with each page design, adjusting for mobile view was a challenge as well. Rearranging buttons and resizing images was something I had to think about, but overall, it wasn't too bad since Squarespace allows you to adjust the mobile view without affecting the desktop view. If something didn't look right, I could quickly adjust it knowing that my desktop version was already saved.

One breakthrough in the design this week was figuring out the header of the site. While I was in Squarespace, I decided on a header that showed the logo on the left and the main navigation on the right. I then decided to use the top yellow bar as an announcement bar instead of keeping it static. The yellow bar can be closed if the user clicks the "X" but I felt it added a sense of professionalism and made the site look more like a real business. I also added a yellow *"Join now"* button under the tagline of the homepage since this will be one of the first places the user's eye will go to. I figured the most common visitor to the site will be someone who wants to join the club, so I want there to be multiple paths to get to the membership page.

I then created the about page, again pretty closely to my original wireframe. But I decided that a contact form would be perfect for the bottom of this page, and it would be an easier way to contact the club than just providing an email. This way visitors can ask questions and sign up for news and club updates with this one form! This was an easy drag and drop piece that Squarespace provided and I found it very easy to customize.

On the membership page I was also able to use Squarespace's testimonial feature to add the testimonials I had written.

Another easy drag and drop feature where I was able to personalize the font and colors to match my site's personality.

For the rides and news page, the layouts were also based on my wireframes and here I was able to change some copy to fit the space better and was able to see how my images fit with the rest of the content. Laying out these pages made me realize that drop shadows are only possible right now with shapes and that if I wanted to add them to buttons or to text, I would have to do that by writing code, which is something I may do down the line.

Another issue I ran into was adding a search bar to the homepage. I'm not sure why I didn't realize this sooner, but this feature would also require some coding. Thought now that I know this, I'm not sure if this type of site would need a search bar anyway. So, while I have some more researching to do as I go on building this site, I plan to add these finishing touches once all the pages are built and in place. I find creating a rough draft and then going back and touching up works best for me.

Next week I plan to expand the site by creating the membership forms, the classes, trails, and group rides pages. This way each week I will work my way down the site map and be able to link these new pages as I go. I hope to learn even more about how to apply certain affects to images and text and hopefully customize my layout even more. Since all my content has already been collected, I'm excited to see what I can do in terms of customization, to make my site unique. Seeing it come together is exciting, especially as I gain more confidence in the platform. As I improve my skills, I hope to build an impressive user-friendly site for the mountain biking community.

Screenshots from Squarespace

Week 4

HOMEPAGE

Save 10% on memberships this week with code Fall10

RR
THE RUGGED ROUTE

Membership   Rides   News   About

OFF-ROAD
IS BETTER TOGETHER

JOIN NOW

RIDE TOGETHER, THRIVE TOGETHER

If you're looking to get in more miles on your bike, a class to improve your skills, or a community that fuels your passion, you've come to the right place. We're Connecticut's premiere bike club offering classes for any skill level, group rides in your hometown, and local trail maps to help you get out and exploring on your own. Whether you're a seasoned rider or just gearing up for your first trail, our site is built to get you started on adventure with two wheels.

-The Rugged Route

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TRAILS

Explore a variety of trails and read reviews for your next ride before heading out.

THE RUGGED ROUTE

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ABOUT PAGE

RR
THE RUGGED ROUTE

Membership   Rides   News   About

WHO WE ARE

We began with a small group of local riders who shared a passion for the trails and a desire to build a stronger biking community. What started as a few weekend rides quickly grew into a club focused on connection and outdoor adventure. We're a diverse group of riders— beginners to seasoned pros—who come together to ride, improve our skills, and support each other on and off the bike. Our mission is to grow the sport and create a welcoming space for all. Whether you're here to ride, learn, volunteer, or just connect, there's a place for you in our club.

MEET OUR BOARD MEMBERS

DAN
President
"It started as an idea to get a few people riding together has grown into something incredible. I'm inspired by passion this club has."

SHERRY
Treasurer
"Hands down, the best club around — Riding with Rugged Route gave me the confidence to take on trails I used to avoid"

JASON
Events Coordinator
"Every event feels like an epic experience with the best people— I've met some of my best friends through this club"

MEMBERSHIPS

JOIN ALL YEAR LONG!

We're always welcoming new members! We offer two membership options designed to fit your riding style and commitment level.

MEMBERSHIP FORMS

GOT QUESTIONS?

We're here to help! Whether you want to know more about memberships or want to volunteer, we'd love to hear from you.

Name (required)
First Name   Last Name

Email (required)

○ SIGN UP FOR NEWS AND UPDATES

Message (required)

SUBMIT

THE RUGGED ROUTE

111 Trailhead Lane, Ridgeview, CT 08023 USA
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NEWS PAGE

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CLUB NEWS

Stay in the know! Keep up to date with the latest happenings in the club and the sport at large. From ride reports and gear reviews to training tips and member spotlights. Catch up on everything that keeps our community riding strong and staying connected.

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This spring, we had a record number of new members hit the trails with energy and enthusiasm during a series of unforgettable group rides. Relive the moments and see if you made the highlight reel! *Read more...*

TOP 5 BIKE GEAR UPGRADES FOR 2025

Want to enhance your mountain biking experience? We've rounded up the top gear upgrades that our riders are talking about. From helmets to pedals, to suspension systems, we list them all. *Read more...*

OUR IMPACT ON TRAIL CONSERVATION

Protecting our favorite trails is a priority for us. We're dedicated to improving trail access while preserving the natural environment. Find out how you can get involved and help make a difference. *Read more...*

UPCOMING GROUP RIDES

Your next ride should be with us! Check out the club schedule and meet us at the trailhead!

RIDES   CALENDAR

THE RUGGED ROUTE

111 Trailhead Lane, Ridgeview, CT 08023 USA
Ruggedroute@mtnbclub.com

Membership   Rides   News   About

RIDES

Your go-to spot for all things mountain biking in your area. Join local group rides led by club members who live near you and share your love for hitting the trails together. Looking to improve? Sign up for our skill-level classes designed to help riders of all abilities ride safer and stronger. Plus, explore our collection of reviewed and rated trail maps to find the perfect route for your next outing. You're that much closer to your next ride!

Epic trails and even better company, join and roll together!

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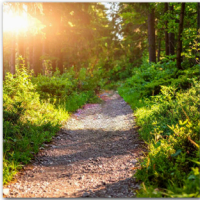
TRAILS

Find the latest information on the most popular trails in the state. Find out what to expect from the terrain difficulty, to hidden gems and must-know tips. *Learn more…*

NOT YET A MEMBER?

To sign up for classes or group rides, you'll need to complete a membership form and receive approval first. *Sign up…*

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Membership   Rides   News   About

MEMBERSHIP

Become a member and become part of a vibrant community of riders who share your passion for the trail. As a member, you'll enjoy exclusive access to organized events, local bike shop discounts, and top tier clinics and classes. Whether you're looking to improve your skills, meet fellow bikers, or give back to the riding community, A Rugged Route membership is all you need to have the best season yet.

✓ Exclusive access to organized events   ✓ Discounts at local bike shops   ✓ Top tier clinics and classes

NEW MEMBERSHIP FORM

Become a part of our riding community and start your next adventure with us today.

RENEW MEMBERSHIP FORM

Renew your membership and continue enjoying all the benefits the club offers.

BOARD APPLICATION FORM

Want to help shape the future of our club? Apply to join the board and make an impact.

"GETTING TO RIDE AND VOLUNTEER WITH THIS GROUP IS TOP TIER."

-Samantha W.

THE RUGGED ROUTE

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ADDING FUNCTIONALITY & MORE PAGES:

Week five of building my site means more pages and content are coming together. This week I was able to create the three membership forms (one for new members, one for returning members, and a board application form). I also created the classes page, the trail reviews page, and group rides page. These are all second tier in my site map, which means they look different than the main navigational pages and are laid out differently. As I was creating these pages, I allowed myself to try out options that were different than what I had originally designed in my wireframes. For me, this week was all about exploration and since I am getting more comfortable in Squarespace, I was finally able to add functionalities and interactive pieces to the site.

I first created the membership forms for my site, which is an important aspect of the club's website. I wanted the forms to be simple, one page, and be submitted through the site. With the Squarespace platform, this was simple enough with their form block, where I was able to customize the information required and change the individual look of the answer blocks themselves.

I liked that I was able to choose how information was captured. Whether that was through the customer typing it in or a bulleted choice. This feature will make signing up for the club much simpler. Previously clubs would almost always make you download the pdf, fill it out, and then email it in...a process that takes you off the website! As the site builder, this is something I don't want my users doing.

I then moved on to creating the classes page, the trail maps page and group rides page. These three pages have a similar large horizontal image at the top that corresponds with the content on that page. These pages are also where I have added animation and functionality to engage the users.

The classes page has a similar layout to the wireframe I made, but I added a small animation to the price of the classes. I realized this text was missing and needed to be added before the user would click on book now. To avoid having the user use the back button, the price is called out on this page and circled. But the fun part is that as the user scrolls down, they will see

the text getting circled. While this is a small feature, it may help users feel more engaged in the content and maybe even encourage them to click and learn more about the class.

The trail maps page was laid out based on its wireframe as well and getting to customize the google maps was a feature I enjoyed playing with. For this page I felt it was important to be able to read about the trail, see it on the map, and then have the option to read additional reviews. Instead of having a button bring you to google maps, which I originally had, (and which clicking on the map can already do), I decided to change the button to bring you to reviews of the trail. Since this is a page that will probably be viewed often, I wanted it to boost engagement by giving users multiple paths, depending on their needs.

The last page I created was the group rides page. While this page is mostly a list of events, I wanted to play around with some animation. I decided that since the content is broken down into counties, I could do something fun with the county title. Now

Squarespace has plenty of animation options for text and after looking at them I landed on a horizonal ticker bar. This shows the county name scrolling and being repeated from left to right. I kept the text moving slowly and felt this was just enough animation for the page without making it difficult to read. Because this page is all about helping riders find events near them, I wanted to keep the page clean and still cohesive with the rest of the site.

After creating these pages, I decided to go back and look at the site as a whole. Since most of the website is now created, I am able to envision how certain pages should lead to others and how visitors will move through the site. At this point, I have started linking pages together and it's starting to feel real. I am able to understand how most users will jump from page to page and what links and buttons will encourage them to stay on the site longer and read more. I'm looking forward to when all pages are complete and every page will act a guide for where the user should go next.

After viewing all the pages, I decided that I hated that my buttons were becoming distorted if the screen size was not wide enough. For some reason I could not figure out a way to change this with Squarespace's' site settings so I decided to try and write some code that would fix this. I was able to locate the custom css panel and paste the line of code in. What I wrote would prevent the button text from wrapping onto two lines and instead keep it on one line, no matter how narrow or wide the screen gets. This line of text affects all buttons across my site, which is what I wanted. It was really exciting to see that when I saved this, my site was able to update immediately, and I could see the changes in real time. I was satisfied with the results and very proud that I was able to fix this problem by writing code.

This week, I have made some major improvements to my site and am enjoying the process. As more pages are created and linked together, it feels like another piece of the puzzle is connected. This week was certainly a turning point, as most pages have been made and now the features and animations are being perfected. I know I will still have some reviewing and

tweaking to do, but I find that I am now building my pages faster and am able to troubleshoot must easier. I feel much more confident building in Squarespace than I did in the earlier weeks and have learned so much.

My hope for the last two weeks are to finish up the remaining pages of the site and then add any additional links to these pages. My hope is that no page will just end a user's journey. But instead, lead to somewhere else, guiding the user where to go next and what to click on. With the time that is left I want to also add the three news stories to the site. This last part was something I was unsure if I would have enough time to create, but I think it's possible with the trajectory I am on.

As week five comes to an end, I am happy with the content that has been made. I hope to continue perfecting and learning more about the Squarespace platform and be able to publish my site in just two weeks.

Screenshots from Squarespace

Week 5

NEW MEMBERS FORM

RR
THE RUGGED ROUTE

Membership   Rides   News   About

NEW MEMBERS FORM

Ready to ride with us? Fill out the form below to become a member... it only takes a minute! Once submitted, you should receive a welcome email within 48 hours with all the details you need to get started. If you have any questions during the process, feel free to reach out to us and we'll be happy to help.

NAME:

First Name

Last Name

ADDRESS:

Country

United States

Address Line 1 (required)

Address Line 2

City (required)

State (required)

ZIP Code (required)

EMAIL:

TELEPHONE:

DATE OF BIRTH:

mm / dd / yyyy

MEMBERSHIP:

◯ HALF YEAR ($20)

◯ FULL YEAR ($40)

CARD TYPE:

Select an option

CARD NUMBER:

EXP DATE:

TOTAL AMOUNT:

DATE OF SUBMISSION:

mm / dd / yyyy

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE:

SUBMIT

THE RUGGED ROUTE

111 Trailhead Lane, Ridgeview, CT 08023 USA
Ruggedroute@mtnbclub.com

Save 10% on memberships this week with code Fall10

RR THE RUGGED ROUTE

Membership   Rides   News   About

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Get ready to roll through another epic year in the saddle—it's time to renew your Rugged Route membership. Don't let your membership expire mid-season—lock in your access to rides, resources, and rad community now. Renew your membership today and let's make this the best year yet on two wheels!

NAME:
First Name
Last Name

CURRENT MEMBER NUMBER:

ADDRESS:
Country
United States

Address Line 1 (required)

Address Line 2

City (required)   State (required)   ZIP Code (required)

EMAIL:

TELEPHONE:

DATE OF BIRTH:
mm / dd / yyyy

MEMBERSHIP:
○ HALF YEAR ($20)   ○ FULL YEAR ($40)

CARD TYPE:
Select an option

CARD NUMBER:

EXP DATE:

TOTAL AMOUNT:

AUTOMATIC RENEWAL:
We can automatically charge the above card every year so that your membership never expires!
○ YES
○ NO

DATE OF SUBMISSION:
mm / dd / yyyy

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE:

SUBMIT

THE RUGGED ROUTE

111 Trailhead Lane, Ridgeview, CT 08023 USA
Ruggedroute@mtnbclub.com

Save 10% on memberships this week with code Fall10

RR THE RUGGED ROUTE

Membership   Rides   News   About

BOARD MEMBER APPLICATION

Apply to Join The Rugged Route Board of Directors! Become one of our strategic leaders and help shape the future of our organization. As a board member, you will support and uphold the club's mission, provide financial and governance oversight, represent our community in the public sphere, and help cultivate new partnerships. We welcome candidates who can commit to our term requirements, attend board meetings and actively engage in committee efforts and events.

NAME:
First Name
Last Name

CURRENT MEMBER NUMBER:

ADDRESS:
Country
United States

Address Line 1 (required)

Address Line 2

City (required)   State (required)   ZIP Code (required)

EMAIL:

TELEPHONE:

BOARD POSITION:
○ SECRETARY   ○ TREASURER   ○ EVENT COORDINATOR   ○ GROUP RIDES LEADER

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE:
(Relevant to the position you are applying for)

WHY DO YOU WANT THIS POSITION:

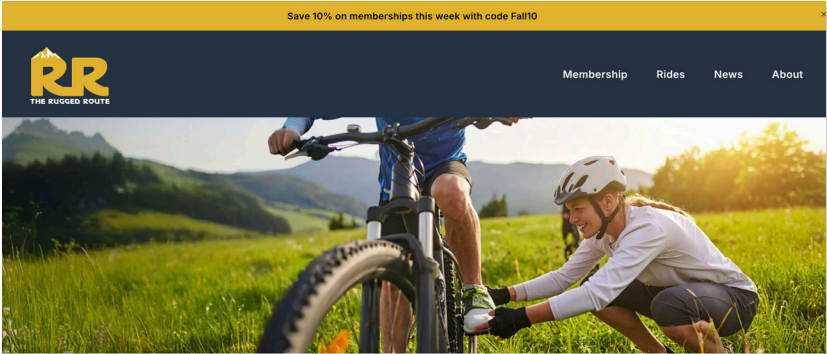**DATE OF SUBMISSION:**
mm / dd / yyyy

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE:

SUBMIT

THE RUGGED ROUTE

111 Trailhead Lane, Ridgeview, CT 08023 USA
Ruggedroute@mtnbclub.com

CLASSES PAGE

RR
THE RUGGED ROUTE

Membership   Rides   News   About

CLASSES

We offer a variety of classes tailored to riders of all skill levels. Whether you're just starting out and want to learn the basics of trail riding or you're interested in mastering bike maintenance on your own, we have a course for you. Choose from one-time classes to multi-week clinics, all led by experienced instructors dedicated to helping you improve. Sign up today and take your riding to the next level!

LAST CALL!

TRAIL BASICS 101

Perfect for beginners, this class covers essential trail riding skills including balance, braking and navigating obstacles. With our friendly instructors, you'll learn how to read trails and ride with control, helping you build confidence for your next adventure.

$200 per person
August 1-3, 2025

BOOK NOW

NEW!

EMERGENCY TRAIL PREP

Learn how to recognize potential hazards and handle common emergencies. You'll practice first aid basics and how to respond if something goes wrong. Practicing real world scenarios, this class is great for all skill levels.

$300 per person
September 7 & 14, 2025

BOOK NOW

NEW!

ADVANCED SKILLS CLINIC: MASTER THE TECHNICAL TRAILS

This clinic focuses on advanced techniques like technical descents, jumps, and tight turns. With professional coaching you'll improve your control and confidence on harder trails, pushing your riding to the next level.
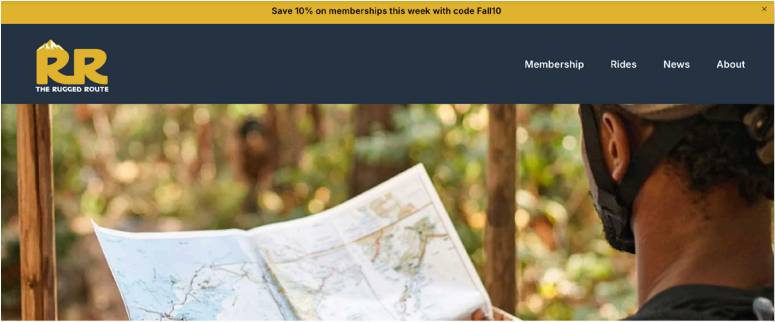
$350 per person
September 20-21, 2025

BOOK NOW

THE RUGGED ROUTE

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Ruggedroute@mtnbclub.com

TRAILS & REVIEWS PAGE

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THE RUGGED ROUTE

Membership   Rides   News   About

TRAIL MAPS

Our interactive trail maps are your guide to the best mountain biking in the region. Each trail is rider-reviewed, regularly updated, and rated by difficulty so you can plan your perfect ride. Download maps, check trail conditions, and discover new routes. Adventure starts here!
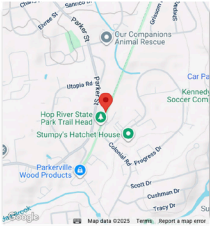
HOP RIVER TRAILHEAD
★★★★★

Level: Beginner

This trail offers a mix of beginner to intermediate trails perfect for riders looking to enjoy some beautiful views. The terrain features gentle climbs, smooth single track, and a few technical sections that challenge riders without overwhelming them. It's an ideal spot for riders new to mountain biking or those seeking a relaxed but engaging ride.

READ REVIEWS
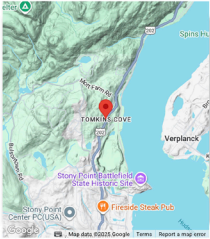
TOMKIN MOUNTAIN TRAIL
★★★

Level: Intermediate

Set amidst beautiful woodland, Tomkin Mountain features miles of trails best suited for intermediate riders. With moderate climbs, some rocky sections, and technical turns, it offers a rewarding challenge without being overwhelming. The trail system has multiple entry points and is conveniently located just off the highway, making it easily accessible.

READ REVIEWS

UPPER PAUGUSSETT STATE FOREST
★★★★

Level: Advanced

Eagle's Nest offers a thrilling ride with about 5 miles of intermediate trails that slowly become advanced as you ride farther. It features a mix of technical sections. Many riders note that one part of the trail is extremely narrow, demanding precise bike handling. This route is best suited for advanced riders with experience in tight, tree-lined sections.

READ REVIEWS

THE RUGGED ROUTE

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Ruggedroute@mtnbclub.com

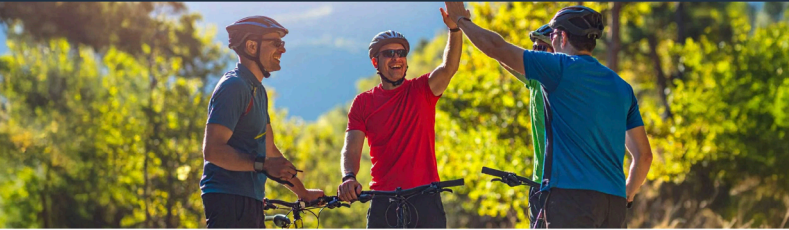Save 10% on memberships this week with code Fall10

RR THE RUGGED ROUTE

Membership   Rides   News   About

GROUP RIDES

Join us for weekly group rides that cater to all skill levels. Groups cater to mountain bikers of all levels, even the more leisure rider. Come have fun, join a community, and share the love of biking with other like minded people. Whether you're local or a drive away, there's always a spot for you in the pack.

AIRFIELD COUNTY 〜 FAIRFIELD COUNTY 〜 FAIRFIELD COUNTY 〜 FAIR

August 26, 2025
6:30pm

Wilton Cruise & Connect: A relaxed group ride perfect for all skill levels. Join us for an easy 9 miles at Rockland Preserve.

September 13, 2025
8:00am

Cruise & Connect Saturdays: We expanded our weekday group rides to Saturday mornings! This ride we will take the blue trail - a longer 15 miles down the Connecticut River.

September 21, 2025
11:00am

Sunday Spin: Our Sunday ride features 10 miles of smooth, rolling singletrack with medium elevation gain. Expect wide, well-maintained trails at Nutmeg State Forest.

〜 NEW HAVEN COUNTY 〜 NEW HAVEN COUNTY 〜 NEW HAVEN COUN

September 17, 2025
6:00pm

New Haven Cruise & Connect: We will be taking the popular double track loop that overlooks the city. Full route takes about 1.5 hours.

September 24, 2025
6:00pm

New Haven Cruise & Connect: Explore the new Naugatuck trail that was just built. We plan on stopping at one of the breweries nearby after the ride.

LITCHFIELD COUNTY 〜 LITCHFIELD COUNTY 〜 LITCHFIELD COUNTY

September 7, 2025
11:00am

Litchfield Cruise & Connect: Meet some of our new members as we show them the legendary 5-mile loop: Mattatuck Trail.

September 27, 2025
10:00am

Saturday Rollout: Plan on doing a few laps at the Lake Trail in Washington, Connecticut. Randy's Bike Shop will be on site in the parking lot to talk bike safety with some giveaways.

THE RUGGED ROUTE

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Ruggedroute@mtnbclub.com

SITE TESTING & PERFORMANCE:

Week six of developing my site consisted of designing the last few pages as well doing some site testing. With most of my content in place, I only had to create the class sign up form, the calendar, and the three news stories. Completing these final pages meant that I successfully created every page I intended, and my full site map has been fleshed out. It feels great to see a full site and I finally feel ready to go back and tweak things and of course, get user feedback.

This week I also published my site! Making it live was exciting and I can't wait to share my work with others. **To view my site from any browser you can visit: www.theruggedrouteclub.com.**

As I mentioned, I created the class sign up form, which was quick since it was very similar to the previous forms I made. But it was important that this form be different than the others and be tailored to the class page specifically.

I then created the calendar page, which I was able to customize as part of Squarespace's' block features. I was happy to find that it was easy to edit but I quickly realized that I needed more photos for the calendar. Which meant that I had to collect more images.

Then came the three news stories. I wanted to create these pages only so that when a user clicks on an article, they are taken somewhere. I felt that if I was going to take the time to create the buttons, I should use them, for the user's sake. These pages also required some new images, but luckily, I was able to find ones that fit the article theme. I decided that a basic article template would do here and there was no need for a more complex layout. This way it would be easy to read.

Since I was done designing the site, I decided to move on to site testing. I first decided to do a speed test. Unfortunately, I only got a score of 49. This was shocking to me because I thought using a content management system would save me from some of the issues that were flagged. However, I quickly learned the truth. After reading the break down, it seems that the home page image may be too large. Too large to download and too

large on the page. This caused the score to go down quite a bit, since this image is the first thing the user sees when the page loads. To fix this, I was advised to optimize the images to an even smaller size and to possibly make the image on the page smaller. The test also mentioned that the long load time may make the site unresponsive, impacting user experience.

However, the site as a whole got a good speed index of 2.8 seconds. My theory on this is that the homepage images may not have been optimized like the most recent pages I created, since we only discussed this in week four. Once I realized this, I decided that next week I will make it a priority to optimize the main navigation pages so that they can load faster.

I then did a compatibility test on my website. Since I couldn't find a free version online, I decided to check each page on multiple screens myself. I viewed my site in the Firefox and Safari browsers as well as viewing it on my iPad and iPhone. I am so glad I did this because I learned that the mobile version in Squarespace wasn't showing me an accurate representation.

On my phone I learned that the logo in the header is too small and that I may need to create a new logo just for the mobile version so that users can easily see it. Right now, it looks odd and way too small for the header.

There were also some pages where images were getting cut off or cropped oddly. Probably due to the smaller screen size. I was able to easily fix this by having the image fit the space/shape it was placed in, rather than filling the space. I also fixed some text boxes which were overlapping each other on certain pages.

When I viewed my site on my iPad, I made sure to double check images and spacing and made sure that the updates I recently made transferred. It was great to see my site in this new screen size because I was able to see how it would crop at these settings. Here is where I noticed that some buttons were too close to each other and that some article titles needed to be adjusted. But they were all minor things that I was able to change.

However, there is one issue I found that I am still struggling with. That is the trail maps page. For some reason the size of the maps change and are no longer squares when viewed on a tablet. For some reason it stays a square in mobile view, but the tablet is not displaying the page correctly. After looking this issue up online, it seems that this is a common problem with Squarespace templates and that tablet view can often be problematic. The padding on my site is already set to a minimal number so it seems that this page may need to be laid out differently. I plan to look into this more next week, since it may require some research and coding.

Lastly, I decided to get some quick user feedback by showing my site to a friend. I had her go through the website and click around, without me guiding her. Her feedback was valuable because this was a fresh set of eyes viewing my work. She mentioned that the site navigation was easy and made sense to her. But she did say that on the homepage, it might be beneficial if the titles: classes, group rides, and trails were links too. Not just the images. She also mentioned that the calendar is a great

tool for the site but she wishes it was easier to get to. This made me think about adding it to the main navigation, as this might be a user's preferred way to see upcoming events. Through her opinion, I plan to implement these ideas into my site.
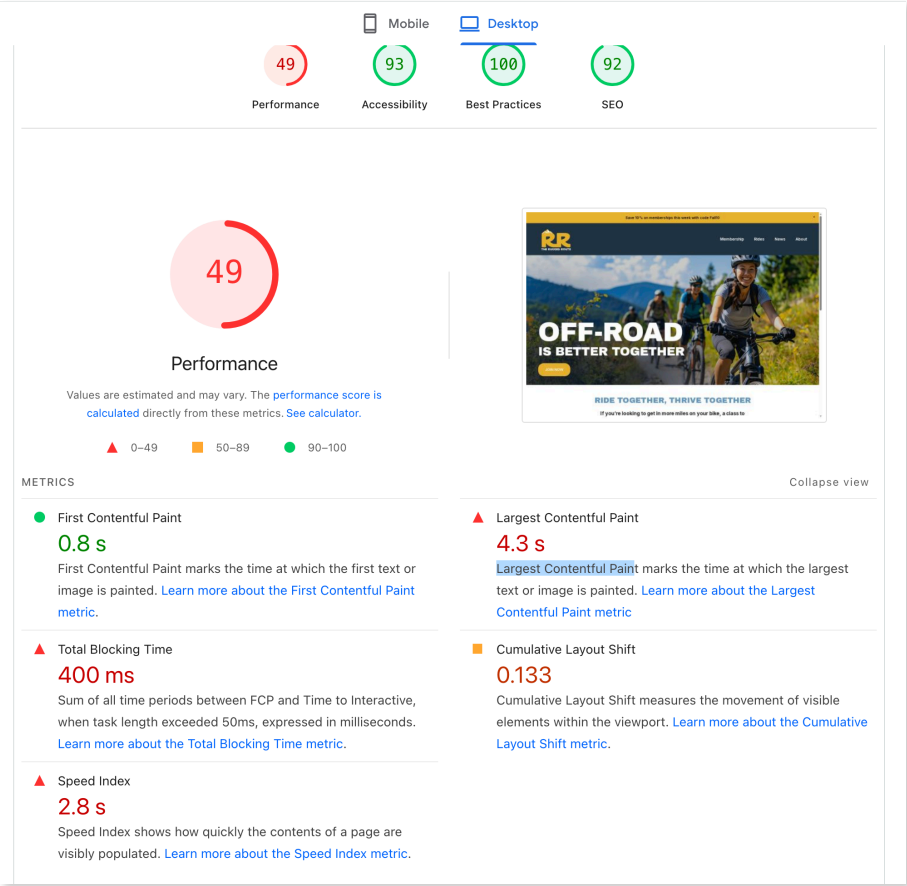
Testing the site this week has made me understand why people say a website is never done. I thought I would have more things finished and in place by now. But each week brings new changes and updates that I hadn't anticipated. However, I am confident going into week seven that my site will be complete next week and fully functional on all screens.

Screenshots from Squarespace

Week 6

WEBSITE TESTING

Membership **Rides** **News** **About**

CLASS SIGN UP FORM

By filling out and signing below, you're saying, *"I know this ride may get a little wild—but I'm ready!"* Mountain biking comes with real risks—including bumps, spills, unpredictable terrain, and even the chance of serious injury or worse. Helmets are required, and other safety gear is highly encouraged. You're responsible for knowing your own limits, riding within them, and bringing anything you personally need (water, snacks, first-aid, etc.).

By participating, you agree that neither the instructors nor the organizers can be held liable for accidents. You're not just signing; you're acknowledging you've read and understood this (yes, even the fine print!). Ride safe—and ride awesome.

TRIP REQUESTED:

TRIP DATE:
mm / dd / yyyy

NAME:
First Name   Last Name

ADDRESS:
Country
United States

Address Line 1 (required)

Address Line 2

City (required)   State (required)   ZIP Code (required)

EMAIL:

TELEPHONE:

DATE OF BIRTH:
mm / dd / yyyy

EMERGENCY CONTACT:
First Name   Last Name

TELEPHONE:

EXP DATE:

TOTAL AMOUNT:

DATE OF SUBMISSION:
mm / dd / yyyy

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE:

SUBMIT

THE RUGGED ROUTE

111 Trailhead Lane, Ridgeview, CT 08023
Ruggedroute@mtnbclub.com

CLUB CALENDAR

‹ **AUGUST 2025** ›

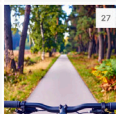| SU	MO	TU	WE	TH	FR	SA
					1	2
3	4 **NEW MEMBERS MEET UP** → 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM — Our New Members Meet-Up is a friendly, no-pressure event designed to welcome riders of all skill levels into the community. Bring your bike and talk trails, gear, and all things mountain biking. We will have refreshments, light bites, and class sign up forms.			7	8	9
10	11	12			14	15 / 16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 / 26	27	28			

CLUB CALENDAR

‹ **SEPTEMBER 2025** ›

SU	MO	TU	WE	TH	FR	SA
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 **LITCHFIELD CRUISE & CONNECT** → 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM — Meet some of our new members as we show them the legendary 5-mile loop: Mattatuck Trail.			10	11	12	13
14		17	18	19	20	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Article 1

RR THE RUGGED ROUTE

Membership   Rides   News   About

THE RUGGED ROUTE WRAPS UP AN EPIC MONTH OF SPRING RIDES

This past weekend, the Rugged Route turned the spring season into a celebration of dirt, camaraderie, and fresh single track. Over fifty riders gathered at Connecticut's beloved Case Mountain trailhead—a place known for its rocky, hilly terrain and challenging trails through forest and glacial boulder fields.

The morning kicked off under a canopy of budding green, as riders of all abilities formed groups ranging from "easy flow" to "tech shred." Led by seasoned ride captains, the groups wove through the beaver trail and nearby connector paths, tackling steep climbs, ladder-bridges, and rock gardens.

The beginners' group was the place to be. Smart pacing, supportive cheers, and on-the-spot tips made the rocky terrain far more approachable. One local rider shared that, *"Connecticut has a lot of rocks… but there seems to be a lot more on this side of the state,"* reflecting what everyone was experiencing firsthand on the trail.

In true Rugged Route spirit, rest stops brought laughter and swapping of gear advice—like whether to ride trails mud-prone in spring or stick to trails known for better drainage, like River Highland. Seasoned riders shared trail-hunting wisdom too, drawing from favorites like Rockland Preserve to add future ride options.

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The afternoon rolled into a post-ride picnic at the trailhead, where club members relaxed, ate, and encouraged newcomers. We also plotted upcoming group rides across Connecticut's network of trails.

THE RUGGED ROUTE

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Ruggedroute@mtnbclub.com

Article 2

RR THE RUGGED ROUTE

Membership   Rides   News   About

GEARING UP: THE TOP 5 BIKING ESSENTIALS OF 2025

With new gear coming out faster than we can install it, this list will hopefully help you decide on which purchases are right for your next ride. This year's top five essentials aren't just upgrades—they're trail-tightening, road-soaring innovations poised to redefine what riders expect from their kit.

1) Sena Smart Cycling Helmet
Imagine gliding down a crisp trail, surrounded by forest and flow, all while staying seamlessly connected. That's the Sena promise—with integrated over-ear speakers, Bluetooth, and an advanced Mesh Intercom allowing you to chat, stream directions, and stay aware of your surroundings. By blending safety and connectivity, it sets the new standard for modern helmets.

2) OnGuard Lightweight Lock
In 2025, leaving your bike unattended at a café doesn't mean compromise. The OnGuard RockSolid 8590 offers Gold Secure Diamond-level protection in a surprisingly portable 1.3 kg frame—making it one of the most travel-friendly yet secure locks available.

3) Specialized RuggedX Bike Tires
When efficiency, comfort, and speed converge, you get the TorchX tires. Crowned the best all-around mountain bike tire of 2025, it delivers supreme performance. Riders consistently noted that they were lighter with smoother hubs—offering improved acceleration, and enhanced control.

4) Flitdeck Handlebar
Meet the Flitdeck—an all-in-one handlebar with waterproof carbon-fiber build and hand grips that stay comfortable mid after ride. The handlebars have a 40mm+ rise, allowing you ride in a more upright position for comfort over long rides. Reviewers and riders are praising the upgrades this year, saying they will stick w...

5) Rapha Revolutionary Trail Shoe
Rapha delivers style and substance with their new line of sneaker... are stiff enough for efficient pedaling, with a flexible forefoot for c... performance and urban aesthetics, these are tailored for long rid...

THE RUGGED ROUTE

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Article 3

RR THE RUGGED ROUTE

Membership   Rides   News   About

RUGGED ROUTE'S TRAIL CONSERVATION EFFORTS

Connecticut has long been a leader in environmental stewardship, and its Rugged Route's trail conservation initiatives are no exception. From the rugged terrains of the Litchfield Hills to the serene woodlands of the Quiet Corner, we have assisted the state with innovative strategies to preserve and enhance its vast network of trails.

One of the cornerstones of the state's trail conservation success is its collaborative approach. Local land trusts, state agencies, and community organizations have come together to form the Connecticut Trails Coalition. This coalition works to ensure that trails are not only preserved but also accessible and sustainable for future generations. Our president - Dan - has recently joined the monthly meetings and will be looking for volunteers in the coming months to help the coalition.

Recognizing the financial challenges of trail maintenance, the Rugged Route has pioneered innovative funding models. We introduced a "Trail Adoption Program," allowing businesses and individuals to sponsor specific trail sections. In return, sponsors receive signage recognition and the satisfaction of knowing they are contributing to the preservation of the state's natural beauty.

Education is also key to fostering a conservation-minded public. Recently we have partnered with schools to integrate trail conservation into curricula. High school students participated in hands-on projects last month, like building birdhouses or conducting water quality tests, instilling a deep appreciation for the environment from a young age.

As the club continues to expand and get more recognition, we plan to have more fundraising events to help protects parks and trails. Of course, money is only one factor, and we will need our members to step up and help us physically maintain the trails we love to ride. Be on the lookout not just for group rides but group conservation classes. The club's proactive measures, collaborative partnerships, and community involvement serve as a model for other regions striving to balance development with environmental preservation.

THE RUGGED ROUTE

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