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The Times Leader

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SPORTS

Friday, October 6, 2006

Pokas OVAC CC on tap Saturday

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

The Ohio Valley Athletic Conference will continue crowning fall-sports champions Saturday morning in Byesville.

The annual Cal Pokas OVAC Cross Country Championship will be held with championship trophies to be awarded in three classes for boys and girls.

The action kicks off at Meadowbrook High School with the boys setting out on a 3.1 mile jaunt at 10 a.m. The girls will follow immediately there after.

Set to try to defend their titles from 2005 are: St. John Central in 1-

A/2-A. The Irish have won three straight titles and a fourth would tie them with Caldwell and Shadyside for the conference record.

Bellaire is aiming for its second straight 3-A title, while Buckeye Local is back to defend the 4-A crown.

On the girls' side, the Lady Irish are looking for a repeat in Class 1-A/2-A, while Bellaire and Wheeling Park have won the last three titles in 3-A and 4-A, respectively.

Ticketed to run in the 1-A/2-A class are Mount DeChantal, St. John, Shadyside, Cameron, Linsly, Caldwell, River, Steubenville Catholic, Barnesville, Shenandoah and Wheeling Central.

Entered in 3-A are: Bellaire, Tyler Consolidated, Magnolia, Union Local, Martins Ferry, St. Clairsville, Meadowbrook, Indian Creek, Harrison Central and Oak Glen.

Joining the Patriots and Panthers in 4-A are: Steubenville, Weir, Edison, Beaver, Cambridge, East Liverpool, Brooke, Zanesville and John Marshall.

Here is a capsule look at the divisions:

In the 1-A/2-A boys race, it appears to be the Irish Invitational once again, however, Irish mentor Jeremy Midei knows you can never count out Caldwell and legendary coach Dugan Hill as well as Shadyside, which has enjoyed a

strong season thus far.

"Shadyside and Caldwell are both quality teams within our division, and Wheeling Park looks like a contender for the overall championship," Midei said. "But if we can run with the same type of focus and intensity that we did last week (at Pickerington), I think we'll be very tough to beat."

The Irish are led by Nick Moscato who has enjoyed an extremely strong season thus far. Zach Yereb continues to round back into shape after an early-season injury and sophomore Sam Foster is becoming a solid third runner.

The remainder of the Irish cast is comprised of Sean Nolan, Nathan Cencula and Luke Holubeck.

"It's not like we can play defense against other teams," Midei noted. "We're going to run our race on Saturday and see what happens."

Shadyside has enjoyed a strong season under first-year coach Bob Caldwell. The Tigers claimed a victory in last week's Cambridge Invitational.

The Orange are led by Adam Amato who is the team's leader. Troy Tollett is the team's second runner and Chris Crow is the third runner. Eric Amato checks in at number four for the Tigers. Jordan Tollett rounds out the top five for the Orange. Bryan Crozier is also a contender for the

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● OVAC

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Tigers.

On the girls' side, St. John Central appears on paper to once again be the favorite, but perennial power Barnesville has undergone a resurgence this season and could figure into the scoring.

The Irish return the defending individual champion on the female side in junior Natalie Perzanowski. She's complemented by freshman sister Kelly Perzanowski, senior Claire LeMasters, Sarah Kosky, Annie Holubeck and Christine Bowman.

"We've been running without two girls we projected to be in top-five runners, so we've really had our depth tested," Midei explained. "The girls who were figured to be sixth and seventh runners have had to step up and fourth and fifth runners, and they have. We've faced some of the best competition in the state already, and feel our best races lie ahead. Hopefully, starting this weekend."

The Lady Shamrocks, meanwhile, were the beneficiaries of the moving of sophomore Stephanie Morgan who moved back to the Ohio Valley after spending her freshman season in Clarkston, Mi.

Morgan is the youngest of four Morgan sisters who all earned all-OVAC accolades. Jenny Morgan -- who is now running at the University of Michigan -- won the OVAC CC title in 2002 and 2003.

"We've been holding Stephanie back some so far," said Barnesville head coach Mark Brown. "As we continue to get closer to the district, we'll start to let her go a little bit more. She's been practicing hard and she's due to have a big race."

Morgan is unblemished this season and figures to be right in the thick of the title chase. She's completed by a pair of freshman in Carly Jones and Mariah Miller. Tiffany Roberts, Ashley Anderson and Amilee Jackson round out the top five for Barnesville.

"I don't know much about some of the West Virginia schools, but I would have to think that on paper St. John is the favorite," Brown said. "I think we can bat-

tle with Caldwell and be right in there."

Shadyside enters a squad once again this season. The Lady Tigers are led by Marissa Melanko, Tru Reisberger, Jill Lytton, Sarah Benedetta and Samantha Starling.

In 3-A, St. Clairsville, Bellaire and Harrison Central all figure to be right in the mix for the team title.

The Big Reds boys have been in a rebuilding mode, however, they found a way to pull out a victory at Rio Grande last week, which gave veteran head coach Chris Arno and company a big lift.

"That win last week was a huge confidence builder," Arno explained. "This is probably the most competitive 3-A boys has been in the past four years. Harrison Central, St. Clairsville and Union Local have all shown great strides over the year and continue to battle."

The Big Reds' top five is comprised of Robbie Chilson, Joey Fry, Kyle Faykus, Travis Williams and Pat Ging.

St. Clairsville -- which has been strong during the early season -- has a top five which includes Alex Thornburg, Jonathan Ebbert, Kyle Timko, Shane Scheurer and Cody Ruminski.

"We have a lot of youth and we are looking forward to the competition on Saturday," said St. C. head coach Tony Cioli. "We are hoping for some beautiful weather and good course conditions."

Harrison Central -- which captured the inaugural Buckeye 8 title last month -- has a bonified opportunity to claim its second OVAC title in school history.

The Huskies are led by Derrick Sproul who was the individual winner at the Buckeye 8. Justin Brooks, Marcus Wise, Casey Kaiser and Mike Beaird have been stable all season. The Huskies received another boost this past weekend at Cambridge when Jimmy Beaird returned from an injury.

Union Local is enjoying an up-and-coming season for Coach Greg Miller. The Jets are led by Billy Padgelak, Nick Nardo, Nick Arnold, Dustin Hess and

Daniel Hess. The other member of the varsity of Zac Blon.

The defending overall individual champion also resides in 3-A as Oak Glen's Brian Wilson claimed the title last fall.

THE 3-A GIRLS meet also appears to be balanced with St. Clairsville, Harrison Central and Bellaire all duking out once again.

The Lady Red Devils claimed the Buckeye 8 title last month and figure to be right in the mix for this conference crown as well.

"It's hard to predict what might happen Saturday," said St. C. girls coach Heidi Mooney. "You just never know who will show up and that applies to us and other teams. I am just hoping our girls show and run like I know they can. I really believe we are focused and where we need to be in order to have a strong showing."

The Lady Red Devils are led by senior Alanna Seamon who has been strong in the early season. The remainder of the St. C. top five is made up of Jamie Garbash, Kate Hodgson, Christina Seamon and Kaila Ruminski.

Harrison Central has been on right on the Lady Red Devils' heels much of the fall.

Coach Scott Porter's outfit is led by Erica Skinner, Samantha McIntosh, Kelsey Harrison, Kim Eckroth and Sandy Eckroth.

Bellaire's Lady Big Reds are made up of just five runners. They include: Rachel Antonik, Alysia Scott, Kathryn Jones, Jessi Boston and Kelsey Ponzani.

The 4-A field is wide open.

Buckeye Local's boys could be right in the thick of the competition with Mark Staten, Paul Jancura, Ronnie Balvin and Cody Wiltshire making up the top five.

Buckeye Local's girls are led by Sherry Borsos who could be right in the thick of the individual title hunt. Another Lady Panther to keep an eye on is Jess Battilochi.

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CAL POKAS OVAC CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

Park Sweeps 4-A Titles for First Time

Patriots' Beabout claims overall crown; Yaeger leads girls to fourth straight triumph

By RICK THORP
Staff Writer

Saturday was a historic day for the Wheeling Park High School cross country program.

For the first time in the nearly 30-year history of the Ohio County consolidation, the Patriots brought home both the boys' and girls' Class AAAA trophies from the Cal Pokas OVAC Cross Country Championships.

"The hard work is starting to pay off," said an elated Park head coach Michael Jebbia after action concluded at Meadowbrook High School in Byesville.

"But we still have more goals we would like to accomplish."

The Patriots' Ryan Beabout, the favorite by many to capture the overall individual title, proved the prognosticators correct as he broke the tape in 16:47 for his first OVAC title.

Wheeling Park finished with 47 points, just two behind Bellaire St. John for the meet's overall team championship. It was the Patriots first boys' crown since 1994.

Buckeye Local, who had won the last three Class AAAA titles, was second with 189 points. East Liverpool was third with 222 points,

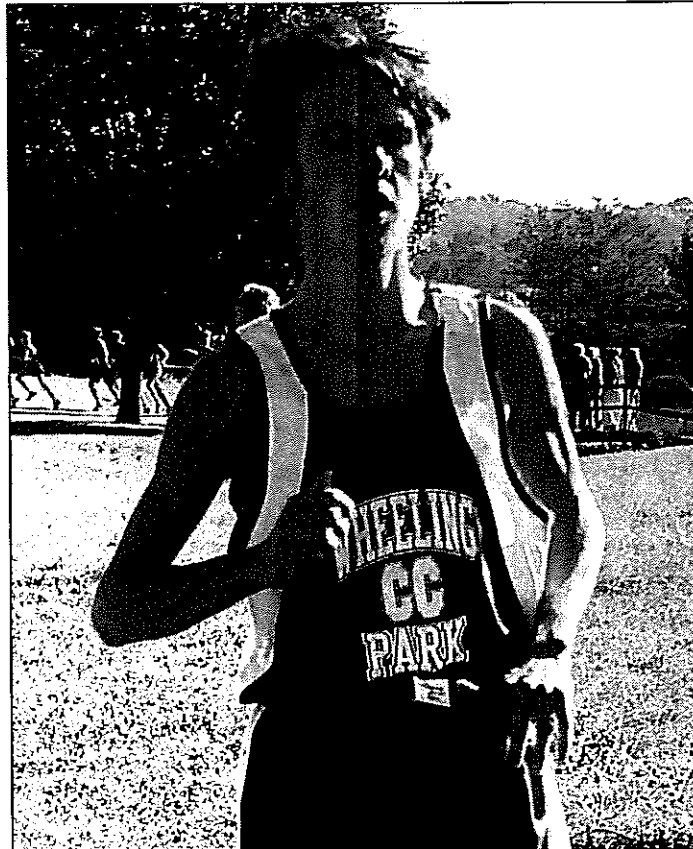


Photo by Rick Thorp

Wheeling Park's Ryan Beabout races toward the boys' overall championship at Saturday's OVAC championships.

followed by Zanesville with 347.

On the girls side, super sophomore Courtney Yaeger led

the Patriots to their fourth consecutive Class AAAA championship.

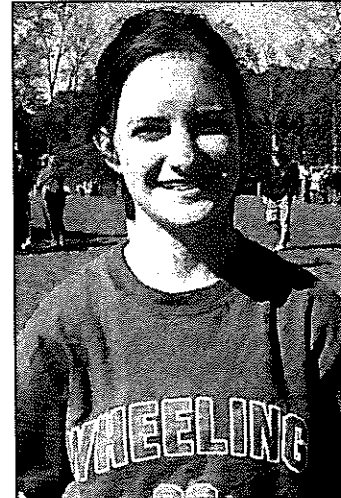
Wheeling Park finished with 150 points, followed by Buckeye Local (199), Brooke (243), East Liverpool (309), John Marshall (386) and Zanesville (412).

For Beabout, Saturday's win was the completion of a goal he had set for himself his freshman year.

"I didn't really have to push that hard after that first mile because I was pretty far ahead," said Beabout, the top-ranked runner in West Virginia Class AAA.

"I pulled ahead about 800 meters into the race and it felt good."

The junior was never threatened. He jumped out to the lead shortly after the gun went off and then cruised. He finished nearly 18 seconds ahead of the runner-up in the overall race, Nick Moscato of Bellaire St. John.



Courtney Yaeger

and Brandon Janeczko (19th overall) also posted top 10 finishes in 4-A.

Others finishing in the top 10 in 4-A were Zanesville's Emerson Rhoad (ninth overall), East Liverpool's Erik Reed (12th overall) and Buckeye Local's Ronnie Balvin (22nd overall).

Phil Provenzano (23rd overall) paced the Brooke effort, while Stefan Riggs (96th overall) was tops for John Marshall.

Yaeger finished fifth overall as a freshman and improved to third this year in what was an extremely competitive girls' field.

"The girls ran well, and obviously Courtney ran a good race," Jebbia said.

"She sat out last week with some tendonitis in her leg, but I told her to try to go out with the Perzanowski girls from St. John."

Another sophomore, Buckeye Local's Sherry Borsos, was third in the 4-A standings and seventh overall.

Others in the top 10 in 4-A were Brooke's Paige Govey (18th overall) and Christina DiBartolomeo (38th overall), Cambridge's Kelsey Braido (22nd overall), Buckeye Local's Jess Battilochi (23rd overall), Wheeling Park's Laura Dixon (35th overall) and Gennie Conlin (39th overall), Edison's Artemia Lombardozi (36th overall) and East Liverpool's Lisa

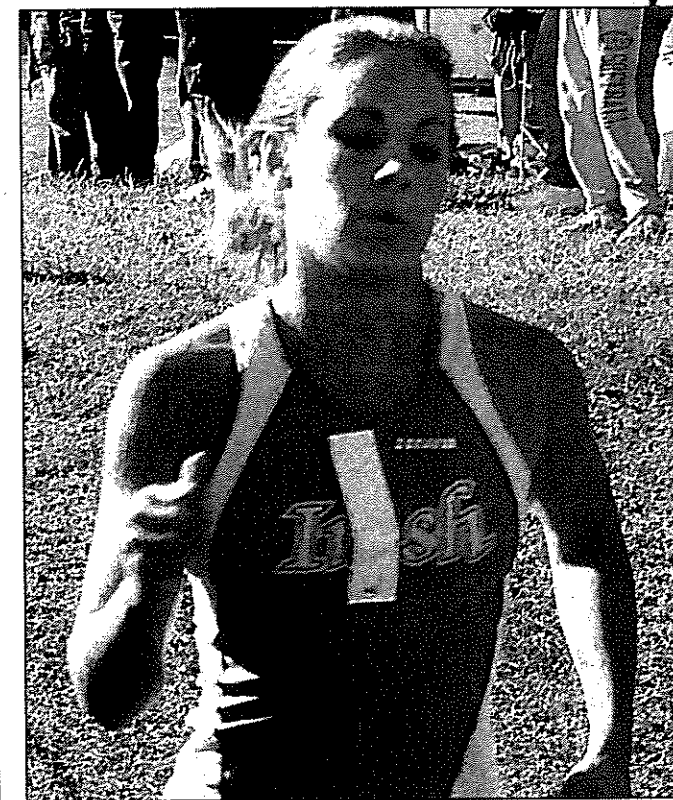


Photo by Rick Thorp

Bellaire St. John's Natalie Perzanowski tackles the tough course at Meadowbrook High School Saturday.

Bellaire St. John Boys, Girls Repeat

Barnesville's Morgan injured in race

By RICK THORP
Staff Writer

It was a year of repeats Saturday for Bellaire St. John at the Cal Pokas OVAC Cross Country Championships.

The Irish's Natalie Perzanowski picked up her second straight individual and Class AA-A crown to lead coach Jeremy Midei's team to the overall championship and the single A title for the second straight year at Meadowbrook High School.

The St. John boys won the overall and Class AA-A titles behind the legs of Nick Moscato and Zach Yereb, who finished second and third in the overall results.

Bellaire St. John's girls finished the day with the top two girls in the overall event and 51 points.

Wheeling Central turned in another strong performance to finish second in AA-A with 102 points, followed by Caldwell (104), Barnesville (104), Lincoln (105) and



Stephanie Caruso



On the girls side, super soph-
omore Courtney Yaeger led

Wheeling Park finished with 150 points, followed by Buckeye Local (199), Brooke (243), East Liverpool (309), John Marshall (386) and Zanesville (412).

For Beabout, Saturday's win was the completion of a goal he had set for himself his freshman year.

"I didn't really have to push that hard after that first mile because I was pretty far ahead," said Beabout, the top-ranked runner in West Virginia Class AAA.

"I pulled ahead about 800 meters into the race and it felt good."

The junior was never threatened. He jumped out to the lead shortly after the gun went off and then cruised. He finished nearly 18 seconds ahead of the runner-up in the overall race, Nick Moscato of Bellaire St. John.

"Ryan looked strong out there," Jebbia said. "It was a total team effort. The kids have been training hard all season. This was one of our goals, win the OVAC."

"After finishing 12th at state last year, Ryan basically said he was going to put the time in in the offseason and be the best runner in the state. And that's what he is right now."

"Some runners might have a bad week, but Ryan's been consistent every week."

Weir's Stewart Jones, who has quietly been having a standout season, finished second in the class standings and fourth overall with a time of 17:08. His teammate, Ronald Read, was eighth in AAAA.

Wheeling Park's Jason Bennett (eighth overall), Kyle Gramlich (11th overall), Spencer Teufel (13th overall)

an extremely competitive girls' field.

"The girls ran well, and obviously Courtney ran a good race," Jebbia said.

"She sat out last week with some tendonitis in her leg, but I told her to try to go out with the Perzanowski girls from St. John."

Another sophomore, Buckeye Local's Sherry Borsos, was third in the 4-A standings and seventh overall.

Others in the top 10 in 4-A were Brooke's Paige Govey (18th overall) and Christina DiBartolomeo (38th overall), Cambridge's Kelsey Braido (22nd overall), Buckeye Local's Jess Battilochi (23rd overall), Wheeling Park's Laura Dixon (35th overall) and Gennie Conlin (39th overall), Edison's Artemia Lombardozzi (36th overall) and East Liverpool's Lisa Zimmerman (37th overall).

Jami Fonner (74th overall) crossed the finish line first for John Marshall.

BOYS

Team Standings

1. Wheeling Park 47; 2. Buckeye Local 189; 3. East Liverpool 222; 4. Zanesville 347.

Top 10 Individuals

1. Ryan Beabout (WP) 16:47*; 2. Stewart Jones (Weir) 17:08; 3. Jason Bennett (WP) 17:25; 4. Emerson Rhoad (Zanes) 17:34; 5. Kyle Gramlich (WP) 17:36; 6. Erik Reed (EL) 17:37; 7. Spencer Teufel (WP) 17:43; 8. Ronald Read (Weir) 17:47; 9. Brandon Janeczko (WP) 17:54; 10. Ronnie Balvin (BL) 17:57.

*Overall Meet Champion

GIRLS

Team Standings

1. Wheeling Park 150; 2. Buckeye Local 189; 3. Brooke 243; 4. East Liverpool 309; 5. John Marshall 386; 6. Zanesville 412.

Top 10 Individuals

1. Courtney Yaeger (WP) 19:46; 2. Sherry Borsos (BL) 20:51; 3. Paige Govey (Brk) 21:53; 4. Kelsey Braido (Camb) 22:09; 5. Jess Battilochi (BL) 22:16; 6. Laura Dixon (WP) 23:16; 7. Artemia Lombardozzi (Edi) 23:18; 8. Lisa Zimmerman (EL) 23:26; 9. Christina DiBartolomeo (Brk) 23:28; 10. Gennie Conlin (WP) 23:29.

St. Clairsville Boys And Huskie Girls Win Titles

By RICK THORP
Staff Writer

Erica Skinner and Samantha McIntosh both posted top 10 finishes Saturday as Harrison Central cruised to the Class AAA championship at the Cal Pokas OVAC Cross Country Championships at sun-splashed Meadowbrook High School in Byesville.

The Huskies ended Bellaire's run of four straight conference crowns.

Harrison Central topped the 3-A standings with 110 points, followed by St. Clairsville with 146, Martins Ferry with 289 and Indian Creek with 354.

The results were flipped on the boys' side, with St. Clairsville walking away with the championship trophy, ending Bellaire's two-year reign.

The Red Devils recorded 175 points, while the Huskies had 233. Oak Glen was third with 241, followed by Union Local (327), Bellaire (334), Magnolia (367) and Tyler Consolidated (431).

Skinner, a freshman, captured the 3-A titles for the Huskies with a time of 20:17. She was fourth in the overall standings.

McIntosh, fifth last year, was second this year with a time of 20:55. She was eighth overall.

Another Harrison Central runner, Kelcie Harrison, was seventh in the class standings and 20th overall.



Brian Wilson



Erica Skinner

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Country Championships. The Irish's Natalie Perzanowski picked up her second straight individual and Class AA-A crown to lead coach Jeremy Midei's team to the overall championship and the single A title for the second straight year at Meadowbrook High School.

The St. John boys won the overall and Class AA-A titles behind the legs of Nick Moscato and Zach Yereb, who finished second and third in the overall results.

Bellaire St. John's girls finished the day with the top two girls in the overall event and 51 points.

Wheeling Central turned in another strong performance to finish second in AA-A with 102 points, followed by Caldwell (104), Barnesville (184), Linsly (325) and Shadyside (344).

The Irish boys finished with 45 points, with the Maroon Knights in second with 172. Caldwell was next with 174 followed by Shadyside (261), Barnesville (287), Linsly (409) and River (588).

Perzanowski's victory in 19:07 wasn't a surprise. But it was who didn't win that caused concern among the throng at the Byesville course.

Barnesville sophomore Stephanie Morgan, thought by many as the favorite in the event, jumped out to a big early lead.

But as the runners rounded the high school and headed into the home stretch, Morgan couldn't be seen. It was obvious something had happened.

A few moments after runners started cross the finish line, Morgan turned the corner of the school. She ended up finishing 63rd with a time of 24:49.

"She said a real sharp pain went through her calf and it just tightened up on her," Barnesville coach Mark Brown said after speaking with Morgan following the race.

"I don't know if it was a Charley Horse or what, but it's real painful to walk on."

Brown said Morgan went down three times on the course, before regaining her strength and jogging to the finish.

"That was a pretty gutsy performance to even finish," Brown said.

Perzanowski finished 1-2 in the overall race, with Natalie's sister, Kelly, a freshman, taking runner-up honors in 19:46.

Claire LeMasters (12th overall) and Sarah Kosky (13th overall) also posted top 10 finishes in AA-A for the Irish.

The Maroon Knights' senior duo of Stephanie Caruso and Lauren Bauer crossed the finish line, fifth and sixth overall, respectively.

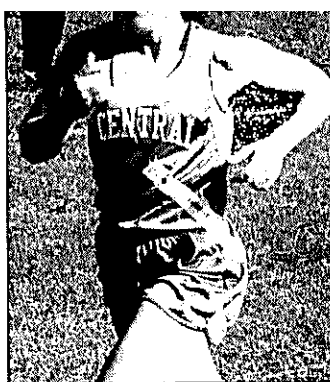
The two were part of the Central team that won the overall OVAC crown a few years back and their coach, Dr. Heather Wayt, said the experience showed Saturday.

"I think our girls ran really well," she said. "They got out strong and several of the girls set (personal records)."

"Everyone ran like we expected to run."

Caruso said the talent in the field was top-notch.

"All the girls got out well, but there was a lot of good



Stephanie Caruso



Brett Saltrick

competition here today," she said. "The first mile was fast and I just tried to stay with the top pack the rest of the way."

Caldwell finished a few points behind the Maroon Knights in the team standings, led by Dawn Spicer (11th overall), Sarah Crum (15th overall) and Adriane Steed (19th overall).

Barnesville's Karly Jones (10th overall) was the fifth Class AA-A runner to finish. Marissa Melanko was 32nd overall for Shadyside, followed by Linsly's Danielle Sevell. Daina Myers had the top finish (73rd overall) for Cameron.

Sam Foster (seventh overall), Luke Holubeck (18th overall) and Sean Nolan (20th overall) also turned in top 10 performances in Class AA-A.

Wheeling Central's top finisher was Chris Gallaway (21st overall).

Caldwell's Cody Morrison was third in the class results (fifth overall). Other top 10 finishers in AA-A were Linsly's Brett Saltrick (14th overall), Barnesville's Adam Sellers (17th overall) and Cameron's Cliff Arbogast (25th overall).

Adam Amato was 43rd overall for Shadyside.

BOYS

Team Standings

1. Bellaire St. John 45*; 2. Wheeling Central 172; 3. Caldwell 174; 4. Shadyside 281; 5. Barnesville 287; 6. Linsly 409; 7. River 588.

*Overall Meet Champion

Top 10 Individuals

1. Nick Moscato (BSJ) 17:05; 2. Zach Yereb (BSJ) 17:08; 3. Cody Morrison (Cald) 17:15; 4. Sam Foster (BSJ) 17:22; 5. Brett Saltrick (Lin) 17:45; 6. Adam Sellers (Barnes) 17:48; 7. Luke Holubeck (BSJ) 17:53; 8. Sean Nolan (BSJ) 17:55; 9. Chris Gallaway (WC) 17:55; 10. Clifford Arbogast (Came) 18:10.

GIRLS

Team Standings

1. Bellaire St. John 51*; 2. Wheeling Central 102; 3. Caldwell 104; 4. Barnesville 184; 5. Linsly 325; 6. Shadyside 344.

*Overall Meet Champion

Top 10 Individuals

1. Natalie Perzanowski (BSJ) 19:07*; 2. Kelly Perzanowski (BSJ) 19:46; 3. Stephanie Caruso (WC) 20:25; 4. Lauren Bauer (WC) 20:36; 5. Karly Jones (Barnes) 21:18; 6. Dawn Spicer (Cald) 21:31; 7. Claire LeMasters (BSJ) 21:34; 8. Sarah Kosky (BSJ) 21:35; 9. Sarah Crum (Cald) 21:54; 10. Adriane Steed (Cald) 21:54.

*Overall Meet Champion

TITLES

Continued from page B2

Red Devils in the top 10 in the class results were Alanna Seamon (ninth overall), Kate Hodgson (14th overall) and Jamie Garbash (17th overall).

Bellaire's Alysia Scott was fifth in the class standings and 16th overall.

Others in the top 10 in 3-A were Indian Creek's Chelsea Furda (21st overall), Magnolia's Alexis Emch (25th overall) and Oak Glen's Michaelene Ayers (26th overall).

Alonna Ackerman (40th overall) was Martins Ferry's top performer, while Chelsea Wells (58th overall) was tops for Tyler Consolidated.

Oak Glen's Brian Wilson brought home in the Class AAA individual title on the boys' side for the second straight year.

But it wasn't enough for the Golden Bears to surpass St. Clairsville for the title.

"We've had a good season so far," said Red Devils head coach Tony Ciroti. "We are really excited about this win. I'm hoping it will propel us to good performances at districts, regionals and state."

Freshman Alex Thornburg was the Red Devils top runner (15th overall).

"He has really stepped up for us," Ciroti said. "I'm glad we have him on the team this year."

Jonathan Ebbert (33rd over-

all) and Kyle Timko (39th overall) also posted top 10 finishes for the Red Devils.

"Overall, we have a really young team," Ciroti said. "I'm just excited about this and the things to come."

Harrison Central was paced by Derrick Sproul (10th overall) and Justin Brooks (31st overall).

Union Local had one top 10 finisher in Nick Nardo (44th overall) as did coach Chris Arno's Big Reds in Robbie Chilson (35th overall).

Tyler Consolidated's Aaron Estep (28th overall) and Magnolia's Hemal Patel (29th overall) were the other Top 10 performers.

BOYS

Team Standings

1. St. Clairsville 175; 2. Harrison Central 233; 3. Oak Glen 241; 4. Union Local 327; 5. Bellaire 334; 6. Magnolia 367; 7. Tyler Consolidated 431.

Top 10 Individuals

1. Brian Wilson (OG) 17:20; 2. Derrick Sproul (HC) 17:34; 3. Alex Thornburg (St.C) 17:47; 4. Aaron Estep (TC) 18:16; 5. Hemal Patel (Mag) 18:17; 6. Justin Brooks (HC) 18:18; 7. Jonathan Ebbert (St.C) 18:19; 8. Robbie Chilson (Bel) 18:35; 9. Kyle Timko (St.C) 18:46; 10. Nick Nardo (UL) 18:56.

GIRLS

Team Standings

1. Harrison Central 110; 2. St. Clairsville 146; 3. Martins Ferry 289; 4. Indian Creek 354.

Top 10 Individuals

1. Ericka Skinner (HC) 20:17; 2. Samantha McIntosh (HC) 20:55; 3. Alanna Seamon (St.C) 20:59; 4. Kate Hodgson (St.C) 21:37; 5. Alysia Scott (Bel) 21:46; 6. Jamie Garbash (St.C) 21:52; 7. Kelcie Harrison (HC) 22:02; 8. Chelsea Furda (IC) 22:06; 9. Alexis Emch (Mag) 22:25; 10. Michaelene Ayers (OG) 22:29.

Champs Are Back For More

OVAC Cross Country
meet on tap for Saturday

By RICK THORP
Staff Writer

Bellaire St. John's Natalie Perzanowski and Oak Glen's Brian Wilson will be back to defend their individual titles Saturday as the OVAC Cross Country Championships step off at Meadowbrook High School.

Action begins at 10 a.m. with the boys' varsity race. The girls' varsity race will follow, along with junior varsity and middle school events.

Perzanowski leads a strong Irish contingent that should be in the hunt for the overall and Class AA-A crowns.

"It will go through Bellaire St. John." Wheeling Central co-cross country coach Tim Weaver

Perzanowski, who led the Irish to the class AA-Atitle last season, is coming off a big victory last Saturday at the Panther Invitational in Pickerington, Ohio, in which she crossed the tape in 19:01.

Also finishing in the top 10 was Natalie's younger sister, Kelly, a freshman.

Barnesville, Wheeling Central and Caldwell are also contenders for the top spot in AA-A.

The Shamrocks are paced by Stephanie Morgan, who moved back to Belmont County from Michigan in the offseason. Another in

the long line of talented Morgan runners, Morgan is coming off a big victory at the Cambridge Invitational.

"Anyone will be hard pressed to beat her," said Bellaire St. John coach Jeremy Midei. "She's helped get that program back to where it was. She has raised the team's level of intensity."

Wheeling Central's strength is its 1-2 senior punch of Stephanie Caruso and Lauren Bauer. The duo are ranked second and fourth, respectively, in the latest West Virginia state individual rankings.

Shadyside is paced by Marissa Melanko.

The Bellaire St. John boys captured the AA-A and overall meet team titles last season and are once again a strong favorite.

"It will go through Bellaire St. John," said Wheeling Central co-coach Tim Weaver, who also sees Shadyside has presenting a strong challenge.

The Irish also had a strong showing in Pickerington, with sophomore Sam Foster and seniors Nick Mosacto and Zach Yereb taking second-through fourth-place, respectively.

"We've been doing very well," Midei said. "The schedule we've ran against has been one of the best in the state. We just beat the No. 2-ranked team in Ohio Division III last weekend."

As for the Maroon Knights, Weaver said his team, ranked fourth in West Virginia Class AA-A's latest rankings, is having one of its best seasons led by senior Chris Gallaway, one of the top-ranked individuals in the Mountain State.

"This is a good race because its highly competitive," said Weaver, who coaches with Dr. Heather Wayt, said. "When you compete against Ohio schools you will always have good competition."

Champs

(Continued from Page 17)

Bellaire is the defending champ in both Class AAA events.

Wilson is probably the top threat on the boys' side. On the girls' side, Magnolia's Alexis Emch and Harrison Central's Samantha McIntosh and Ericka Skinner are among those who could take home individual titles.

Wheeling Park is looking to make history in Class 4-A. The school has never won both the boys and girls titles in the same season and coach Michael Jebbia is hoping this is the

year.

"The boys haven't won the OVAC since 1994 so they're kind of on a mission," he said. "They are working hard. We want to get the OVAC first before we start thinking about regionals and state."

The Patriots boys are also one of the favorites to claim the meet's overall title, thanks in part to Ryan Beabout. The junior has finished no lower than second this season.

"Overall, Park will be the team we'll be competing with the most," Midei

said.

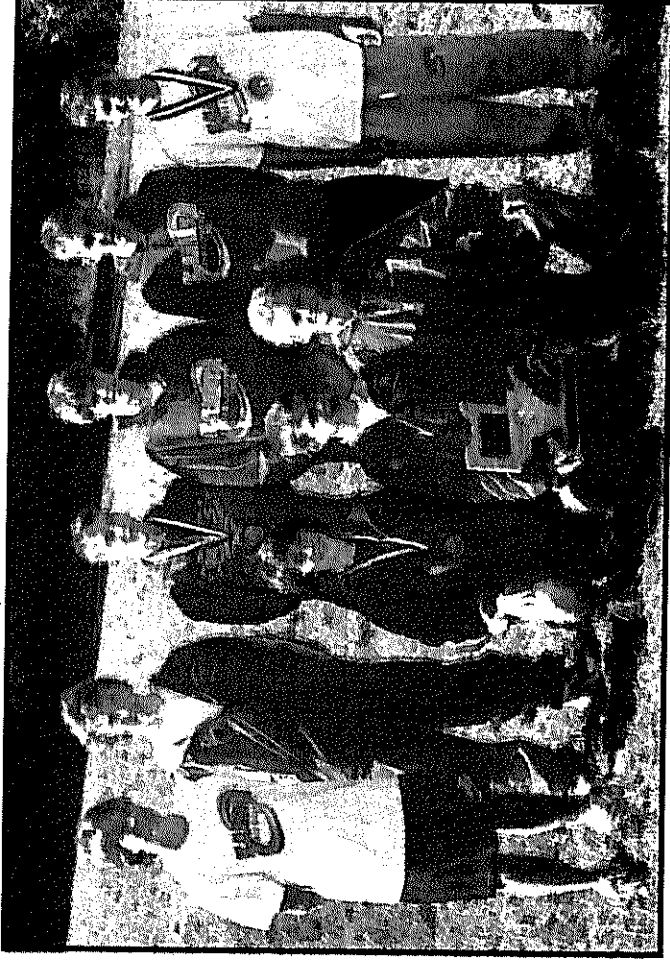
The Patriots will get a strong test from three-time defending 4-A champ Buckeye Local.

Also a defending three-time class champ is the Wheeling Park girls' team. The Patriots are led by super sophomore Courtney Yaeger.

Yaeger will be one of the threats to win the girls' overall title, as will another sophomore, Buckeye Local's Sherry Borsos.

"The overall girls' race will be very competitive," Jebbia said.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE OVAC CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPS!



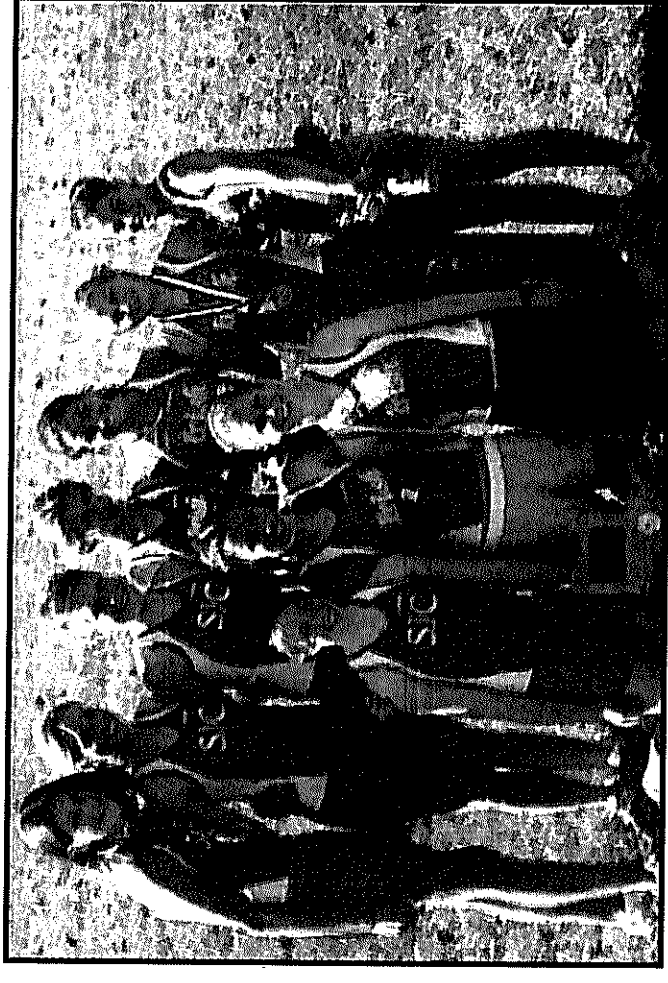
ST. CLAIRSVILLE BOYS



HARRISON CENTRAL GIRLS



BELLAIRE ST. JOHN BOYS



BELLAIRE ST. JOHN GIRLS

OVAC CHAMPS



**CONGRATULATIONS
OVAC CROSS**

**BELLAIRE
LEGION**

**Way
To Go!**

SPORT



T-L Photo/JOEL JOSEPH

JOCKEYING for position during Saturday's Ohio Valley Athletics Conference Cal Pokas Classic girls varsity race is this group of runners. St. John junior Natalie Perzanowski led the Lady Irish to the overall and A/AA titles, while St. John also won both on the boys front.

Irish sweep OVAC meet

• Perzanowski, Beabout capture individual titles;
St. C boys, Harrison girls win class championships

By **JEFF POTTS**
Times Leader Sports Writer

And the beat rolls on for the St. John's boys and girls cross country teams.

The Irish boys captured their fourth straight Ohio Valley Athletic Conference boys overall title, while the Lady Irish captured their second consecutive A/AA title and their first overall title Saturday morning at Meadowbrook High School.

Harrison Central captured its first girls OVAC title, while the St. Clairsville boys picked up the championship in AAA. Wheeling Park swept the big school titles.

But it was a little school in Bellaire that beat them all.

"We had an awesome day," said St. John head coach Jeremy Midei, whose boys team tied the record for most consecutive championships. "The boys overcame a lot of adversity today, and the girls really came together as a team.

"I really couldn't ask more of our kids."

Midei was extremely proud of his girls first overall team title.

"We're really stoked about winning the overall," he said. "Before the race I challenged our girls to just fight and claw for every place they could get. Their effort gave us a big gap in what should have been a close race.

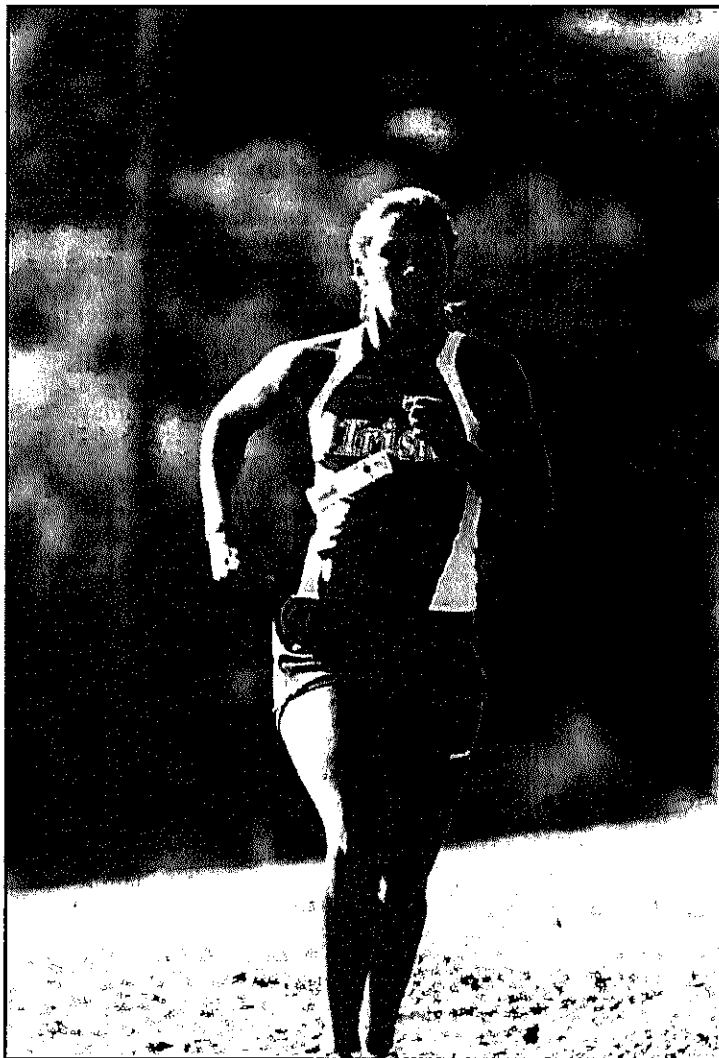
"The bottom line is, I was really impressed with both of our teams today," he continued.

As well as he should be.

Junior sensation Natalie Perzanowski ran a blistering 19:07 over a muddy course to claim her second straight OVAC overall title while sister Kelly, who is only a freshman, followed her sister across the line just 36 seconds behind.

The much anticipated showdown between Natalie Perzanowski and Barnesville standout Stephanie Morgan, who transferred back to Barnesville from Clarkston High School in Michigan, never fully materialized as Morgan pulled up with what looked like a charley horse two-and-a-half miles into the race and finished a disappointing 63rd.

"It's kind of unfortunate today with Stephanie, I'm sure she would've ran a lot better if she hadn't fell," Natalie Perzanowski said. "Had Stephanie not had medical prob-



T-L Photo/JOEL JOSEPH

ST. JOHN CENTRAL junior Natalie Perzanowski runs alone during Saturday's OVAC Cal Pokas Championship at Meadowbrook. Perzanowski won the race in 19:07 to lead the Lady Irish to the overall and A/AA team titles.

lems, I probably would have finished second."

Nevertheless, Claire LeMasters and Sarah Kosky gave the Lady Irish four runners in the top 15.

Christine Bowman was fifth for St. John, and Annie Holubeck and Alexis Campbell rounded out the top seven.

Barnesville head coach Mark Brown said Morgan was hurting after the race.

"She said her calf had a real sharp pain go through it and tightened up on her," he said. "I don't know if it's a charley horse or what. She can't walk on it so we'll just have to wait and see."

Wheeling Central finished second, while Caldwell came home third. Barnesville finished fourth, Linsly fifth and Shadyside sixth.

The Perzanowski sisters were joined on the Class A/AA All-OVAC team by teammates Sarah Kosky and Claire LeMasters along with Stephanie Caruso and Lauren Bauer of Wheeling Central, Karly Jones of Barnesville, Dawn Spicer, Sarah Crum and Adriane Steed of Caldwell.

In the boys' race, Nick Moscato covered the 3.1 miles in 17:05 to come home second behind Wheeling Park's Ryan Beabout. Senior Zach Yereb finished three seconds behind Moscato.

"They did a great job of having and executing a race strategy," Midei said of runner-up Wheeling Park. "We were a little off today, not physically but mentally we had a little bit of a let down after last week at Pickerington."

"I think it says a lot about our team that even when we don't run to our standards, we can still win a meet of this caliber," Midei said.

Sophomore Sam Foster also finished in the top ten overall, while freshman Luke Holubeck and senior Sean Nolan completed an Irish top seven all under 18 minutes.

Sophomore Nathan Cencula and freshman Matthew Moscato won their first OVAC title with St. John.

The Irish finished the meet with 45 points to outdistance the Patriots by two points

"It feels good," Wheeling Park head coach Michael Jebbia said as his squad won their first Class 4-A since 1994. "It was a goal of ours that we set early in the year and the kids have worked hard."

In the girls 4-A race, Jebbia's Lady Patriots finished with 150 points to come away with their fourth straight championship. Buckeye Local finished second with 199 points, while Brooke, East Liverpool, John Marshall and Zanesville finished third, fourth, fifth and sixth respectively.

"It was a total team effort," Jebbia said. "The girls ran real well and Courtney (Yaeger, only a sophomore) ran a great



T-L Photo/JOEL JOSEPH

ST. JOHN CENTRAL senior Nick Moscato surges a turn at the OVAC Cal Pokas Championship Saturday at Meadowbrook. Moscato and teammate Zach Yereb went two-three to lead the Irish to their fourth straight overall title.

Eckroth, Ashlei Beard, Chloe Chisnell and Kim Eckroth completed the team.

Bennett and McIntosh were joined on the All-OVAC team by teammate Harrison, St. Clairsville's Alanna Seamon, Kate Hodgson and Jamie Garbash. Alexis Emch of Bellaire, Indian Creek's Chelsea Furda and Oak Glen's Michaelene Myers rounded out the team.

**Ohio Valley Athletic Conference
Cal Pokas Cross Country
Championships
(At Meadowbrook)**

Boys Overall Results:

1. St. John, 45; 2. Wheeling Park, 47; 3. Wheeling Central, 172; 4. Caldwell, 174; 5. St. Clairsville, 175; 6. Buckeye Local, 189; 7. East Liverpool, 222; 8. Harrison Central, 233; 9. Oak Glen, 241; 10. Shadyside, 261; 11. Barnesville, 287; 12. Union Local, 327; 13. Bellaire, 334; 14. Zanesville, 347; 15. Magnolia, 367; 16. Linsly, 409; 17. Tyler Consolidated, 431; 18. Cambridge, 451; 19. John Marshall, 530; 20. River, 588.

Class 4-A Team Results:

1. Wheeling Park, 47; 2. Buckeye Local, 189; 3. East Liverpool, 222; 4. Zanesville, 347.

Individual Results:

1. Ryan Beabout (WP), 16:47; 2. Nick Moscato (SJ), 17:05; 3. Zach Yereb (St. J), 17:08.24; 4. Stewart Jones (W), 17:08.88; 5. Cody Morrison (C), 17:15; 6. Brian Wilson (OG), 17:20; 7. Sam Foster (St. J), 17:22; 8. Jason Bennett (WP), 17:25; 9. Emerson Rhoad (Zanes), 17:34.18; 10. Derrick Sproul (HC), 17:34.68; 11. Kyle Gramlich (WP), 17:36; 12. Erik Reed (EL), 17:37; 13. Spencer Teufel (WP), 17:43; 14. Brett Saltrick (L), 17:45; 15. Alex Thornburg (StC), 17:47.37; 16.

386; 6. Zanesville, 412.

Class 4-A All-OVAC:

1. Courtney Yaeger (WP), 19:46; 2. Sherry Borsos (BL), 20:51; 3. Paige Govey (Brooke), 21:53; 4. Kelsey Braido (Camb), 22:09; 5. Jess Battifochi (BL), 22:16; 6. Laura Dixon (WP), 23:15; 7. Artemia Lomardozi (Edison), 23:18; 8. Lisa Zimmerman (EL), 23:26; 9. Christina diBartolomeo (Brooke), 23:28; 10. Gennie Conlin (WP), 23:29.

Class 3-A Team Results:

1. Harrison Central, 110; 2. St. Clairsville, 146; 3. Martins Ferry, 289; 4. Indian Creek, 354.

Class 3-A All-OVAC:

1. Ericka Skinner (HC), 20:17; 2. Samantha McIntosh (HC), 20:55; 3. Alanna Seamon (StC), 20:39; 4. Kate Hodgson (StC), 21:37; 5. Alysia Scott (Bel), 21:46; 6. Jamie Garbash (StC), 21:52; 7. Kelcie Harrison (HC), 22:02; 8. Chelsea Furda (IC), 22:06; 9. Alexis Emch (Mag), 22:25; 10. Michaelene Myers (OG), 22:29.

Class 2-A/1-A Team Results:

1. St. John, 51; 2. Wheeling Central, 102; 3. Caldwell, 104; 4. Barnesville, 184; 5. Linsly, 325; 6. Shadyside, 344.

Class 2-A/1-A All-OVAC:

1. Natalie Perzanowski (BSJ), 19:07; 2. Kelly Perzanowski (BSJ), 19:46; 3. Stephanie Caruso (WC), 20:25; 4. Lauren Bauer (WC), 20:36; 5. Karly Jones (Barnes), 21:18; 6. Dawn Spicer (Cald), 21:31; 7. Claire LeMasters (BSJ), 21:34; 8. Sarah Kosky (BSJ), 21:35; 9. Sarah Crum (Cald), 21:54; 10. Adriane Steed (Cald), 21:54.

Individual Results:

1. Natalie Perzanowski (BSJ), 19:07; 2. Kelly Perzanowski (BSJ), 19:46.03; 3. Courtney Yaeger (WP), 19:46.66; 4. Ericka Skinner (HC), 20:17; 5. Stephanie Caruso (WC), 20:25; 6. Lauren Bauer (WC), 20:36; 7. Sherry Borsos (BL), 20:51; 8. Samantha McIntosh (HC), 20:55; 9. Alanna Seamon (StC), 20:59; 10. Karly Jones (Barnes), 21:18; 11. Dawn Spicer

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"It was a total team effort," Jebbia said. "The girls ran real well and Courtney (Yaeger, only a sophomore) ran a great race."

Yaeger was joined on the Class 4-A team by teammates Laura Dixon and Gennie Conlin along with Sherry Borsos of Buckeye Local, Brooke's Paige Govey and Christina DiBartolomeo, Kelsey Braido of Cambridge, Jess Battilochi from Buckeye Local, Edison's Artemia Lomardozi and Lisa Zimmerman of East Liverpool.

In the boys 3-A race, St. Clairsville came home in first with 175 points to top Harrison Central by 58 points. Oak Glen came in third followed by Union Local, Bellaire, Magnolia and Tyler Consolidated.

"My kids felt confident," Red Devils head coach Tony Cirola said. "We've had a good season and we really like this win and I'm hoping this will propel us into districts, regionals and state."

Freshman Alex Thornburg paced the Red Devils, running 17:48. Jonathan Ebbert, Kyle Timko, Shane Sheuer, Cody Ruminski, Pat Tadolini and Mike Bigelow rounded out the team.

On the girls side in Class 3-A, Ericka Skinner covered the course in 20:17 to lead Harrison Central to its first ever team title. Senior Samantha McIntosh also garnered a top ten overall finish to bolster the Huskies' effort.

"It feels super," Huskies head coach Scott Porter said. "It was a lot of hard work and the kids performed when they had to."

"Ericka and McIntosh ran real well."

Kelcie Harrison, Sandy

Chisnell and Kim Eckroth completed the team.

Bennett and McIntosh were joined on the All-OVAC team by teammate Harrison, St. Clairsville's Alanna Seamon, Kate Hodgson and Jamie Garbash. Alexis Emch of Magnolia, Alysia Scott of Bellaire, Indian Creek's Chelsea Furda and Oak Glen's Michaelene Myers rounded out the team.

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1. Ryan Beabout (WP), 16:47; 2. Stewart Jones (Weir), 17:08; 3. Jason Bennett (WP), 17:25; 4. Emerson Rhoad (Zanes), 17:34; 5. Kyle Gramlich (WP), 17:36; 6. Erik Reed (EL), 17:37; 7. Spencer Teufel (WP), 17:43; 8. Ronald Reed (Weir), 17:47; 9. Brandon Janeczko (WP), 17:54; 10. Ronnie Balvin (BL), 17:57.

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Class 3-A All-OVAC:
1. Brian Wilson (OG), 17:20; 2. Derrick Sproul (HC), 17:34; 3. Alex Thornburg (StC), 17:47; 4. Aaron Estep (TC), 18:16; 5. Hemal Patel (Mag), 18:17; 6. Justin Brooks (HC), 18:18; 7. Jonathan Ebbert (StC), 18:19; 8. Robbie Chilson (Bel), 18:35; 9. Kyle Timko (StC), 18:46; 10. Nick Nardo (UL), 18:56.

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*Denotes overall champion