

INSIDE

Scoreboard / C6

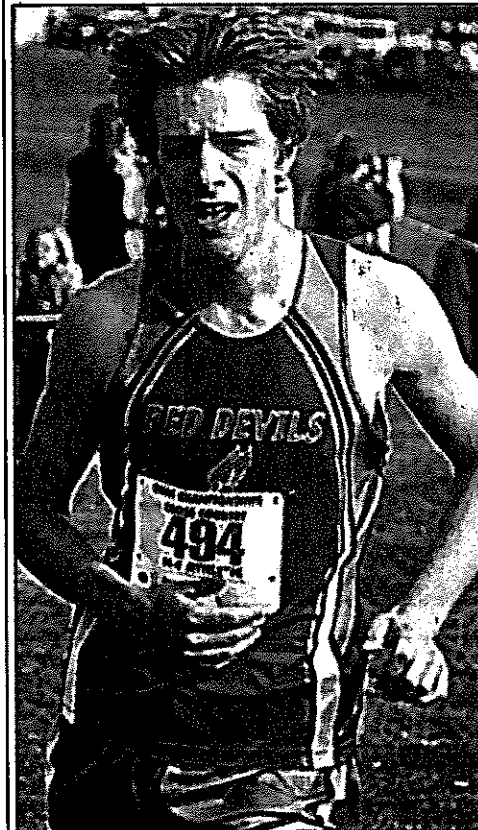
The Times Leader

SPORTS

SECTION

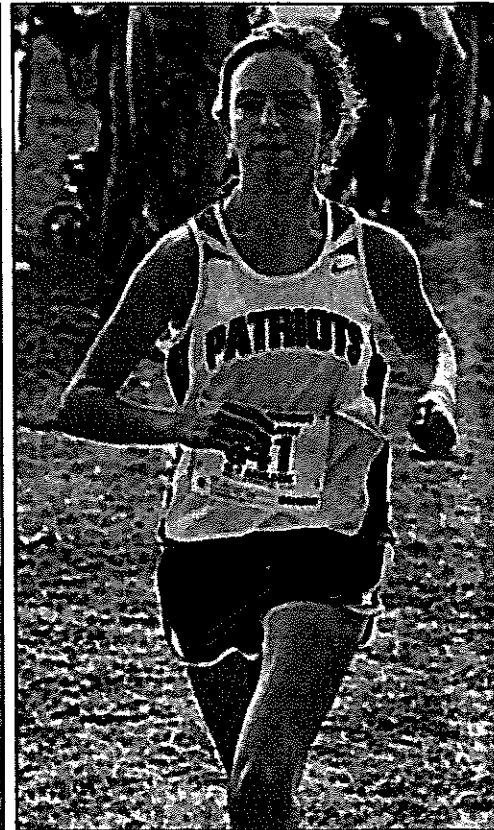
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Sunday,
October 5, 2008



T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

ST. CLAIRSVILLE'S Shane Scheuer approaches the finish line. He led the Red Devils to the Class 3-A title, which is their second straight.



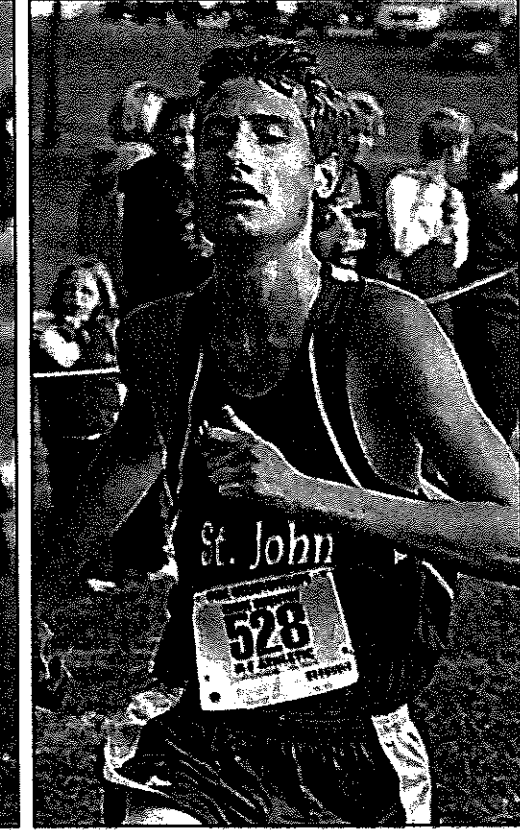
T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

WHEELING PARK'S Courtney Yaeger runs toward the finish line and a second-place finish. She led the Lady Pats to the team title.



T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

ST. CLAIRSVILLE'S Kate Hodgson makes her way to the finish at Saturday's OVAC meet. She led the Lady Devils to the title.



T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

ST. JOHN'S Luke Holubeck finished third overall and second on his team as the Fighting Irish claimed the overall and Class A/AA titles Saturday.

OVAC CC champs crowned

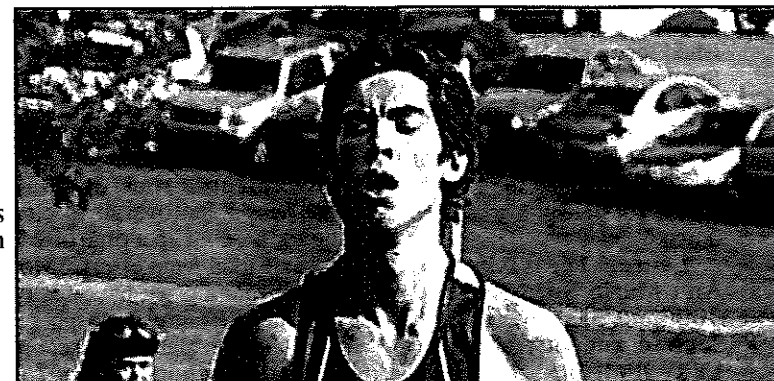
Foster wins overall to lead Irish boys; Central girls win

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

BYESVILLE — The St. John Central boys cross country team has its eyes on a possible big prize in four weeks at Scioto Downs in Columbus.

However, the Fighting Irish came here with a similar goal.

Capture the entire thing.
And Coach Jeremy Midei's



St. C. sweeps Class 3-A titles once again; Morgan repeats

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

BYESVILLE — It was about the middle of this past week when St. Clairsville girls cross country coach Heidi Mooney really sat down and began looking at other times entering Saturday morning's Cal Pokas OVAC Cross Country Championship here.

The fact that her Lady Red



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However, the Fighting Irish came here with a similar goal.

Capture the entire thing.

And Coach Jeremy Midei's well-trained harriers did just that impressively, capturing their fifth overall OVAC Cross Country Championship in the last six years and in the process claimed the OVAC Class 1-A/2-A class title, scoring just 50 points.

"We didn't back off from this (meet) because of the larger goal," Midei said moments after his fifth runner crossed the finish line at Meadowbrook High School. "This is the first time, we've really ran against the local teams, and that's important to us because you want to run well locally."

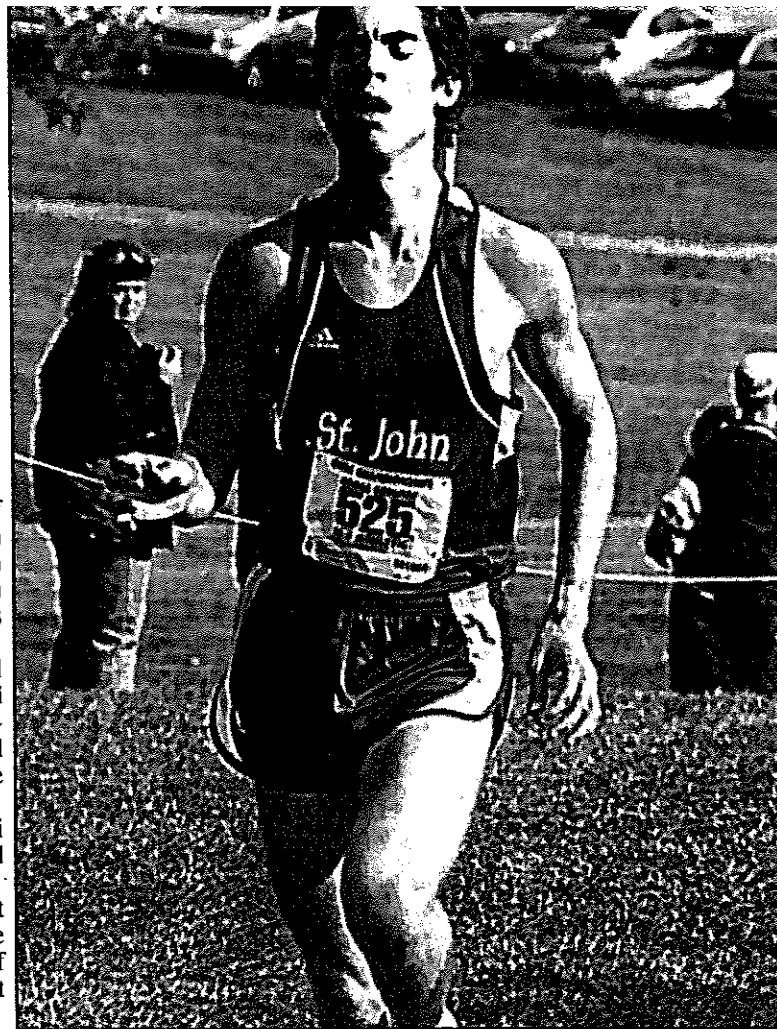
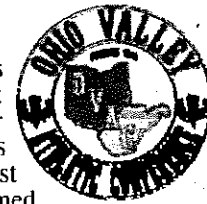
The Irish had a rough week, battling the normal sickness and bumps and bruises that are going around this time of the year, but the state's number one-ranked Division III squad came out and still placed six of their seven varsity competitors inside the meet's Top 20, earning each of them all-OVAC.

"We were really geared up for this meet," Midei said. "We ran a little better than I thought we would given the week we had."

Leading the way for the Irish was senior standout Sam Foster who got the Irish rolling on the score sheet with a championship run in a solid time of 16:10, which was 10 seconds better than his nearest runner.

"Everything went according to plan for Sammy," Midei said. "We were very relaxed in the first mile or so, but in the second half of the race during the big

See, **SJC**, Page C2



T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

ST. JOHN'S Sam Foster approaches the finish line for the victory in Saturday's OVAC CC Championship at Meadowbrook High School. Additional images may be viewed at cu.timesleaderonline.com

Wheeling Park boys roll; Girls edge Buckeye on tie-breaker

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

BYESVILLE – The Wheeling Park Patriots claimed the state title a year ago in West Virginia Class 3-A.

However, graduation claimed the state's and Wheeling Park's best in Ryan Beabout.

It didn't slow down Coach Michael Jebbia's Patriots during Saturday's OVAC Cal Pokas Cross Country Championship held here at Meadowbrook High School.

The Patriots – with several key



holdovers returning from their team from a year ago – ran roughshod over the 4-A competition, finishing with 64 points, which bettered runner-up East Liverpool by 188 points Saturday morning.

"We were excited to come over here and run a fast course after being on so many hills early in the season," the classy Jebbia remarked. "Our main goal was to win the 4-A and running against a team like St. John is going to help us down the road in our state meet."

Wheeling Park – which opens state

competition in two weeks will return to the course Saturday at its own Wheeling Park Invitational – placed three runners inside the top 10 overall and their scoring stopped after the 28th overall place.

"All of our kids ran our season-best times," Jebbia said. "We had the three in the top 10, and those guys have been pretty steady, but our fourth, fifth and sixth have been steadily improving each week, and now we've got three guys who could be in any type of order coming in."

Leading the way for the Patriots was senior Kyle Gramlich who was second

See, **PARK**, Page C2

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

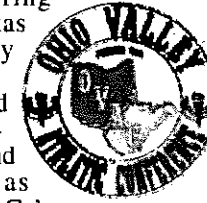
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The fact that her Lady Red Devils had an opportunity – barring something unforeseen and outside distractions such as Saturday being St. C.'s Homecoming Dance – to claim the overall championship as well as the Class 3-A title.

"I was like, 'could this be?'" Mooney asked herself. "Could we really have a shot at this? It looked like we had a chance, and our girls really came and performed today."

The Lady Red Devils' goal of an overall title

See, **ST. C.**, Page C2



T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

BARNESVILLE'S Stephanie Morgan heads toward the finish line with a victory in the OVAC Cal Pokas Cross Country Championship held Saturday at Meadowbrook High School.

UNION LOCAL'S Brandon Nicholes tries to break free from Bellaire's Casey Davis (6) and Zach Manning (9) during the first half of Saturday's game



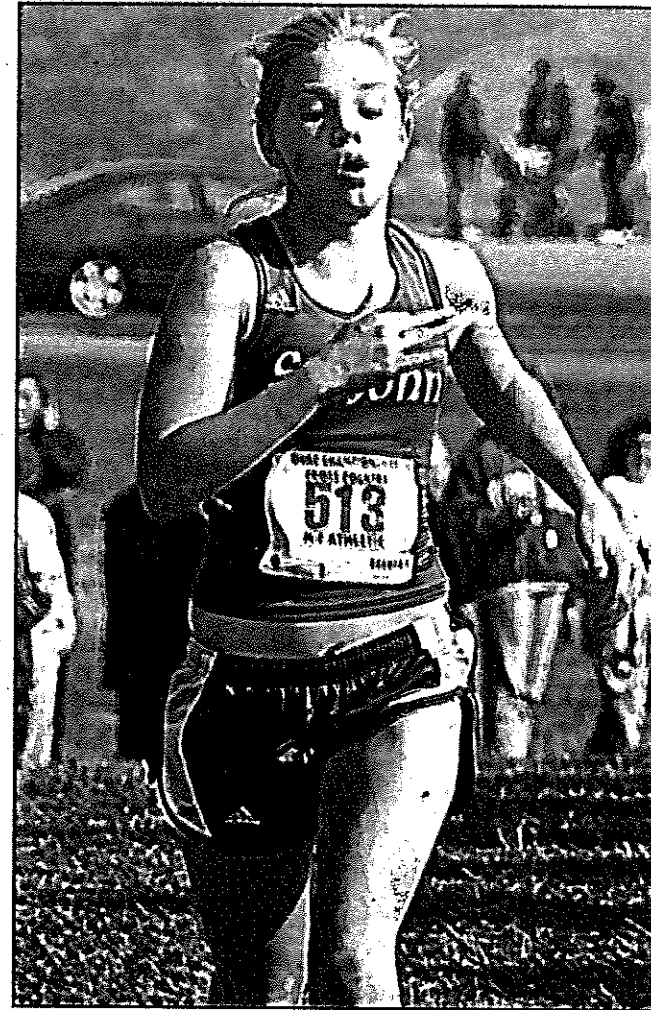
Union Local staves off Bellaire to improve to 6-1

By **KIM NORTH**
Times Leader Sports Writer

At this point of the high school football season, a head coach will take a win any way he can get it.

second half we sputtered. Give them (Bellaire) credit, though. Their kids played very well defensively in the second half, and they didn't give up."

UL (6-1) took a 7-0 lead in the waning moments of the first quarter when Kvie



T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

ST. JOHN'S Sarah Kosky heads to the finish line in third place overall. She led the Lady Irish with a time of 19:33. Additional images may be found at cu.timesleaderonline.com

● SJC

Continued from Page C1

loop it gets a little more mental, and we felt that was Sam's territory."

For Foster, the individual title was his first and ever since he watched his older brother Zach finish second, bringing home the OVAC title was something he had longed.

"It was really exciting, and I was thinking about how disappointed my brother was when he got second his senior year, so I kind of used that as motivation," Foster noted. "I came in here worrying about the team and trying to do as well as I could to help the team win."

Foster came through the early portions of the race in seventh or so place, but made his move on the aforementioned loop in the second and third miles that Midei eluded to.

"I just had to stay under control mentally during the first mile," Foster explained. "One of the my teammates told me to use my gut. I stayed smart, but when I saw (Wheeling Park's Kyle) Gramlich take off, I just went with him, and I was by myself pretty much."

Luke Holubeck was third overall and the second Irishman across the line, posting a time of 16:21.

Matt Moscato broke the tape in 11th place overall with a 16:47. The Irish sealed the deal for their title by coming across the line in succession in places 17-19 with the likes of Ian Gulley, Martv Swartz and Ramon Nieves, respective-

● Park

Continued from Page C1

overall in a time of 16:20. Russell Mulley was fifth overall in 16:27 and Logan Wojcik was eighth in 16:39.

"We've got guys who've been varsity runners since they were freshman," Jebbia said. "They've been on big stages throughout their careers whether it's at OVAC or at the state meet."

The Patriots' scoring was rounded out by Kevin Busick (22nd) and Ethan Chapman Casey (28th).

Weir High's Ronald Read — who some thought could contend for the overall title coming in — finished fourth in the event with a time of 16:25.

THE LADY PATRIOT girls had gotten used to winning OVAC titles, claiming four in a row until Buckeye Local rose to occasion and knocked the Lady Pats off their perch a year ago.

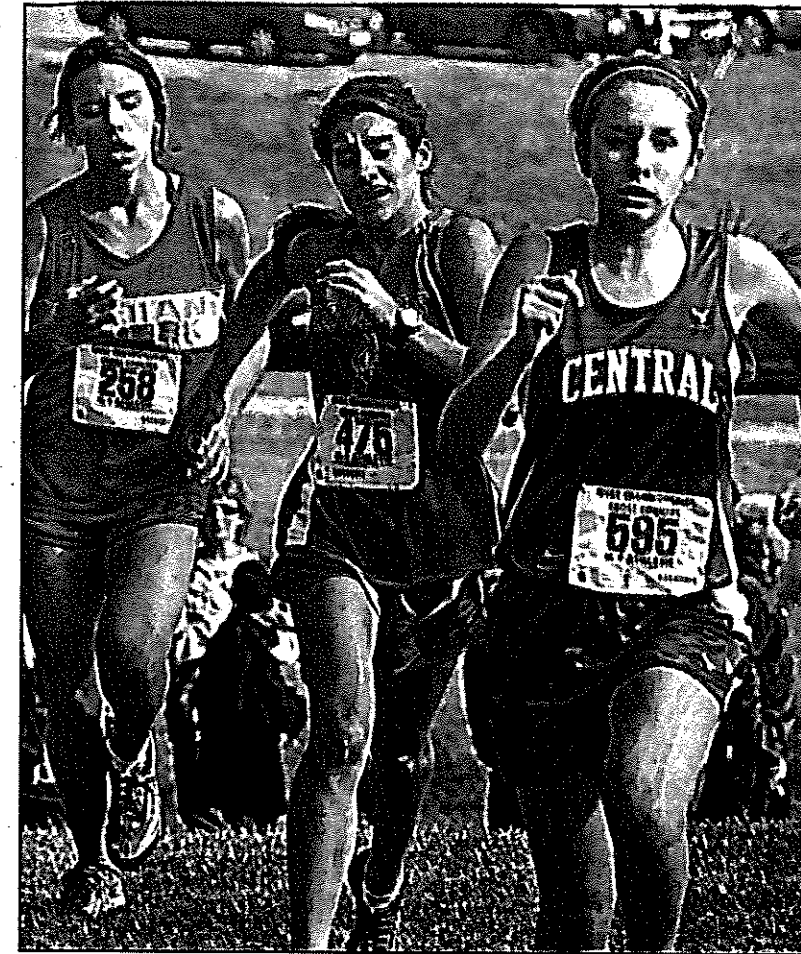
Lo and behold, the same two squads were duking it out once again in 2008 and they actually finished in a tie with 143 points, but the OVAC hardware went back to Ohio County on the tie-breaker, which is the sixth runner comparison of both squads.

"I was trying to get the times and places at the end, but it was difficult and I knew it was going to be tight," Jebbia said. "We had some young kids step up and pass people in the end. I guess this was like overtime in basketball. We just treated the crowd to some free cross country."

Leading the way for the Lady Patriots was none other than senior standout Courtney Yaeger who finished second to Barnesville's Stephanie Morgan in a solid time of 19:01.

"Courtney ran very well," Jebbia said. "She ran a great race, and I think she'll continue to bring her times down."

Lauren Tarovisky and Ann Marie Sorg finished 30th and 31st overall and second and third for the Lady Patriots. Madison Morris was the fourth Park



WHEELING CENTRAL'S Jesse John leads St. Clairsville's Cassandra Prezzia and Indian Creek's Chelsea Furda to the finish line during Saturday's OVAC CC Championship

T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

● St. C.

Continued from Page C1

turned into reality at Meadowbrook High School. St. Clairsville — packed six runners inside the top 25 en route to .59 points, which was 30 better than Wheeling Central and doubles the score put forth by Class 3-A runner-up Barnesville.

"I am tickled," Mooney said. "The girls ran a super race. They didn't go bonkers at the start. They were strong in the middle and ran a great end of the race."

St. Clairsville was once again led by senior Kate Hodgson who continues to improve with each passing mile. She finished fifth overall in a time of 20:20.

Sophomore Jamie Perzanowski — who came to St. C. from St. John during the off-season — finished eighth overall in a time of 20:30. Cassandra Prezzia was 12th overall and third for the Lady Devils in a time of 20:41.

Christina Seamon put forth another strong race for the Lady Red Devils, placing 16th overall in a time of 20:47. Jamie Garbash was 22nd overall to close out the scoring for St. C. with a time of 21:33.

"It was a total team effort," Mooney said. "The pack running we have really helps us and it creates a healthy atmosphere."

The 3-A title marks the second straight and second in school history for the Red Devils, but the feeling didn't change for

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Harrison Central — which finished third in Class 3-A — was led by junior Ericka Skinner who finished fourth overall in a time of 19:55. The Lady Huskies' Lauren Yoho was 17th in 20:58.

THE ST. CLAIRSVILLE boys came into their meet as the favorites once again and sure enough, Coach Tony Cirol's Red Devils delivered their third consecutive OVAC Championship Trophy to the Belmont County Seat.

"I think we could have ran a better race, and there are some things we definitely need to work on," Cirol said. "All of the other meets this season have been in preparation for this meet and the postseason, so we don't have a lot of time, but I am hoping within the next couple of weeks, we can come together a little bit more."

The Red Devils finished with 100 points, which was 66 better than Class 3-A runner-up Barnesville.

"The weather really helped our kids today," Cirol said of the ideal running conditions. "We finally got rid of that heat and the rain (Saturday morning) helped us too."

The Red Devils came into the season



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"It's tough to get up every week and that's why the little bit of time we take off each week is big to help us get up and ready to go," Midei confirmed. "We kind of relaxed a little bit to get a little hungrier for this race and it worked out well because our kids were focused and everything went to plan."

Caldwell — which finished second in the team race in the small-school division — had one all-OVAC finisher in 16th in Brandon Sailing in 17:17.

Fort Frye's Jeremy Anderson was all-OVAC, finishing seventh overall in a time of 16:33. Wheeling Central's Rob Bonenberger was all-conference thanks to a 15th place finish in a time of 17:14.

THE LADY MAROON KNIGHTS were one of the unknowns coming into the Cal Pokas OVAC meet. The Lady Knights of Heather Wayt hadn't ran much in the Ohio Valley, electing to go around the state of West Virginia to scope out competition for the upcoming post-season.

However, Central proved its worth Saturday on the girls' side, scoring 89 points to win the small-school division and finish second overall.

"I thought we would run well today, and our-girls still exceeded what I expected in terms of times we ran," Wayt said. "We run a lot of races against the competition we'll see in the regional and in the state, and this was the first time we ran a lot of these teams from Ohio, so I think our results might be a little bit deceiving."

The title marks the Lady Knights' second in the school history with their only other one coming in 2004.

Leading the way for Central was Jesse John who finished 11th overall in a time of 20:41. Kelly Mortakis and Brianna Robbins were second and third across for Central, posting places of 14th and 15th, respectively with times of 20:46 and 20:47.

Claire Caruso was the fourth Lady Knight and 23rd overall finisher in 21:41 with Molly Kurtz serving as the No. 5 runner for Central in a time of 22:26, which was good for 35th place.

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Lauren Tarovisky and Ann Marie Sorg finished 30th and 31st overall and second and third for the Lady Patriots. Madison Morris was the fourth Park runner to cross with Megan Galloway serving as the fifth runner, but it was the late surge by Lacey Dunaway as the sixth Park harrier to cross, which gave the Park the gold trophy a trip to the Banquet of Champions in May.

Runner-up Buckeye Local was led by senior Sherry Borsos who finished sixth overall in a time of 20:21. Leah Figurski was 18th for the Lady Panthers in a time of 21:02.

Indian Creek's Chelsea Furda was 13th overall in a time of 20:43 to lead the Lady Redskins.

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The 3-A title marks the second straight and second in school history for the Red Devils, but the feeling didn't change for Mooney and company from 2007.

"I am really excited," Mooney offered. "These kids have worked hard and deserve everything they are receiving."

While the Lady Red Devils won the overall title and there was suspense, there was very little suspense entering the meet who the runner to beat for the girls' individual title was.

Barnesville's Stephanie Morgan — who continues to sift through Division I college offers — continued her quest for a second straight state championship by winning her third straight OVAC title in a sizzling time of 18:33.

"It was a good effort," Morgan said. "I kind of wanted to run in the 17s, but I was kind of tight, and I want to be ready for next week."

Morgan's schedule alters some from the rest of her Lady Shamrock teammates. She's flying to Alabama to take part in a nationally-recognized meet whereas the remainder of the Lady Rocks will run at the OVACCL Championship.

"I am not going to lie, almost all of my splits were slow today," Morgan relayed. "We went out slow at like 5:40 pace and it wasn't what I wanted, but I ran to the conditions. Today wasn't my day, but that's okay."

Barnesville's Karly Jones finished ninth

in the race, posting a time of 20:32. Allison Healey rounded out the all-OVAC contingent with a 20th place effort in a time of 21:18.

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"The weather really helped our kids today," Ciroli said of the ideal running conditions. "We finally got rid of that heat and the rain (Saturday morning) helped us too."

The Red Devils came into the season amidst turmoil and runner defections, but resiliency has been the key as they have continued to mesh as a unit.

"We've been resilient and we've performed all season," Ciroli said. "I tell people, 'everyone's replaceable, including me.' Usually what happens when a vacancy becomes available someone steps up and fills it, and I was lucky to have a lot of kids who wanted to fill that spot."

Leading the way for the Red Devils was Shane Scheuer who finished sixth overall in a time of 16:30. Junior Alex Thornburg finished 10th overall and second for St. C. in a time of 16:44. Thornburg's freshman brother, Andy, was 20th overall in a time of 17:28. Cody Ruminski and Nick Pokas rounded out the scoring for the Red Devils.

Barnesville was led by first-year cross country runner Brennan Delaney who finished ninth overall in 16:42. Adam Seller was 12th overall for the Shamrocks in 17:02.

Harrison Central senior Derrick Sproul was 13th overall to lead the Huskies in a time of 17:06, while Bellaire's Robbie Chilson — a former state runnerup in wrestling — finished 14th in a time of 17:06.

Staskey can be reached at sstaskey@timesleaderonline.com

Cal Pokas OVAC Cross Country Results

GIRLS
TEAM SCORES: St. Clairsville, 59; Wheeling Central, 89; Barnesville, 118; Caldwell, 142; Wheeling Park, 143; Buckeye Local, 143; Harrison Central, 144; St. John

1. Stephanie Morgan (Barnes), 18:33; 2. Ericka Skinner (HC), 19:55; 3. Kate Hodgson (St. C.), 20:20; 4. Jamie Perzanowski (St. C.), 20:30; 5. Karly Jones (Barnes), 20:32; 6. Cassandra Prezzia

17:18; 18. Marty Swartz (SJC), 17:19; 19. Ramon Nieves (SJC), 17:26; 20. Andy Thornburg (St.C), 17:28.

CLASS 4-A

Team Scores: 1. Wheeling Park 64. East

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However, Central proved its worth Saturday on the girls' side, scoring 89 points to win the small-school division and finish second overall.

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Claire Caruso was the fourth Lady Knight and 23rd overall finisher in 21:41 with Molly Kurtz serving as the No. 5 runner for Central in a time of 22:26, which was good for 35th place.

"We didn't even field a full team a lot of the times last year," Wayt said. "We had a girl injured and we've picked up a couple of freshman, who've been major factors in how we're doing. Our returners have been able to be consistent and get the job done each week."

St. John Central — which had won the last three team titles in A/AA — settled for second despite producing the meet's third overall finisher in Sarah Kosky who ran a solid 19:33.

Caldwell's Morgan Stellfox was seventh overall in 20:24, while River's Sarah Blatt was 10th in a time of 20:36. Fort Frye's Jillian Pawloski was 19th overall in a time of 21:11.

Buckeye Trail improves to 16-3 in volleyball

Buckeye Trail improved to 16-3 in girls' volleyball action Saturday when the Lady Warriors defeated Zanesville and Magnolia in a tri-match.

Buckeye Trail topped the Blue Devils 18-25, 25-22 and 25-22 as Candice Bumgardner scored 12 points, charted nine digs and seven kills. Kaitlyn Wolfe added nine markers and 13 digs, while Emily McEndree contributed eight points and 26 assists.

Laura Dunlap added nine lightings.

Michelle Twiggs had 22 points, 26 assists and 19 digs for Zanesville.

Buckeye Trail then disposed of the Blue Eagles by scores of 25-13 and 25-8.

Bumgardner had 12 points and four kills, while Wolfe added nine points and four kills.

Banquet of Champions in May.

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Top 20
1. Stephanie Morgan (Barnes), 18:33; 2. Courtney Yaeger (WP), 19:01; Sarah Kosky (SJC), 19:33; 4. Ericka Skinner (HC), 19:55; 5. Kate Hodgson (St. C.), 20:20; 6. Sherry Borsos (BL), 20:21; 7. Morgan Stellfox (Cald), 20:24; 8. Jamie Perzanowski (St.C.), 20:30; 9. Karly Jones (Barnes), 20:32; 10. Sarah Blatt (River), 20:36; 11. Jesse John (WC), 20:41; 12. Cassandra Prezzia (St. C.), 20:41; 13. Chelsea Furda (IC), 20:43; 14. Kelly Mortakis (WC), 20:46.3; 15. Brianna Robbins (WC), 20:47; 16. Christina Seamon (St. C.), 20:47; 17. Lauren Yoho (HC), 20:58; 18. Lea Figurski (BL), 21:02; 19. Jillian Pawloski (FF), 21:11; 20. Allison Healey (Barnes), 21:18.

CLASS 4-A

TEAM SCORES: 1. Wheeling Park, 143 (Won Title on Sixth-person tie-breaker); 2. Buckeye Local, 143; John Marshall, 304; Indian Creek, 326; Brooke, 359; Cambridge, 400.

Top 10
1. Courtney Yaeger (WP), 19:01; 2. Sherry Borsos (BL), 20:21; 3. Chelsea Furda (IC), 20:43; 4. Leah Figurski (BL), 21:02; 5. Lisa Zimmerman (EL), 21:50; 6. Lauren Tarovisky (WP), 22:05; 7. Ann Marie Sorg (WP), 22:10; 8. Faith Jancura (BL), 22:16; 9. Kathleen Phillips (Brooke), 22:29; 10. Tessa Gretchen (BL), 22:47.

CLASS 3-A

TEAM SCORES: St. Clairsville, 59; Barnesville, 118; Harrison Central, 144; Bellaire, 252; Union Local, 256; Tyler Consolidated, 325.

Top 10

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Barnesville's Stephanie Morgan — who continues to sift through Division I college offers — continued her quest for a second straight state championship by winning her third straight OVAC title in a sizzling time of 18:33.

"It was a good effort," Morgan said. "I kind of wanted to run in the 17s, but I was kind of tight, and I want to be ready for next week."

Morgan's schedule alters some from the rest of her Lady Shamrock teammates. She's flying to Alabama to take part in a nationally-recognized meet whereas the remainder of the Lady Rocks will run at the OVAC Championship.

"I am not going to lie, almost all of my splits were slow today," Morgan relayed. "We went out slow at like 5:40 pace and it wasn't what I wanted, but I ran to the conditions. Today wasn't my day, but that's okay."

Barnesville's Karly Jones finished ninth

1. Stephanie Morgan (Barnes), 18:33; 2. Ericka Skinner (HC), 19:55; 3. Kate Hodgson (St. C.), 20:20; 4. Jamie Perzanowski (St. C.), 20:30; 5. Karly Jones (Barnes), 20:32; 6. Cassandra Prezzia (St.C.), 20:41; 7. Christina Seamon (St. C.), 20:47; 8. Lauren Yoho (HC), 20:58; 9. Allison Healey (Barnes), 21:18; 10. Jamie Garbash (St. C.), 21:33.

CLASS 1-A/2-A

TEAM SCORES: Wheeling Central, 89; Caldwell, 142; St. John, 178; Shadyside, 354.

Top 10

1. Sarah Kosky (SJC), 19:33; 2. Morgan Stellfox (Cald), 20:24; Sarah Blatt (River), 20:36; 4. Jesse John (WC), 20:41; 5. Kelley Mortakis (WC), 20:46; 6. Brianna Robbins (WC), 20:47; 7. Jillian Pawloski (FF), 21:11; 8. Lindy Stauffer (SJC), 21:26; 9. Claire Caruso (WC), 21:41; 10. Dawn Spicer (Cald), 22:01.

BOYS

TEAM SCORES: St. John Central, 50; Wheeling Park, 64; St. Clairsville, 100; Caldwell, 128; Barnesville, 166; Fort Frye, 218; Wheeling Central, 235; Bellaire, 249; East Liverpool, 252; Weir, 284; Harrison Central, 298; John Marshall, 303; Union Local, 391; Buckeye Local, 401; Zanesville, 420; Cameron, 422; Oak Glen, 475; Cambridge, 477; Linsly, 500; Brooke, 512; Indian Creek, 576; Bishop Donahue, 602.

Overall Top 20

1. Sam Foster (SJC), 16:10; 2. Kyle Gramlich (WP), 16:20; 3. Luke Holubeck (SJC), 16:21; 4. Ronald Read (Weir), 16:25; 5. Russell Mulley (WP), 16:27; 6. Shane Scheuer (St. C.), 16:30; 7. Jeremy Anderson (FF), 16:33; 8. Logan Wojcik (WP), 16:39; 9. Brennan Delaney (Barnes), 16:42; 10. Alex Thornburg (St. C.), 16:44; 11. Matt Moscato (SJC), 16:47; 12. Adam Sellers (Barnes), 17:02; 13. Derrick Sproull (HC), 17:06; 14. Robbie Chilson (Bell), 17:06; 15. Rob Bonenberger (WC), 17:14; 16. Brandon Saling (Cald), 17:17; 17. Ian Gulley (SJC),

Usually what happens when a vacancy becomes available someone steps up and fills it, and I was lucky to have a lot of kids who wanted to fill that spot."

Leading the way for the Red Devils was Shane Scheuer who finished sixth overall in a time of 16:30. Junior Alex Thornburg finished 10th overall and second for St. C. in a time of 16:44. Thornburg's freshman brother, Andy, was 20th overall in a time of 17:28. Cody Ruminski and Nick Pokas rounded out the scoring for the Red Devils.

Barnesville was led by first-year cross country runner Brennan Delaney who finished ninth overall in 16:42. Adam Seller was 12th overall for the Shamrocks in 17:02.

Harrison Central senior Derrick Sproul was 13th overall to lead the Huskies in a time of 17:06, while Bellaire's Robbie Chilson — a former state runnerup in wrestling — finished 14th in a time of 17:06.

Staskey can be reached at sstaskey@timesleaderonline.com

17:18; 18. Marty Swartz (SJC), 17:19; 19. Ramon Nieves (SJC), 17:26; 20. Andy Thornburg (St.C), 17:28.

CLASS 4-A

Team Scores: 1. Wheeling Park, 64; East Liverpool, 252; Weir, 284; John Marshall, 303; Buckeye Local, 401; Zanesville, 420; Cambridge, 477; Brooke, 512; Indian Creek, 576.

Top 10

1. Kyle Gramlich (WP), 16:20; 2. Ronald Read (Weir), 16:25; 3. Russell Mulley (WP), 16:27; 4. Logan Wojcik (WP), 16:39; 5. Kevin Busick (WP), 17:31; 6. Ethan Chapman Casey (WP), 17:48; 7. Hunter Ankrum (JM), 17:51; 8. Brandon Lucas (EL), 17:53; 9. Cody Wiltshire (BL), 17:55; 10. Stegan Riggs (JM), 17:57.

CLASS 3-A

Team Scores: St. Clairsville, 100; Barnesville, 166; Bellaire, 249; Harrison Central, 298; Union Local, 391; Oak Glen, 475.

Top 10

1. Shane Schuerer (St.C), 16:30; 2. Brennan Delaney (Barnes), 16:42; 3. Alex Thornburg (St.C.), 16:44; 4. Adam Sellers (Barnes), 17:02; 5. Derrick Sproull (HC), 17:06; 6. Robbie Chilson (Bell), 17:14; 7. Andy Thornburg (St. C.), 17:28; 8. Cody Ruminski (St.C.), 17:34; 9. Cedric Robinson (MF), 17:42; 10. Kody Crooks (Barnes), 17:50.

Class 1-A/2-A

Team Scores: St. John, 50; 2. Caldwell, 128; 3. Fort Frye, 218; 4. Wheeling Central, 235; Cameron, 422; Linsly, 500; Bishop Donahue, 602.

Top 10

1. Sam Foster (SJC), 16:10; 2. Luke Holubeck (SJC), 16:21; 3. Jeremy Anderson (FF), 16:33; 4. Matt Moscato (SJC), 16:47; 5. Rob Bonenberger (WC), 17:17; 6. Brandon Saling (Cald), 17:17; 7. Ian Gulley (SJC), 17:18; 8. Marty Swartz (SJC), 17:19; 9. Ramon Nieves (SJC), 17:26; 10. Jordan Croucher (Cald), 17:31.

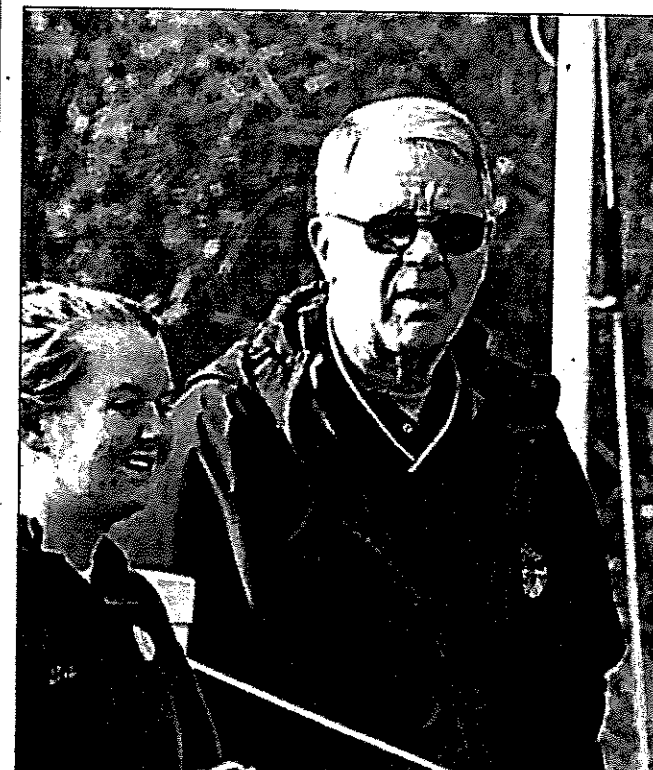


The Times Leader

OVAC CC EXTRA

SECTION
C8

Sunday,
October 5, 2008



TOP LEFT: St. Clairsville's Shane Scheuer (left) and Alex Thornburg (middle) race with Barnesville's Brennan Delaney (right) and Martins Ferry's Cedric Robinson (behind) during the early stages of the OVAC Cross Country Championship.

TOP RIGHT: Bellaire freshman Claire Kovalyk bundles up as chilly temperatures greeted local harriers at the OVAC Meet.

AT LEFT: Shadyside resident Bud Haney heads to the mile mark to watch for his daughter Rebecca.

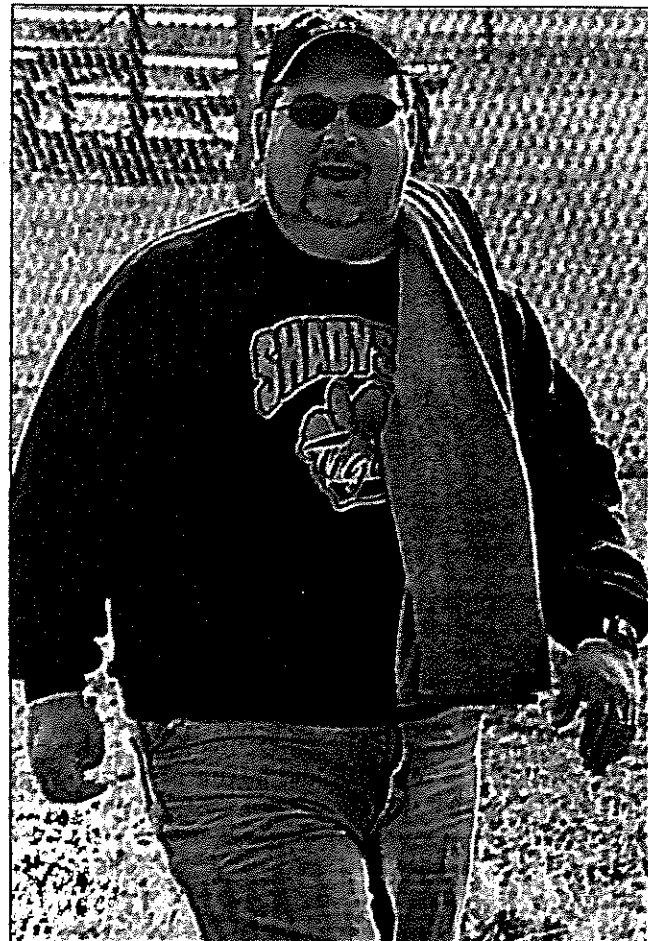
AT RIGHT: OVAC Executive Secretary Tom Rataiczak awaits runners Saturday.

BELOW LEFT: St. Clairsville girls coach Heidi Mooney tabulates points.

BELOW MIDDLE: Brandon Fluharty (2) awaits the runners from...

CU

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TOP LEFT: St. Clairsville's Shane Scheuer (left) and Alex Thornburg (middle) race with Barnesville's Brennan Delaney (right) and Martins Ferry's Cedric Robinson (behind) during the early stages of the OVAC Cross Country Championship.

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TOP RIGHT: Bellaire freshman Claire Kovalyk bundles up as chilly temperatures greeted local harriers at the OVAC Meet.

AT LEFT: Shadyside resident Bud Haney heads to the mile mark to watch for his daughter Rebecca.

AT RIGHT: OVAC Executive Secretary Tom Rataczak awaits runners Saturday.

BELOW LEFT: St. Clairsville girls coach Heidi Mooney tabulates points.

BELOW MIDDLE: Brandon Fluharty (3) awaits the runners from Indian Creek. His father Jack is the head coach.

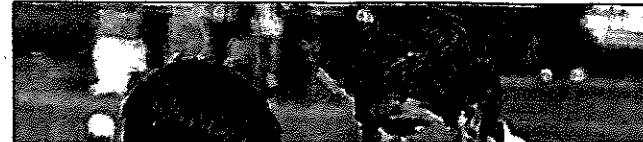
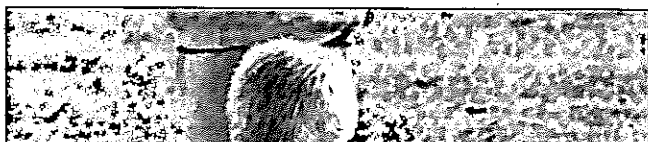
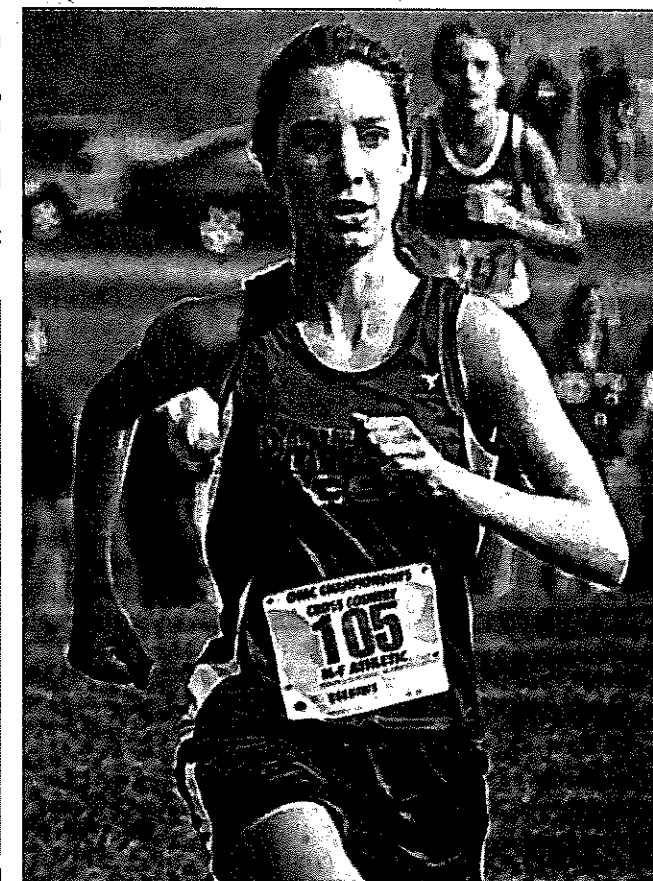
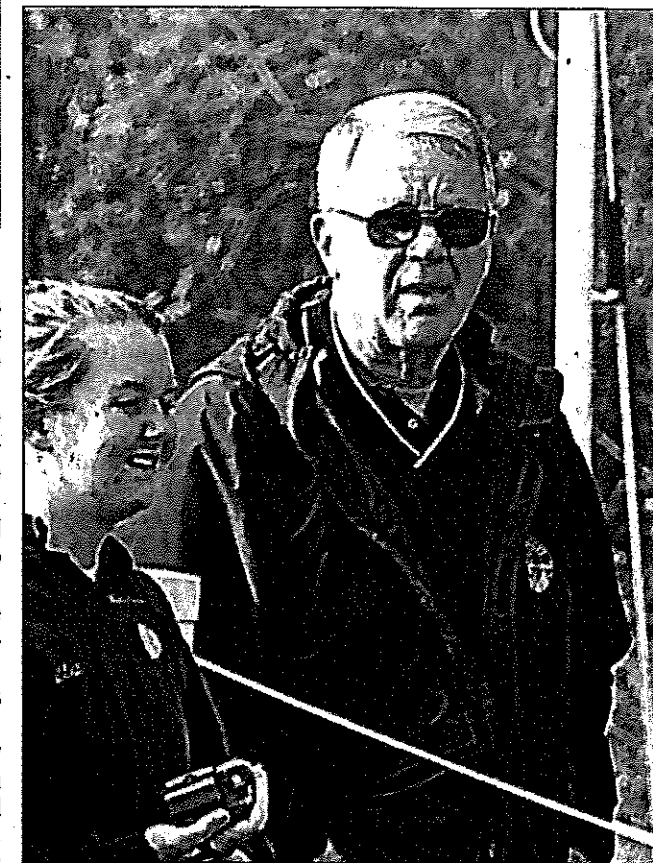
BELOW RIGHT: Buckeye Local senior Sherry Borsos takes part in her final OVAC meet, finishing sixth.

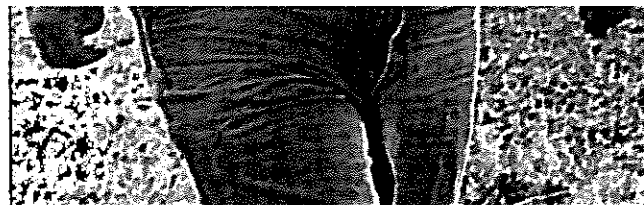
BOTTOM LEFT: Union Local kindergartener Kellen Miller is following the path of the runners.

BOTTOM MIDDLE: Bellaire head coach Chris Arno provides last-minute instruction to sophomore Ian McConville prior to his race.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Harrison Central's Derrick Sproull heads toward the finish line in 13th place.

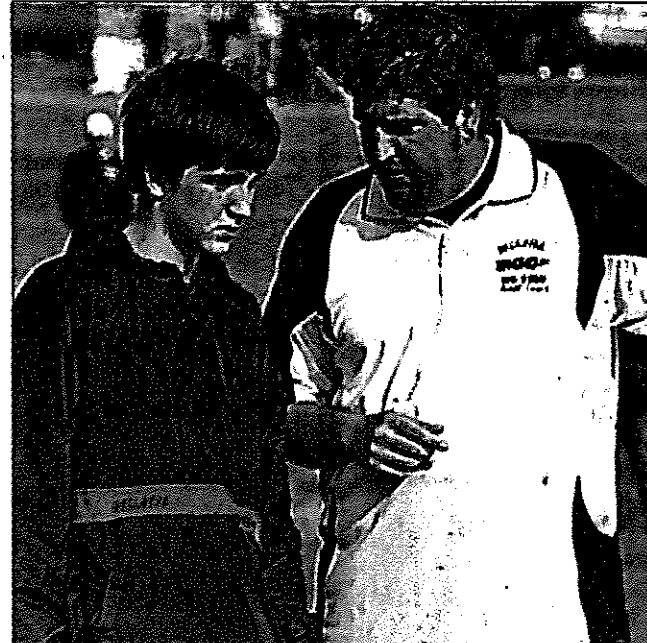
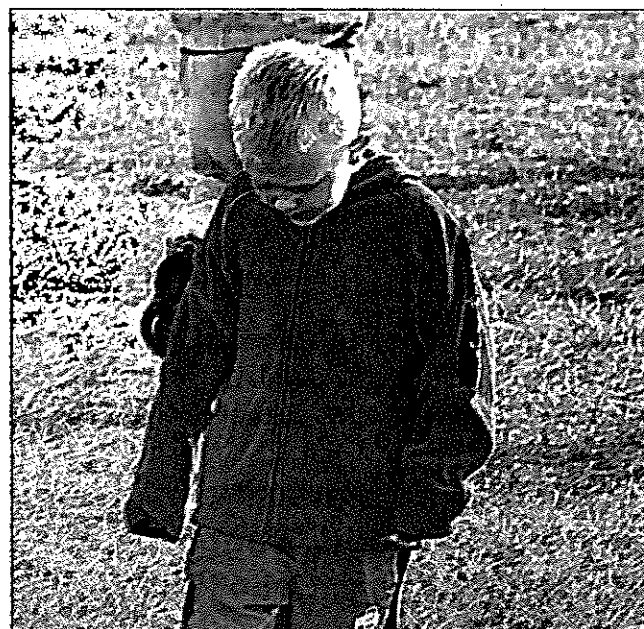
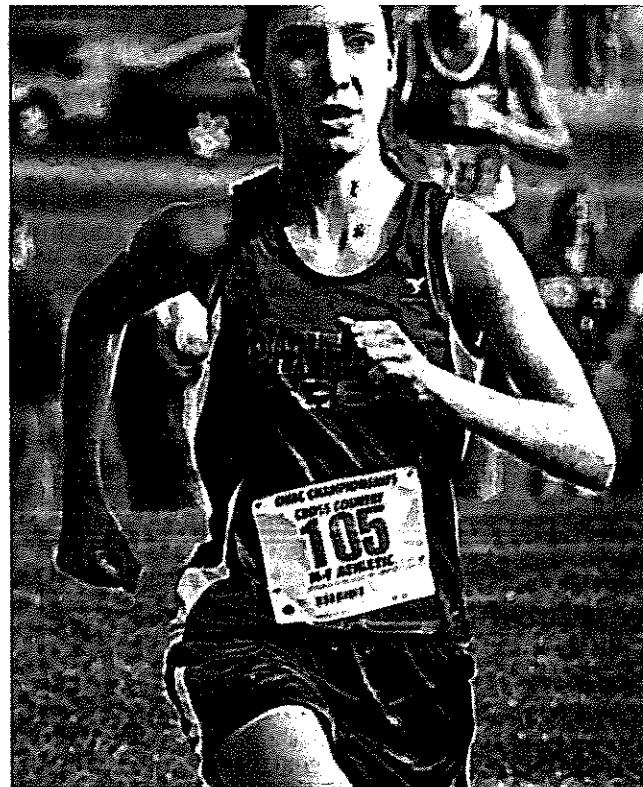
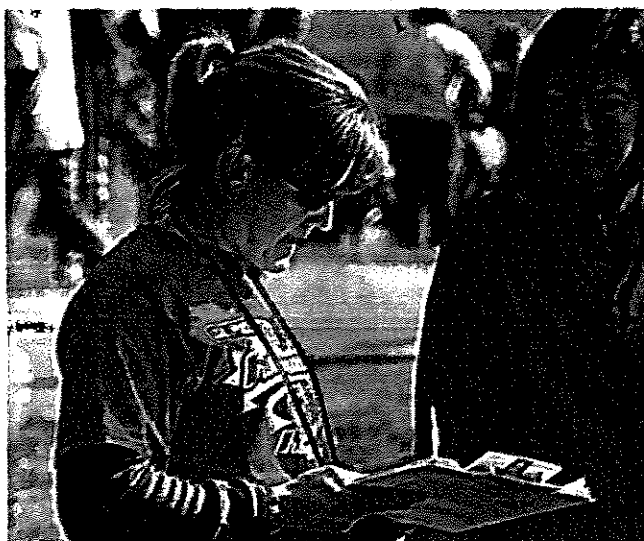
T-L Photos/SETH STASKEY





... provides last-minute instruction to sophomore Ian McConville prior to his race.
BOTTOM RIGHT: Harrison Central's Derrick Sproull heads toward the finish line in 13th place.

T-L Photos/SETH STASKEY



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Pats Sweep Team Titles

Park sweeps boys' and girls' OVAC Class 4-A meets

By SETH STASKEY
For the News-Register
BYESVILLE, Ohio — The Wheeling Park Patriots claimed the state title a season ago in West Virginia Class AAA.

However, graduation claimed the state's and Wheeling Park's best in Ryan Beabout.

It didn't slow down Coach Michael Jebbia's Patriots during Saturday's OVAC Cal Pokas Cross Country Championship held here at Meadowbrook High School.

The Patriots — with several key holdovers returning from their team from a season ago — ran roughshod through the AAAA competition, finishing with 64 points, which bettered runner-up East Liverpool by 188 points Saturday morning.

"We were excited to come over here and run a fast course after being on so many hills early in the season," Jebbia said. "Our main goal was to win the 4-A and running against a team like St. John is going to help us down the road in our state meet."

Wheeling Park — which opens state competition in two weeks and will return to the course Saturday at its own Wheeling Park Invitational — placed three runners inside the top 10 overall and their scoring stopped after the 28th overall place.

"All of our kids ran our season-best times," Jebbia said. "We had the three in the top 10, and those guys have been pretty steady, but our fourth, fifth and sixth have been steadily improving each week, and now we've got three guys who could be in any type of order coming in."

Leading the way for the Patriots was senior Kyle Gramlich who was second overall in a time of 16:20. Russell Mulley was fifth overall in 16:27 and Logan



Courtney Yaeger

Wojcik was eighth in 16:39.

"We've got guys who've been varsity runners since they were freshman," Jebbia said. "They've been on big stages throughout their careers whether it's at OVAC or at the state meet."

The Patriots' scoring was rounded out by Kevin Busick (22nd) and Ethan Chapman Casey (28th).

Weir High's Ronald Read — who some thought could contend for the overall title coming in — finished fourth in the event with a time of 16:25.

The Patriots girls had gotten used to winning OVAC titles, claiming four in a row until Buckeye Local rose to occasion and knocked the Pats off their perch a season ago.

Lo and behold, the same two squads were duking it out once again in 2008 and they actually finished in a tie with 143 points, but the OVAC hardware went back to Ohio County on the tiebreaker, which is the sixth runner comparison of both squads.

"I was trying to get the times and places at the end, but it was difficult and I knew it was going to be tight," Jebbia said. "We had some young kids step



Kyle Gramlich

up and pass people in the end. I guess this was like overtime in basketball.

"We just treated the crowd to some free cross country."

Leading the way for the Patriots was none other than senior Courtney Yaeger, who finished second to Barnesville's Stephanie Morgan in a solid time of 19:01.

"Courtney ran very well," Jebbia said.

"She ran a great race, and I think she'll continue to bring her times down."

Lauren Tarovisky and Ann Marie Sorg finished 30th and 31st overall and second and third for the Lady Patriots.

Madison Morris was the fourth Park runner to cross with Megan Gallaway serving as the fifth runner, but it was the late surge by Lacey Dunaway as the sixth Park harrier to cross, which gave the Park the gold trophy and a trip to the Banquet of Champions in May.

Runner-up Buckeye Local was led by senior Sherry Borsos who finished sixth overall in a time of 20:21. Leah Figurski was 18th for the Panthers in a time of 21:02.

Indian Creek's Chelsea Furda was 13th overall in a time of 20:43 to lead the Redskins.

Sunday, October 5, 2008

OVAC CROSS COUNTRY

Cal Pokas OVAC Championships
(at Meadowbrook High School)

GIRLS

Team Scores

1. St. Clairsville, 59; 2. Wheeling Central, 89; 3. Barnesville, 118; 4. Caldwell, 142; 5. Wheeling Park, 143; 6. Buckeye Local, 143; 7. Harrison Central, 144; 8. St. John Central, 178; 9. Belleaire, 252; 10. Union Local, 256; 11. John Marshall, 304; 12. Tyler Consolidated, 325; 13. Indian Creek, 328; 14. Shadydale, 354; 15. Brooke, 359; 16. Cambridge, 400.

Top 20 Overall

1. Stephanie Morgan (Barnes), 18:33; 2. Courtney Yaeger (WP), 19:01; Sarah Kosky (SJC), 19:33; 4. Ericka Skinner (HC), 19:55; 5. Kate Hodgson (St. C.), 20:20; 6. Sherry Borsos (BL), 20:21; 7. Morgan Stillox (Cald), 20:24; 8. Jamie Perzanowski (St. C.), 20:30; 9. Karly Jones (Barnes), 20:32; 10. Sarah Blatt (River), 20:36; 11. Jesse John (WC), 20:41; 12. Cassandra Prezzia (St. C.), 20:41; 13. Chelsea Furda (IC), 20:43; 14. Kelley Mortakis (WC), 20:46; 15. Brianna Robbins (WC), 20:47; 16. Christina Seamon (St. C.), 20:47; 17. Lauren Yoho (HC), 20:58; 18. Lea Figurski (BL), 21:02; 19. Jillian Pawloski (FF), 21:11; 20. Allison Healey (Barnes), 21:18.

Class 4-A

Team Scores

1. Wheeling Park, 143 (won title on sixth-person tie-breaker); 2. Buckeye Local, 143; John Marshall, 304; Indian Creek, 326; Brooke, 359; Cambridge, 400.

Top 10 Individuals

1. Courtney Yaeger (WP), 19:01; 2. Sherry Borsos (BL), 20:21; 3. Chelsea Furda (IC), 20:43; 4. Leah Figurski (BL), 21:02; 5. Lisa Zimmerman (BL), 21:50; 6. Lauren Tarovisky (WP), 22:05; 7. Ann Marie Sorg (WP), 22:10; 8. Faith Jancura (BL), 22:16; 9. Kathleen Phillips (Brooke), 22:29; 10. Tessa Gretchen (BL), 22:47.

Class 3-A

Team Scores

1. St. Clairsville, 59; 2. Barnesville, 118; 3. Harrison Central, 144; 4. Belleaire, 252; 5. Union Local, 256; 6. Tyler Consolidated, 325.

Top 10 Individuals

1. Stephanie Morgan (Barnes), 18:33; 2. Ericka Skinner (HC), 19:55; 3. Kate Hodgson (St. C.), 20:20; 4. Jamie Perzanowski (St. C.), 20:30; 5. Karly Jones (Barnes), 20:32; 6. Cassandra Prezzia (St. C.), 20:41; 7. Christina Seamon (St. C.), 20:47; 8. Lauren Yoho (HC), 20:58; 9. Allison Healey (Barnes), 21:18; 10. Jamie Garbush (St. C.), 21:33.

Class 2-A/1-A

Team Scores

1. Wheeling Central, 89; 2. Caldwell, 142; 3. St. John, 178; 4. Shadydale, 354.

Top 10 Individuals

1. Sarah Kosky (SJC), 19:33; 2. Morgan Stillox (Cald), 20:24; Sarah Blatt (River), 20:36; 4. Jesse John (WC), 20:41; 5. Kelley Mortakis (WC), 20:46; 6. Brianna Robbins (WC), 20:47; 7. Jillian Pawloski (FF), 21:11; 8. Lindy Stauffer (SJC), 21:26; 9. Claire Caruso (WC), 21:41; 10. Dawn Spicer (Cald), 22:01.

Boys

Team Scores

1. St. John Central, 80; 2. Wheeling Park, 64; 3. St. Clairsville, 100; 4. Caldwell, 128; 5. Barnesville, 166; 6. Fort Frye, 218; 7. Wheeling Central, 235; 8. Belleaire, 249; 9. East Liverpool, 252; 10. Weir, 284; 11. Harrison Central, 298; 12. John Marshall, 303; 13. Union Local, 391; 14. Buckeye Local, 401; 15. Zanesville, 420; 16. Cameron, 422; 17. Oak Glen, 475; 18. Cambridge, 477; 19. Linsley, 500; 20. Brooke, 512; 21. Indian Creek, 576; 22. Bishop Donahue, 602.

Top 20 Overall

1. Sam Foster (SJC), 16:10; 2. Kyle Gramich (WP), 16:20; 3. Luke Holubeck (SJC), 16:21; 4. Ronald Read (Weir), 16:25; 5. Russell Mulley (WP), 16:27; 6. Shane Schauer (St. C.), 16:30; 7. Jeremy Anderson (FF), 16:33; 8. Logan Wojcik (WP), 16:39; 9. Brennan Delaney (Barnes), 16:42; 10. Alex Thornburg (St. C.), 16:44; 11. Matt Moscato (SJC), 16:47; 12. Adam Sellers (Barnes), 17:02; 13. Derrick Sproull (HC), 17:06; 14. Robbie Chilson (Bell), 17:06; 15. Rob Bonenberger (WC), 17:14; 16. Brandon Sailing (Cald), 17:17; 17. Ian Gullley (SJC), 17:18; 18. Marty Swartz (SJC), 17:19; 19. Ramon Nievea (SJC), 17:26; 20. Andy Thornburg (St. C.), 17:28.

Class 4-A

Team Scores

1. Wheeling Park, 64; East Liverpool, 252; Weir, 284; John Marshall, 303; Buckeye Local, 401; Zanesville, 420; Cambridge, 477; Brooke, 512; Indian Creek, 576.

Top 10 Individuals

1. Kyle Gramlich (WP), 16:20; 2. Ronald Read (Weir), 16:25; 3. Russell Mulley (WP), 16:27; 4. Logan Wojcik (WP), 16:39; 5. Kevin Busick (WP), 17:31; 6. Ethan Chapman Casey (WP), 17:48; 7. Hunter Ankrum (JM), 17:51; 8. Brandon Lucas (EL), 17:53; 9. Cody Wiltshire (BL), 17:55; 10. Stegan Riggs (JM), 17:57.

Class 3-A

Team Scores

1. St. Clairsville, 100; 2. Barnesville, 166; 3. Belleaire, 249; 4. Harrison Central, 298; 5. Union Local, 391; 6. Oak Glen, 475.

Top 10 Individuals

1. Shane Schauer (St. C.), 16:30; 2. Brennan Delaney (Barnes), 16:42; 3. Alex Thornburg (St. C.), 16:44; 4. Adam Sellers (Barnes), 17:02; 5. Derrick Sproull (HC), 17:06; 6. Robbie Chilson (Bell), 17:14; 7. Andy Thornburg (St. C.), 17:28; 8. Cody Ruminaki (St. C.), 17:34; 9. Cadric Robinson (MF), 17:42; 10. Kody Crooka (Barnes), 17:50.

Class 2-A/1-A

Team Scores

1. St. John, 50; 2. Caldwell, 128; 3. Fort Frye, 218; 4. Wheeling Central, 235; 5. Cameron, 422; 6. Linsley, 500; 7. Bishop Donahue, 602.

Top 10 Individuals

1. Sam Foster (SJC), 16:10; 2. Luke Holubeck (SJC), 16:21; 3. Jeremy Anderson (FF), 16:33; 4. Matt Moscato (SJC), 16:47; 5. Rob Bonenberger (WC), 17:17; 6. Brandon Sailing (Cald), 17:17; 7. Ian Gullley (SJC), 17:18; 8. Marty Swartz (SJC), 17:19; 9. Ramon Nievea (SJC), 17:26; 10. Jordan Croucher (Cald), 17:31.

SPORTS



T-L File Photo

ST. JOHN CENTRAL'S Sam Foster takes part in last year's OHSAA State Championship meet. Saturday, he'll go after his first OVAC Championship in CC at Meadowbrook High School. The Irish have won five straight team titles.

Local harriers have eyes set on OVAC crowns

• Conference CC Championship set Saturday at Meadowbrook

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

The second OVAC Championship of the fall sports season unfolds this weekend.

The annual Cal Pokas OVAC Cross Country Championship will be held Saturday morning at Meadowbrook High School in Byesville.

Class champions in 4-A, 3-A and 1-A/2-A will be crowned with the top 20 earning the distinction of being called all-OVAC.

Action hears the sounding of the gun at 10 a.m. with the boys varsity race. The girls' event is scheduled to begin at 11:30 a.m. with junior high following to round out the day's action.

IN CLASS 4-A, the Wheeling Park Patriot boys and Buckeye Local girls are cast in the role of defending OVAC champions and both squads are strong again this season with visions of hoisting the gold trophy once again.

The Patriot boys lost the talented Ryan Beabout to graduation, but Coach Michael Jebbia's cupboard is far from bare.

"We've been unique because we've had a different order each week it seems," Jebbia said. "We have five kids back from last

year's team and we've ran in some big meets against good competition, but we haven't seen a flat, fast course (like the OVAC), so it'll be interesting to see."

The Patriots are led by Kyle Gramlich, Russell Mulley and Logan Wojcik who have each taken a different turn being the Pats' leader Kevin Busick, Jason Bennet and Ethan Chapman Casey are the fourth through sixth runners.

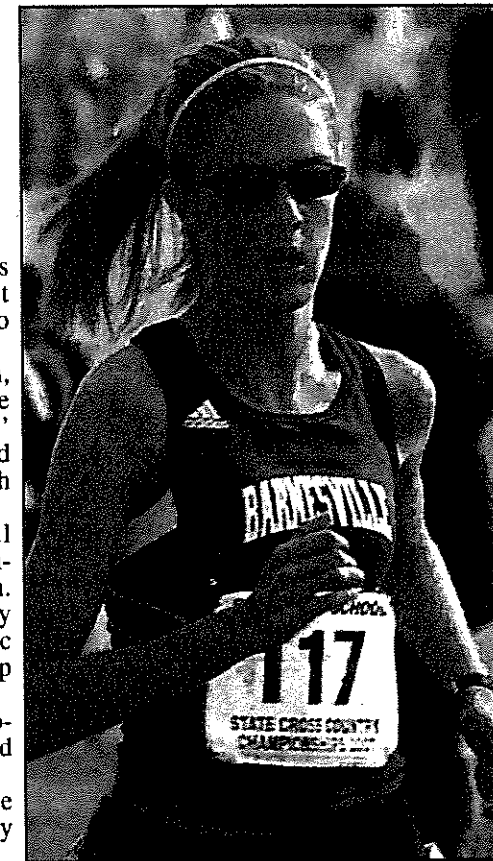
The Buckeye Local Panthers have been an up-and-coming team for much of the season. They are led by junior Cody Wiltshire, who head coach Eric Laughlin thinks can finish in the top five of Class 4-A if he runs well.

The 4-A girls race appears to be a two-horse battle between the Lady Panthers and the Lady Patriots.

Buckeye Local - which owns three OVAC titles - is led by senior Sherry Borsos and classmate Jessica Battiloche.

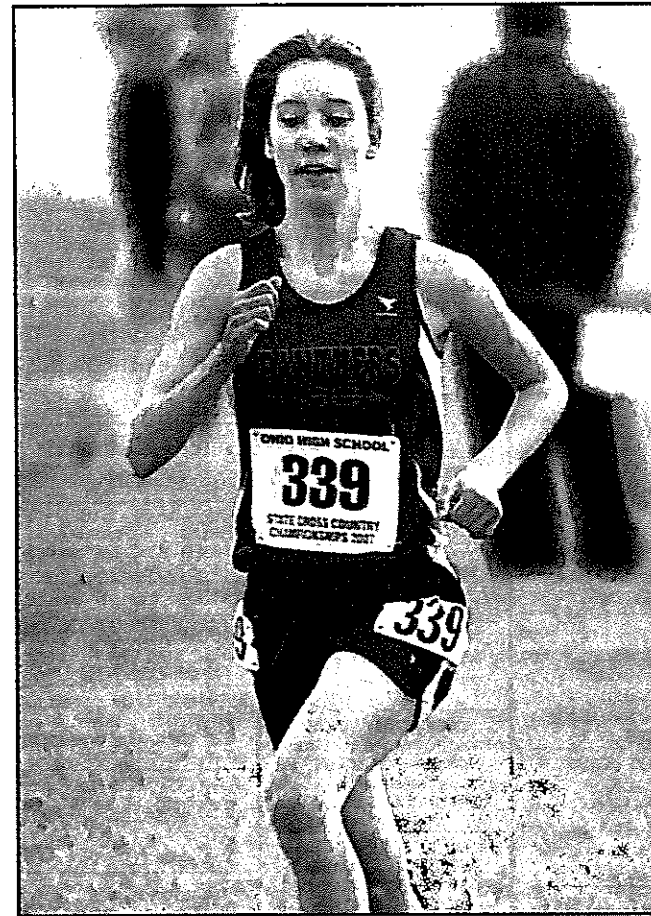
"We're going to rely heavily on our two seniors," said Laughlin. "We've had some young kids really come along this season, and we're battle tested, so it's going to be fun to see how well they run this weekend."

See, OVAC, Page C10



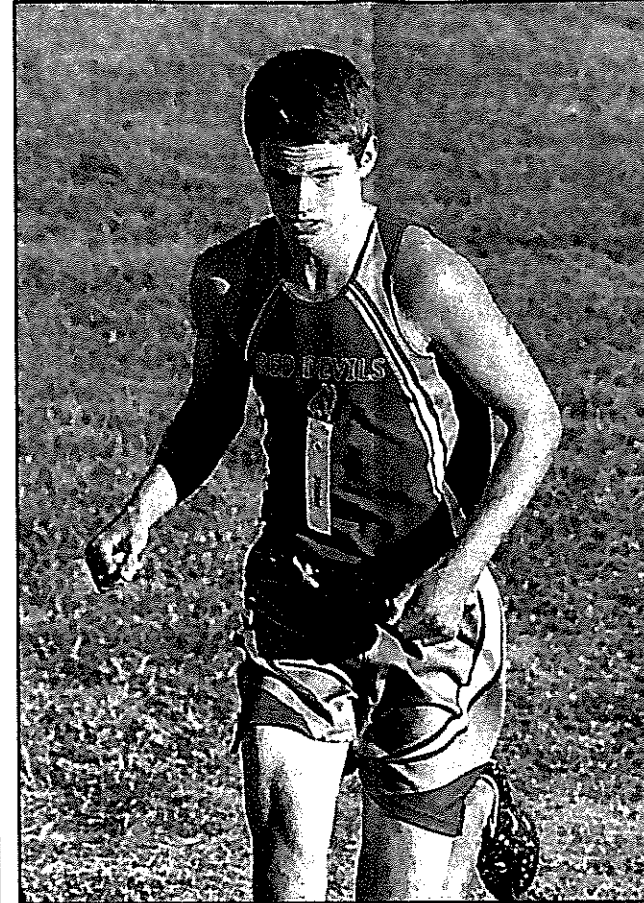
T-L File Photo

BARNESVILLE'S Stephanie Morgan runs toward her first Division III state CC title last year. She'll go after her second straight OVAC title Saturday at the annual championship at Meadowbrook High School.



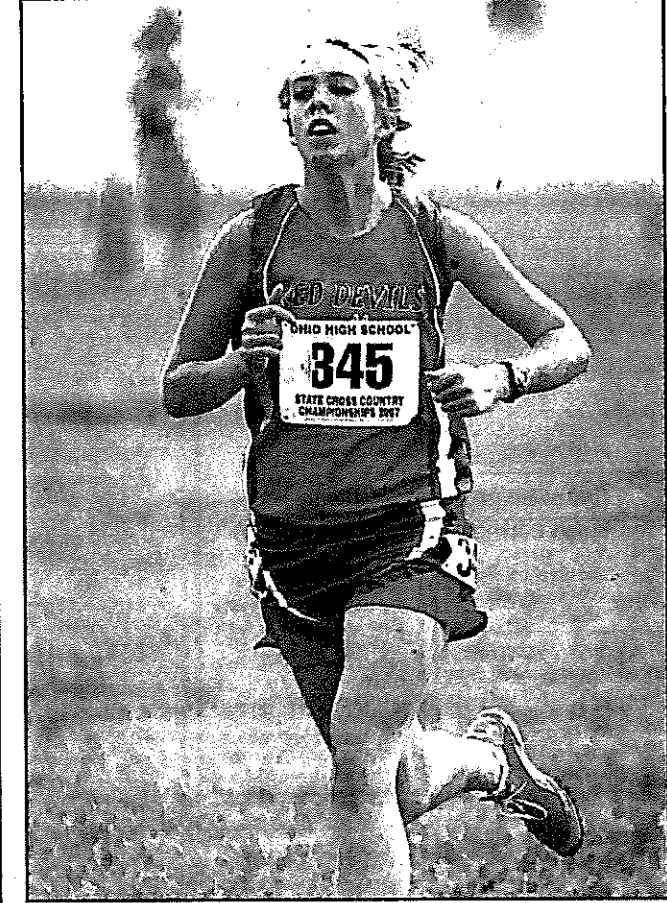
T-L File Photo

BUCKEYE LOCAL'S Sherry Borsos runs in the 2007 Division II Ohio State Cross Country Meet. She'll lead the Lady Panthers into Saturday's OVAC Championship.



T-L File Photo

ST. CLAIRSVILLE'S Alex Thornburg take part in the Belmont County Cross Country meet earlier this season. He'll lead the Red Devils into Saturday's OVAC Championship at Meadowbrook.



T-L File Photo

ST. CLAIRSVILLE'S Kate Hodgsdon takes part in the 2007 Division II State meet. She'll lead St. C. into Saturday's OVAC Cross Country Championship at Meadowbrook High School.

● OVAC

Continued from Page C1

Borsos is a defending all-OVAC performer a year ago.

The Lady Panthers also rely on freshmen Leah Figurski, Faith Jancura, Celina Richetti, Anna Aires and junior Tessa Gretchen.

Wheeling Park, meanwhile, is led by senior Courtney Yaeger who's been first at every meet except the Galion, Ohio meet in which she finished second. She leads a relatively young Lady Patriots outfit.

"Our girls are getting better," Jebbia said. "We need some of our younger kids to come through. We know Courtney is going to go out and run her race, but we have to have everyone run well if we want to win the meet."

IN CLASS 3-A, St. Clairsville made it a clean sweep last year for the first time in the Red Devils' history. St. C.'s boys had won four titles entering last year, but the Lady Red Devils of Coach Heidi Mooney had never hoisted a banner into the gymnasium rafters.

The Red Devils' boys and girls are amongst the favorites once again this season, but they will receive stiff challenges from Harrison Central and Barnesville just to name a few.

"This is when our season really starts," said St. C. head coach Tony Ciroti. "The team has been moving right along training hard and preparing for this race and the ones to come all year."

The remainder of the top five consists of: Jamie Perzanowski, Christina Seamon, Cassandra Prezzia and Jamie Garbash. Ashley Gordon and Haley Wetzel round out the varsity squad.

"Our third through seventh runners have flipped flopped around all season, which has led to a really healthy competition for the team," Mooney said. "We anticipate stiff competition from Barnesville and Harrison Central. It just depends on who shows up to run Saturday, and if all of our girls 'show up', I think we've got a good chance."

The Lady Shamrocks go into the meet with the likely champion barring something unforeseen. Senior Stephanie Morgan is undefeated on the season and is drawing Division I interest from colleges across the nation. She's the defending OVAC and Division III state champion.

Barnesville has claimed eight OVAC titles, but has not won one since 2003.

Karly Jones and Amy Wahl are two other Lady Shamrock runners to keep an eye on this weekend.

Harrison Central is also a solid outfit again this season. Leading the way for the Lady Huskies - who won the 2006 OVAC title - is junior Ericka Skinner.

The St. John Central Fighting Irish come into the meet as one of the favorites on the boys' side. The Irish have won

Matt Riffle and Ramon Nieves round out the top seven for the Green.

"We're not really focusing on any one team," Midei said. "There are several capable of winning this meet. We're just going to do the things we feel we need to do to be successful. Our guys need to bring the same kind of intensity we had at Tiffin and Dayton."


The Irish have captured titles at Pickerington as well as the Tiffin Carnival earlier this season. They were also fourth in the prestigious All-Ohio Catholic Championship.

On the girls' side, St. John Central has won five titles and three straight, but graduation and defections have weakened the Lady Irish's stranglehold on the small-school division.

"This team has really improved a lot, so winning the OVAC title would really be a great accomplishment," Midei said. "We've had this meet circled on our calendar all season, but we know it won't be easy."

The Lady Irish are led by Sarah Kosky, who has been solid all season. Lindy Stauffer is the second Lady Irish runner, finishing before Annie Holubeck. The fourth through sixth positions are maintained by Devon Bell, Jacque Flowers and Alexis Campbell. Gina Myers rounds out the seven varsity runners.

"She's had an awesome season," Midei confessed



T-L File Photo
BUCKEYE LOCAL'S Sherry Borsos runs in the 2007 Division II Ohio State Cross Country Meet. She'll lead the Lady Panthers into Saturday's OVAC Championship.

● OVAC

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Borsos is a defending all-OVAC performer a year ago.

The Lady Panthers also rely on freshmen Leah Figurski, Faith Jancura, Celina Richetti, Anna Aires and junior Tessa Gretchen.

Wheeling Park, meanwhile, is led by senior Courtney Yaeger who's been first at every meet except the Galion, Ohio meet in which she finished second. She leads a relatively young Lady Patriots outfit.

"Our girls are getting better," Jebbia said. "We need some of our younger kids to come through. We know Courtney is going to go out and run her race, but we have to have everyone run well if we want to win the meet."

IN CLASS 3-A, St. Clairsville made it a clean sweep last year for the first time in the Red Devils' history. St. C.'s boys had won four titles entering last year, but the Lady Red Devils of Coach Heidi Mooney had never hoisted a banner into the gymnasium rafters.

The Red Devils' boys and girls are amongst the favorites once again this season, but they will receive stiff challenges from Harrison Central and Barnesville just to name a few.

"This is when our season really starts," said St. C. head coach Tony Ciroti. "The team has been moving right along training hard and preparing for this race and the ones to come all year."

The Red Devils are led to the starting line and then to the finish line by junior ace Alex Thornburg and classmate Shane Scheuer. Both have been strong all season and both finished in the top 10 at Pickerington last week.

Cody Ruminski, Andy Thornburg and Nick Pokas round out the top five for St. C. Patrick Tadolini, Jacob Zink and Brett Frakowski have battled for the sixth through eighth spots.

"We've had a lot of warm, dry weather this season and the kids have done okay," Ciroti said. "But, we would prefer to have some cooler weather for the race on Saturday because we just tend to race better under those conditions."

The Harrison Central boys have been strong this season. The Huskies own one OVAC title, which they claimed in 1999. Leading the way for the Cadiz-based outfit is senior standout Derrick Sproul who was an all-OVAC performer a year ago.

Barnesville's boys have been work in progress thus far, but have been getting better with each passing week. The Shamrocks are led by Brennan Delaney who is in his first year of varsity cross country, but has been running well.

Bellaire - which owns seven OVAC titles in boys CC - should also put forth a strong showing. The Big Reds are led by senior Robbie Chilson.


Martins Ferry's squad is slim in numbers, but the Purple Riders boast a strong individual in junior Cedric Robinson who is coming off a big victory in the Cambridge Invitational last weekend.

THE 3-A GIRLS meet figures to be many of the same teams making noise this weekend.

The St. Clairsville Lady Red Devils - winners already of the Buckeye 8 title - have again been strong for Coach Heidi Mooney.

"Our girls are really looking forward to the OVAC Saturday," Mooney said. "Our girls have been working hard to claim another OVAC banner, and their focus is where it needs to be in order to meet this goal."

The Lady Red Devils are led by junior Kate Hodgson who has been one of the area's most solid harriers all sea-



T-L File Photo
ST. CLAIRSVILLE'S Alex Thornburg take part in the Belmont County Cross Country meet earlier this season. He'll lead the Red Devils into Saturday's OVAC Championship at Meadowbrook.

son. The remainder of the top five consists of: Jamie Perzanowski, Christina Seamon, Cassandra Prezgia and Jamie Garbash. Ashley Gordon and Haley Wetzel round out the varsity squad.

"Our third through seventh runners have flipped flopped around all season, which has led to a really healthy competition for the team," Mooney said. "We anticipate stiff competition from Barnesville and Harrison Central. It just depends on who shows up to run Saturday, and if all of our girls 'show up', I think we've got a good chance."

The Lady Shamrocks go into the meet with the likely champion barring something unforeseen. Senior Stephanie Morgan is undefeated on the season and is drawing Division I interest from colleges across the nation. She's the defending OVAC and Division III state champion.

Barnesville has claimed eight OVAC titles, but has not won one since 2003.

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The St. John Central Fighting Irish come into the meet as one of the favorites on the boys' side. The Irish have won five OVAC banners in a row and seven in the school's history on the boys' side. The Irish are currently ranked number one in the latest Division III Ohio State Cross Country Poll.

"We're always looking forward to the OVAC meet," said Irish head coach Jeremy Midei. "Winning our class is definitely a priority, and we've been running well of late and hopefully that's a trend that extends through Saturday."

The Irish boast one of the pre-meet favorites for the individual title as well in senior Sam Foster who's been running strong all season. He's coming off a victory in the Pickerington Invitational.

"Sam has as good a chance as any to win the overall title," Midei said. "Not only has he run some excellent times, but he's also displayed a consistency we were lacking last season. And I know he's excited for this race."

The Irish are led by Foster, but he's by no means alone. Luke Holubeck, Matt Moscato, Marty Swartz, Ian Gulley,



T-L File Photo
ST. CLAIRSVILLE'S Kate Hodgson takes part in the 2007 Division II State meet. She'll lead St. C. into Saturday's OVAC Cross Country Championship at Meadowbrook High School.

Matt Riffle and Ramon Nieves round out the top seven for the Green.

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"Sarah's had an awesome season," Midei confessed. "She's been very consistent, and I think she can run a top-five kind of race on Saturday. We'll definitely need a low single digit from her if we hope to contend for the team title."

The Lady Irish's stiffest competition could come from Wheeling Central, which returned to Class 2-A this season as well as Caldwell, which the Lady Irish have defeated two out of three times.

One individual to keep an eye on in the small-school division is River senior standout Sarah Blatt who is a returning all-OVAC runner and a state qualifier from a season ago.

Donna Joseph - the former Shadyside High coach and OVAC Hall of Famer - along with Wayne Clark serve as the meet directors.

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