

VanDraska leads Prairie to title

Written by Jim Ecker

Thursday, 10 September 2015 20:39 - Last Updated Thursday, 10 September 2015 20:48



Tysen VanDraska was sorely disappointed when he finished seventh at the Class 4A state cross country meet last fall.

"I kind of choked a little bit," he claimed Thursday.

He does not plan to let it happen again.

VanDraska captured top honors and led Cedar Rapids Prairie to the team championship Thursday at the annual Cedar Rapids Invitational at Noelridge Park.

VanDraska won the 5K outing in 16 minutes, 7.68 seconds, edging Brandon Cooley of Bettendorf by 1.5 seconds in a tight race throughout. Prairie ran away with the team championship with 31 points with Jake Moore finishing fourth, Chris Oehlert sixth and Cam Steffens seventh.

VanDraska may have been a little harsh on himself by claiming he "choked a little bit" at the state meet, but he's always set high standards for himself as a distance runner.

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"My goal is to win it all," he declared. "I know it's a high goal, because there are a lot of great kids in the state. But that's what I'm keeping in my mind and working at every day.

"Last year I was going for the win as well and I just wasn't prepared mentally."

Prairie placed second at the state meet last year behind Linn-Mar. The Lions were hit hard by graduation, but the Hawks have most of their top runners in the fold again this year and VanDraska hopes to lead them to the championship as a senior.

Cedar Falls topped the Hawks at the Prairie Invitational earlier this season and will be a formidable opponent for the Hawks all year, but Prairie Coach Bill Schwarz has the knack of getting his team to peak at the right time.

"He's a great coach," VanDraska said. "He's the reason we're a top team every year. He knows how to train us."



Prairie will see Cedar Falls again this year in the Mississippi Valley Conference and probably in the postseason as well. Prairie was ranked No. 1 and Cedar Falls was ranked No. 2 in the preseason poll, but the Tigers enjoyed the edge in their first encounter this year.

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"We knew they were a great team, but they kind of surprised us," said VanDraska. "We weren't in our top form then. We'll be stronger at state."

Cedar Falls is ranked No. 1 now and Prairie is ranked No. 4, behind Pleasant Valley and Dowling. Van Draska is ranked No. 5 in the individual state poll.

VanDraska plans to run in college next year, but has not picked a school. He trained about 40 miles per week during the summer to get ready for his senior campaign and looked strong Thursday in a good race with Cooley, Michael Mather of Linn-Mar and Moore.

"I felt good," said VanDraska. "I could feel everybody pushing on me. They were on me the whole time, so I had to give it everything I had."

Mather finished third for Linn-Mar. Myles Bach of Marion placed ninth and Samuel Eck of Washington was 10th.

McKenzie Yanek of Pleasant Valley ran away in the girls 5K race in 18 minutes, 23 seconds. Pleasant Valley won the girls title with 81 points in a tight race with Muscatine (84) and Bettendorf (85) as the three Mississippi Athletic Conference schools dominated the meet.

Madison Bach of Marion finished fifth. Hannah Fusselman of Kennedy was sixth and Reagan Gorman of Washington finished 10th.

BOYS RESULTS

Team standings

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1. Prairie 31, 2. Iowa City West 84, 3. Iowa City High 136, 4. (tie) Mount Vernon/Lisbon 169, Ames 169, 6. Waterloo West 170, 7. Washington 187, 8. Linn-Mar 192, 9. Bettendorf 251, 10. Kennedy 294, 11. Muscatine 299, 12. Wahlert 322, 13. Pleasant Valley 344, 14. Xavier 362, 15. Marion 383, 16. North Scott 386, 17. Davenport West 401, 18. Davenport Central 424, 19. Jefferson 465.

Top 10 individuals

1. Tysen VanDraska, Prairie 16:07.68
2. Brandon Cooley, Bettendorf 16:09.18
3. Michael Mather, Linn-Mar 16:13.88
4. Jake Moore, Prairie 16:20.87
5. Kolby Greiner, Iowa City West 16:26.01
6. Chris Oehlert, Prairie 16:28.36
7. Cam Steffens, Prairie 16:30.72
8. Matthew Dodge, Iowa City High 16:33.55

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9. Myles Bach, Marion 16:35.46

10. Samuel Eck, Washington 16:38.73

PRAIRIE - 1. Tysen VanDraska 16:07.68, 4. Jake Moore 16:20.87, 6. Chris Oehlert 16:28.36, 7. Cam Steffens 16:30.72, 13. Levin Lefebure 16:45.36.

WASHINGTON - 10. Samuel Eck 16:38.73, 35. Finbar Berry 17:09.40, 39. Ian Hoover-Grinde 17:16.24, 46. Patrick Gorman 17:22.91, 57. Sam McDermott 17:36.47.

LINN-MAR - 3. Michael Mather 16:13.88, 19. Grant Chlystun 16:51.59, 24. Johnny Clymer 16:57.97, 53. Colin Johnston 17:32.29, 93. Carter Lorenz 18:10.91.

KENNEDY - 33. Reece Linder 17:05.84, 48. Andrew Solsrud 17:23.93, 66. Derek Girling 17:44.41, 73. Jackson Foley 17:52.21, 74. Jacob Ciabatti 17:52.21.

XAVIER - 23. Steve Culpepper 16:57.33, 47. Jonathan Francois 17:23.15, 82. John Pape 18:03.44, 94. Nick Lyon 18:11.46, 116. Grayson Walther 18:59.86.

MARION - 9. Myles Bach 16:35.46, 79. Nick Ward 17:59.63, 81. Jacob Manderscheid 18:02.03, 106. Jeremy Fopma 18:32.06, 108. Salem Snoop 18:44.53.

JEFFERSON - 83. Robert Larson 18:04.21, 88. Nate Homan 18:08.43, 95. Barrett Wise 18:11.85, 99. Nathan Prochnow 18:23.30, 100. Mac Karr 18:25.14.

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GIRLS RESULTS

Team standings

1. Pleasant Valley 81, 2. Muscatine 84, 3. Bettendorf 85, 4. Iowa City West 114, 5. Iowa City High 147, 6. Ames 169, 7. Linn-Mar 210, 8. Marion 264, 9. Prairie 269, 10. Wahlert 287, 11. Jefferson 289, 12. Kennedy 295, 13. North Scott 310, 14. Washington 342, 15. Xavier 416, 16. Mount Vernon/Lisbon 431, 17. Davenport Central 457, 18. Davenport West 513, 19. Waterloo West 530.

Top 10 individuals

1. McKenzie Yanek, Pleasant Valley 18:23.00

2. Haley Humphrey, Bettendorf 18:46.66

3. Brina Kraft, Muscatine 18:50.52

4. Mary Arch, Iowa City High 18:55.32

5. Madison Bach, Marion 19:00.81

6. Hannah Fusselman, Kennedy 19:06.27

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7. Mallory Lafever, Pleasant Valley 19:12.74

8. Gabby Skopec, Iowa City West 19:14.86

9. Isabella Blackman, Bettendorf 19:15.64

10. Reagan Gorman, Washington 19:17.09

LINN-MAR - 31. Morgan Garcia 20:12.88, 32. Maddie Mann 20:13.41, 40. Deanna Newhouse 20:25.17, 43. Amber Decker 20:29.41, 64. Abby Van Rheenen 21:06.98.

MARION - 5. Madison Bach 19:00.81, 39. Hallie Kephart 20:24.69, 46. Andrea Ertz 20:35.99, 81. Avery Manderscheid 21:49.53, 93. Kelsi Huhndorf 22:10.44.

PRAIRIE - 14. Hannah Frazee 19:36.42, 54. Cayla Renwick 20:56.30, 61. Morgan Erickson 21:05.57, 63. Alissa Neubauer 21:06.83, 77. Victoria Enyart 21:46.90.

JEFFERSON - 17. Meredith Koenigsfeld 19:43.75, 56. Megan Ely 20:57.09, 62. Sarah Hanna 21:06.20, 74. Adriana Hargrove 21:37.74, 80. Caleigh Meyer 21:48.57.

KENNEDY - 6. Hannah Fusselman 19:06.27, 13. Grace Walker 19:27.79, 85. Ali Meyer 21:55.87, 94. Hannah Peterson 22:11.28, 97. Emily Manders 22:16.46.

WASHINGTON - 10. Reagan Gorman 19:17.09, 37. Sarah Altemeier 20:23.44, 71. Brett Visser

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21:27.89, 105. Serena Eck 22:45.08, 119. Ashley Hageman
24:09.46.

XAVIER - 50. Jenny Dickes 20:50.09, 82. Kiana Stanek 21:49.68, 88. Lydia Brown 22:01.09,
92. Megan Lenss 22:09.82, 104. Abigail Tanko 22:38.60.