

Prairie boys on stride for state meet

Written by Tom Fruehling

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Led by its four horsemen in the orange checkerboard jerseys, the Cedar Rapids Prairie boys cross country team set sights on a state championship by running away from the field in the regional qualifying meet Thursday afternoon at the Tuma Soccer Complex.

The Kennedy girls, meanwhile, punched their own ticket to next week's state meet in Fort Dodge with a runnerup finish behind Iowa City West in team competition.

And though she didn't come close to winning, Washington's future U.S. Naval Academy cadet Shannon Gorman made waves for herself by coming in second to West's indefatigable Ashlynn Yokom.

The Prairie Hawks, ranked third in the latest Class 4A ratings, took four of the top-five places with late-season sophomore sensation Jake Moore leading the pack in a time of 15:36.20.

Senior Mitch Pritts ran eight seconds behind to finish third, while senior Isaiah Vlasek and sophomore Tysen VanDraska ran fourth and fifth. Their team score of 26 out-distanced Dubuque Hempstead by 27 points.

"We've got four kids who are just running studs," said Prairie Coach Bill Schwarz after a race run on cold and windy conditions. "You're usually fortunate to have one like that in your program, and this year we've got four of them. They're all studs."

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Moore, who has come on of late as the leader of the group, said he was just trying to stay up front with Pritts as the race progressed.

“I wanted to stick with Mitch,” he explained. “The two of us and (Jon) Specht from Hempstead kind of pulled away at the two mile mark.

“I got the lead and at about 300 yards somebody yelled that Hempstead was 10 meters back. That's when I definitely kicked it in.”

Moore won the race by just under two seconds. “All I really cared about,” he said, “was getting points to help our team get to state.”

Schwarz said the dominant showing bodes well for next week's championships.



“Linn-Mar is still the team to beat,” he acknowledged. “And Johnston deserves its No. 2 ranking. Three teams get a trophy at state, and I think we've got a real chance to get up there on the deck.”

Also racing for a trophy will be the Kennedy girls, who placed three runners in the top-10. Senior Alyssa Averhoff finished third behind Gorman, and senior Allison Culver and junior Lauren Meyer came in ninth and 10th.

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Gorman a week ago received an acceptance letter from the naval academy and wore a USNA stocking cap to show her pride. Last year at the bitterly cold and rainy qualifying meet, she said she performed badly and has been trying to adjust her training.

"I usually run bad in the cold," she said. "This year I'm focusing on being at my best at the end of the season."

Still, she knew she had little chance against long-time nemesis Yokom, a state champion contender who won Thursday's race by a whopping 37 seconds.

"She was way ahead right from the start," Gorman noted. "I basically stayed in the pack for the first part of the race. My times were right where I wanted them to be.

"When I decided to break away, there were several of us bunched together. I really had to push through at the end. It was windy, and my back started to hurt. But I have to get used to running in the cold."

CLASS 4A STATE QUALIFIER
At Tuma Soccer Complex

GIRLS RESULTS
4K

Team Standings
(Top 3 Qualify For State)

1. Iowa City West 41, 2. Kennedy 64, 3. Muscatine 80, 4. Prairie 119, 5. Washington 125, 6. Hempstead 148, 7. Waterloo West 172, 8. Jefferson 186, 9. Ottumwa 250, 10. Waterloo East 299.

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Top 10 Individuals

(Qualify For State)

1. Ashlynn Yokom, IC West	14:24.39
2. Shannon Gorman, Washington	15:01.25
3. Alyssa Averhoff, Kennedy	15:05.27
4. Brina Kraft, Muscatine	15:08.40
5. Sammie Sproul, Waterloo West	15:10.29
6. Emmie Skopec, IC West	15:10.72
7. Abby Harbin, Hempstead	15:14.27
8. Jessie Skopec, IC West	15:21.17
9. Allison Culver, Kennedy	15:30.46
10. Lauren Meyer, Kennedy	15:36.62

Kennedy - 3. Alyssa Averhoff 15:05.27, 9. Allison Culver 15:30.46, 10. Lauren Meyer 15:36.62, 14. Laura Feld 15:58.08, 28. Carolyn Stone 16:22.33, 33. Alissa Meyer 16:31.36, 43. Katherine Nus 16:59.13.

Prairie - 12. Cayla Renwick 15:51.14, 17. Eilish Stanek 16:05.15, 22. Katie Costigan 16:16.14, 32. Victoria Enyart 16:30.88, 36. Sophia Smith 16:35.43, 40. Sarah Meyers 16:44.20, 52. Anna Rubsam 17:35.06.

Washington - 2. Shannon Gorman 15:01.25, 16. Morgan Stuckenschneider 16:04.16, 25. Madison Stuckenschneider 16:18.75, 35. Kristin Mackenburg 16:34.74, 47. Brett Visser 17:24.43, 48. Sarah Witt 17:28.70, 57. MJ Kamin 17:57.41.

Jefferson - 23. Meredith Koenigsfeld 16:17.23, 24. Sara Hannan 16:18.29, 37. Megan Ely 16:38.18, 49. Caleigh Meyer 17:30.01, 53. Maddie Robinson 17:37.48, 54. Jasmine Blue 17:43.21, 68. Anna Petersen 19:04.05.

BOYS RESULTS

5K

Team Standings

(Top 3 Qualify For State)

1. Prairie 26, 2. Hempstead 53, 3. Iowa City West 77, 4. Waterloo West 107, 5. Muscatine 158, 6. Washington 161, 7. Kennedy 189, 8. Ottumwa 218, 9. Jefferson 226.

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(Qualify For State)

1. Jake Moore, Prairie	15:36.20
2. Jon Specht, Hempstead	15:38.10
3. Mitch Pritts, Prairie	15:44.01
4. Isaiah Vlasek, Prairie	16:01.58
5. Tysen VanDraska, Prairie	16:04.74
6. Daniel Gardarsson, IC West	16:05.82
7. Akash Borde, IC West	16:17.43
8. Joe Meehan, Hempstead	16:17.82
9. Cody McConnell, Ottumwa	16:24.23
10. Sam Eck, Washington	16:27.00

Prairie - 1. Jake Moore 15:36.20, 3. Mitch Pritts 15:44.01, 4. Isaiah Vlasek 16:01.58, 5. Tysen VanDraska 16:04.74, 13. Ross Adams 16:35.84, 15. Cam Steffans 16:43.78, 17. Zack Fiser 16:45.96.

Washington - 10. Sam Eck 16:27.00, 34. Ian Klopfenstein 17:23.30, 36. Finbar Berry 17:33.47, 38. Robbie Gearhart 17:36.35, 43. Wyatt Forster 17:52.48, 46. Ian Hoover-Grinde 18:06.48, 59. Sam McDermott 18:51.19.

Kennedy - 25. Addison Furry 16:59.88, 31. Matt Stevens 17:10.77, 40. Derek Girling 17:46.97, 44. Tim Zange 17:56.70, 49. Ignacio Perea 18:19.41, 53. Hunter Schnoenauer 18:24.09.

Jefferson - 22. Tim Bell 16:50.94, 45. Jason Chung 17:58.03, 51. Nathan Prochnow 18:22.01, 52. Christopher Haring 18:23.03, 56. Nate Homan 18:35.92, 60. Kane Kramer 18:59.13, 61. Trey Hitchins 19:09.55.