

Linn-Mar claims 4A state title

Written by Jim Ecker

Saturday, 01 November 2014 21:15 -



FORT DODGE - Daniel Murphy has lived with a nightmare the past year after collapsing at the state cross country meet in 2013 and needing medical attention.

Now he's living a dream.

Murphy and the Linn-Mar Lions raced to the first state title in school history Saturday when they captured top honors at the Class 4A meet in Fort Dodge.

The Lions nudged Cedar Rapids Prairie, 85-98, in the team standings. Prairie won the state title last year, making it back-to-back crowns for Metro schools.

Murphy finished dead-last in 2013 after he collapsed several times and staggered to the finish line, due to dehydration and a possible virus.

Linn-Mar might have challenged Prairie for the state title last year if Murphy had been in top form.

"I felt like I let the team down," he said Saturday.

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That's all in the past now. Linn-Mar came home with the top prize this time thanks to Daniel Murphy, Michael Mather, Ryan Murphy, Bryan Fogerty, Jay Halverson and the entire program of coaches, runners, trainers and managers.

"It's amazing," said Murphy, who finished sixth. "That's all you can say. Amazing."

Mather placed eighth, Ryan Murphy 10th, Fogerty 18th and Halverson 43rd on a crisp day at the Lakeside Golf Course in Fort Dodge, with the temperature in the low 40's.

"It feels great," said Linn-Mar Coach Todd Goodell. "These kids, this program, have been working hard for a long time. It just finally feels good to get one."

The Lions had a chance to win the state title last year with superstar Josh Evans on the club, but Prairie ran a terrific race in 2013 and Daniel Murphy ended up in the first-aid tent in Fort Dodge before heading to a hospital once he got home.

"Night and day," said Goodell, comparing the 2013 and 2014 state meets. "You have to give these kids credit, to come off what they did last year and put it past them."

"They also used it as a little motivation to come out with something to prove. You have to give the kids credit for moving on and working toward something bigger and better."

"We had a couple of guys run the race of their career today," he said.

Linn-Mar and Prairie battled all year for bragging results. It ended in Fort Dodge, with the two

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friendly rivals finishing 1-2 in the biggest race of the season.

"If we had to finish second to anybody, we're glad it's them," said Prairie junior Tysen VanDraska, who struggled a little in the chilly conditions and finished seventh. "They're a great team."

Prairie junior Jake Moore, who battled calf and arch problems this season, ran his best race of the year and finished fourth for the Hawks for the second straight time. "Today everything kind of worked out," said Moore, who ran himself to exhaustion.

Matt Lorenz placed 15th for Prairie, Zack Fiser 35th and Chris Oehlert 37th.

"We knew if the Linn-Mar kids were running right, there was nobody who could catch them," said Prairie Coach Bill Schwarz. "Our team gave it their best shot. Our kids ran real well.

"It's great to have first and second from the Metro area."

Prairie has enjoyed a remarkable six-year stretch at the state meet with a pair of state titles (2011 and 2013) and two second-place showings.

The Linn-Mar girls placed sixth out of 14 teams in their race. Amber Decker led the Lions with a 20th-place showing.

The Marion boys finished 11th in the Class 3A standings. Freshman Jeremy Fopma led the Indians in 12th place. Colton Forster, Marion's top runner, struggled and finished 48th.

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Madison Bach of Marion placed 21st in the girls 3A race. Jenny Dickes of Xavier finished 29th.



CLASS 4A BOYS

Team Standings

1. Linn-Mar 85, 2. Prairie 98, 3. Johnston 111, 4. Cedar Falls 119, 5. Pleasant Valley 127, 6. West Des Moines Valley 159, 7. Dowling 179, 8. Ames 210, 9. Iowa City West 219, 10. Bettendorf 276, 11. Fort Dodge 279, 12. Dubuque Senior 282, 13. Hempstead 287, 14. Waukee 290, 15. Urbandale 335.

Winner - Daniel Soto, West Des Moines Valley, 15:24.2

Linn-Mar: 6. Daniel Murphy 15:45.6, 8. Michael Mather 15:58.9, 10. Ryan Murphy 16:00.3, 18. Bryan Fogerty 16:20.6, 43. Jay Halverson 16:40.0.
Prairie: 4. Jake Moore 15:42.5, 7. Tysen VanDraska 15:54.8, 15. Matt Lorenz 16:09.5, 35. Zack Fiser 16:35.1, 37. Chris Oehlert 16:35.6, 71. Cam

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Steffens 17:04.9, 96. Luke Heudepohl 17:42.8.

CLASS 4A GIRLS

Team Standings

1. Johnston 64, 2. Urbandale 82, 3. Ames 102, 4. Iowa City West 165, 5. Dowling 175, 6. Linn-Mar 176, 7. Waukee 184, 8. Des Moines Roosevelt 199, 9. Ankeny Centennial 218, 10. Iowa City High 223, 11. Muscatine 224, 12. Bettendorf 252, 13. Hempstead 310, 14. Southeast Polk.

Note: Pleasant Valley scratched due to illness.

Winner - Megan Schott, Des Moines Roosevelt, 14:11.6.

Linn-Mar: 20. Amber Decker 15:09.5, 29. Morgan Garcia 15:23.6, 32. Maddie Saville 15:27.4, 35. Bryce Jones 15:30.7, 60. Maddie Mann 15:55.5, 67. Sydney Johnston 16:01.3, 80. Deanna Newhouse 16:18.2.

CLASS 3A BOYS

Team Standings

1. Gilbert 73, 2. Mount Vernon/Lisbon 78, 3. Pella 96, 4. Grinnell 168, 5. Charles City 179, 6. Center Point-Urbana 191, 7. Dallas Center-Grimes 194, 8. Decorah 208, 9. Algona 209, 10. Sioux City Heelan 219, 11. Marion 255, 12. Vinton-Shellsburg 263, 13. Harlan 272, 14. Ballard 325, 15. MOC-Floyd Valley 331.

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Winner - Thomas Pollard, Gilbert, 15:04.5

Marion: 12. Jeremy Fopma 16:42.8, 29. Myles Bach 17:15.6, 48. Colton Forster 17:36.9, 81. Hunter Reifschneider 18:19.4, 85. Austin Yorkovsky 18:24.7, 87. Maverick Miller 18:28.5, 95. Jacob Manderscheid 18:49.5.