

## NEWS

### **Ailing Red Devils finish fourth at conference meet**

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GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY -- Hinsdale Central worked hard this season trying to achieve West Suburban Conference Silver Division history.

During Saturday's Silver Meet, many Red Devils had to battle just to reach to the finish line.

With an illness-plagued lineup, the Red Devils had an outcome as gloomy as the weather at Camera Park in Glendale Heights as they finished fourth after going undefeated in Silver dual meets.

Senior Graylin Harrison (17 minutes, 34.4 seconds) and freshman Jill Hardies (17:40.2) still were an impressive third and fourth over the sloppy 2.92 miles to earn all-conference honors with a top-16 finishes.

Seniors Katie Kummerer (20th, 18:35.8), Colleen Leahy (22nd, 18:44.4) and Grace Hucek (25th, 18:57) and sophomores Grace Klein (30th, 19:21.3) and Taylor Troy (32nd, 19:28.7) also competed. Kummerer raced sick and Klein was absent from school most of the week.

"We're missing one of our top runners (senior Hailey Krzyston); everyone has been sick," Harrison said. "We tried to be as optimistic as we could going into it, but we weren't looking too good from the beginning of the week (health-wise). I know I was not feeling my best. I tried to ignore it, tried to move past it, but there's no doubt everyone felt a little something.

"No one felt their best (Saturday), but I'm not worried about it. I think in the next week or two (for sectionals), we're going to get everyone back to full strength and good things are going to happen. We're going to show the world what we're ready to do."

Against a field with three other state-ranked teams, the Red Devils (74 points) were beaten by York (40), Lyons Township (59) and edged by Downers Grove North (72). In the final overall standings, a 50-50 combination of dual meet and Silver Meet results, Hinsdale Central shared second with LT.

The Red Devils begin their quest for an eighth consecutive state team berth at the Class 3A LT Regional at 2 p.m. Saturday. The top five teams advance to the Lockport Sectional Oct. 31.

The Red Devils had won or shared seven straight Silver titles and were hoping to tie Downers North's record stretch of eight straight WSC crowns from 1978-85. With four seniors in the 2008 Silver Meet lineup, the Red Devils secured their fifth straight title outright and went on to finish second at state.

"It's only my second year on the team but I've known in the past the team has been so strong. It's kind of like a given that they win conference," Harrison said. "The world was against us, at least this week. Two weeks from now (at sectionals), who knows? I think things will come together. We've worked too hard for them not to so I hope so."

Harrison improved upon taking seventh at the 2008 Silver Meet, but she was disappointed with being passed by LT senior Kelsey Kilrea (2nd, 17:32.4) down the final straightaway. York senior Meghan Frigo defended her individual title in 17:18.9.

"I think I could have stuck with Meghan if I had been feeling my best," Harrison said. "I did the best that I possibly could (Saturday) and to come in third when I'm not feeling that great is something I can't really be too upset with."

One big positive Saturday was that Hardies continued to prove herself as a varsity standout and is injury free. She recently sat out two duals and an invite to rest a hurting growth plate in her foot.

"My goal was top 5. It's nice to know that I didn't lose anything when I was out," Hardies said. "I felt fine. We didn't run as a team as best as possible but as soon as everyone gets better, I think we really have something going for us."

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