

IHSA State Finals Recap Saturday, November 3, 2007

Photos

<http://hchsgirlsxc.smugmug.com/gallery/3739428#217161503>

Results

<http://www.ihsa.org/activity/ccg/2007-08/3result1.htm> FIX!

The State Championships were held on Saturday, November 3, 2007 at Detweiler Park in Peoria. For the 3rd year in a row, race day conditions were excellent. It was very cool overnight, dropping into the mid 30's, but race time temps were in the upper 50's with bright sunshine. Northwest winds picked up as the day wore on but did not play a huge factor at 10-15 mph at race time. The course was dry and fast, but very hard, bumpy and brown due to a lack of rain this fall. It was a great day for a championship cross country meet in every way!

The Lady Devils placed 4th in the meet with 181 points and, while unable to defend our title from one year ago, placed in the Top 4 for the third consecutive year. That is the best record over that period of any girls team in the state of Illinois. Geneva finished in the top spot with 119 points followed by LT (131) and Naperville North (181), who edged us out by five points for the third spot. Following the Lady Devils were Neuqua Valley (190), Palatine (195) and Lockport (209). Our Sectional finished 1,2,3,4 in the team standings and the West Suburban Silver Conference placed two teams in the Top 4 and had 6 of the top 29 individual finishers. As always, our challenging schedule prepared us well for the competition at the State Meet.

Elaine Kuckertz placed in the Top 10 for the second year in a row, placing 6th overall in 17:23 on the 3.0 mile course. Elaine joins Lynne Segreti (Kern) as the only 2 time All-Stater in HC history. Only a junior, Elaine has higher goals yet for her senior season. Lauren Zumbach was next for the Devils, finishing 29th in 17:47. Lauren has placed in the top 29 for three consecutive years, characteristic of her consistent excellence in all that she does. Heather Stevens and Katie Kummerer were next for the Lady Devils, finishing 61st and 69th overall in 18:23 and 18:31. Heather made some big strides this year and is excited about gaining more consistency and moving to an even higher level next season. As a sophomore, Katie came back strongly at both Sectionals and State and has a very bright future ahead of her. Emily Cleary struggled a bit as our fifth runner, finishing 93rd in 18:46. We suspect that Em may still have been feeling some of the after effects of the illness that held her out of the Regional Meet. As a captain, four year Varsity runner and one of the top athletes ever to come through our program, Emily is excited about finishing off her senior track season in style and I know that her best times and performances will come this spring. Roey Hines and Grace Hucek finished it off for the Devils, finishing 125th and 139th overall in 19:02 and 19:19. While it may not look like it on paper alone, Roey's effort was our race of the day. After cross training like a maniac for almost three weeks and having countless treatment and massage sessions, she was determined to give it everything she had in the State Meet race. It never entered her mind that she would not race. Her only concern was how she was going to make it happen. The race started out well and she was side-by-side with Elaine and Lauren at the mile mark, reached in 5:37. She was feeling great and the heel was fine. Then suddenly the pain returned and intensified as the race went on. While most competitors would have tossed in the towel at that point, Roey persevered to the finish, knowing that we were "All for One". While this race may not have had a story book ending for Roey, the lessons she learned and the experience she gained will be invaluable in future races and in life. Her fire burns hotter than ever! She turned in a truly heroic effort, both on race day and in the weeks leading up to the race.

While we may not have realized all of our competitive goals at the end of the season, it was a great season overall and we can't be too disappointed with 4th in the state. After all, there are only three teams in the state that wouldn't trade places with us J "Expect nothing, be prepared for anything", but realize that unforeseen things happen and, when they do, we need to fight harder than ever for each other, all for one. I thanked all of our alumni for all that they have done to bring us to the point

where 4th at the State Meet is not cause for jumping up and down and absolute euphoria. It's important, however, to keep things in perspective in running and in life. While we strive to do and be our best in all that we do, the reality is that we won't always reach the absolute pinnacle of success that we strive to reach. That is why it is so crucial to do what we love and to love what we do. Enjoy the journey, because that is what matters. On the other hand, we will never reach those heights of success if we don't set high goals and expect the very best from ourselves and those around us. But even in those times when we don't reach the very top, we must appreciate how much we have accomplished, examine what we can do better next time and resolve to come back better than ever. I told both our alumni and our girls (all 71 of them) that they should be very proud because they have built this program from the ground up. Next year our goals will be bigger and better than ever! That begins over the winter, continues through the track season and summer and will end in a 2008 season that we are already looking forward to with great anticipation. Lastly, as their coach, I always want our girls to know how much I appreciate all that they give to the program and, that they are the best group of girls I could possibly hope to coach. All For One, indeed!