

Frosh-soph race

In her previous cross country race Oct. 10, Glenbard West sophomore Kate Dorsey enjoyed a huge breakthrough by covering the Camera Park home course an amazing 1:10 faster than she did only one week earlier.

Dorsey found a way to top surpass that accomplishment at the West Suburban Conference Silver Division Meet Saturday, Oct. 19, at Proviso West.

Dorsey won the frosh-soph individual title with teammates Abby Shaver and Nicole Berneche second and fourth and Caitlyn Reick and Christina Sedall 14th and 16th as the Hilltoppers edged Lyons Township 37-38 to win the meet.

"It felt really good because it's the first race I've ever won," Dorsey said.

"Originally, I was seeing myself at least up in the front, kind of or trying to be running with Abby. I was thinking based on how I'd done against all of the other teams in the dual meets I could get in the top five at least and it would have been awesome if I'd won."

Dorsey covered the 3.04 miles in 19:36.2 with Shaver (19:53.5) just ahead of LT's Vanessa Flaherty (19:54.0) and Berneche (19:55.9).

They and Reick (20:44.0) and Sedall (20:46.7) earned all-conference honors for finishing among the top 16. Sedall was .6 ahead of 17th place.

Maddy Burt (23rd, 21:08.4) and freshman Annie Pasterz (25th, 21:21.2) also were among the top 25, followed by Nicole Rogus (34th, 22:01.1), freshmen Jenna Kelly (43rd, 22:26.6) and Lindsay Lifka (48th, 22:48.0), Claire Filippelli (57th, 23:11.6), Meredith Miscinski (59th, 23:15.7), Macy Lemke (61st, 23:21.4) and freshmen Grace Zemenak (63rd, 23:26.3), Abby Beedle (66th, 23:33.5), Julie Garcia (72nd, 23:54.7), Avery Kiker (73rd, 23:55.2), Sarah Cholewinski (74th, 23:58.4), Rebekah Crail (75th, 24:02.8), Madeleine Manas (93rd, 24:47.6), Lisette Gonzalez (98th, 25:42.4) and Jennifer Orozco (116th, 27:43.2).

Dorsey is the Hilltoppers' third frosh-soph individual Silver Meet champion over the past four years, joining Grace Rogers from 2012 and Kate Majewski in 2012.

Glenbard West also won last year's Silver Meet, but this is the first time Glenbard West coach Paul Hass can recall five all-conference Hilltoppers in any frosh-soph race.

"The kids are excited and they should be," Hass said. "It was certainly close, but it's great to see the kids step up. Any time you get a conference championship – in our conference – you have certainly something to be proud of."

In their last frosh-soph race together Oct. 3, Shaver, Dorsey and Berneche finished 1-2-3 in a 27-30 victory over Downers Grove North. Like Dorsey, Shaver never had a top-five finish in a major race until Saturday.

"(Before the Silver Meet, Dorsey and I) actually had a conversation. We were like, 'You know, we shouldn't be afraid if we're up in the front. Just take charge and win this race.' We were kind of joking, but then it actually happened," Shaver said.

"It was awesome and especially the finish was super intense because the LT girl (Flaherty) was right next to me. I was just like, 'OK. I need to actually sprint a little faster here.' I usually do not have a big kick at all so I was really nervous. I just found something somewhere. It came out of nowhere."

Shaver and the Hilltoppers were even more excited when the final team scores were revealed.

By just one point, the Hilltoppers had edged Lyons Township, whose top-five were 3-5-7-11-12. Two other Hilltoppers finished just ahead of Lions but with room to spare. By breaking 20:00, Berneche had 17.6 seconds on fifth-place LT freshman Colleen O'Connell (20:13.5) and Reick was 2.2 seconds ahead of 15th-place LT sophomore Luci Lussier (20:46.2).

"If (Flaherty) had beaten me, we would have lost," Shaver said. "That felt awesome, especially because we didn't know the (final scores) the whole meet. Then Mr. Hass came over at the end and he was doing his little speech and we were like, 'Oh just tell us. We want to know if we won.' He told us we won and we freaked out."

However, the Lions were awarded the overall conference title outright because dual results also account for half of the final standings. LT was 6-0 in Silver duals and Glenbard West was 3-3, often having to deplete its frosh-soph lineup to supplement the varsity's run to a second straight outright title and third in a row.

Glenbard West also won last year's Silver Meet after going 3-3 in duals and settled for a second-place tie in the final standings.

"We were 3-3, and I probably think we could have won every single one of the ones we lost if we were healthy or didn't move people out or hold them out (from races)," Hass said. "We were 3-3 but conference was where we got to see our team at full strength."

Shaver and Dorsey ran like champions from the start. Shaver and Dorsey were 1-2 after one mile in 6:06 and 6:09 with a nine-second lead on the pack of third to fifth.

"When I saw (Shaver) up front, I'm like, 'Oh, I should go get her so we can push each other. I tried to work my way up to the front by the one mile so I could get with her,'" Dorsey said.

By two miles, Dorsey (12:44) had the lead on Shaver (12:51) with Berneche (12:53) moving from eighth into third, five seconds ahead of Flaherty.

Dorsey said running so well in her previous race gave her additional fortitude to help her to victory Saturday. Against LT Oct. 10, Dorsey (18:24) and Shaver (18:31) enjoyed faster times than Oct. 3, and they helped the varsity beat LT 25-32 as the Hilltoppers' No. 5 and 6 finishers with three of Saturday's varsity runners not in the lineup (Madeline Perez, Lindsay Graham and Megan Ozog).

"I was looking at my (Oct. 10) time and they have this app where you can figure out your (3.0 mile equivalent) time. And it was about 19:00," Dorsey said. "If I hadn't run that there, I probably wouldn't have known I could have gone faster. This (victory) really helps to get me feeling good about my running and not be afraid to go fast the second and third miles or go out faster."

In much the same manner, Berneche gained confidence from her third-place finish in the dual against Downers North and built upon that Oct. 10 against LT. She actually won the frosh-soph race in 18:58, although the Hilltoppers' depleted lineup lost to the Lions 20-39.

Berneche still was a bit unsure of how she'd do Saturday. She responded with what she felt was her best race of the season.

"I didn't think I would (get fourth)," Berneche said. "It was really cool. I think I ran well. (My goal was) just to do as well as possible and to start fast. I just tried to stay near (Dorsey and Shaver) and look up to them."

With Janie Nabholz later finishing seventh in the varsity race, all 13 freshmen in the program competed Saturday. Glenbard West coach Paul Hass opted to run his other freshmen in the frosh-soph race, which allowed unlimited entries, rather than the earlier freshman race that also was 3.04 miles.

Sophomore Kate Wyant and junior Abigail Dibadj were the only two Hilltoppers who did not compete Saturday.

"We had 41 out of our 43 kids competing at the end of the season, and quite honestly, running well. They ran some amazing times despite the length (being more than 3.0 miles) and the wind," Hass said.

"We truly had a team effort. It was a great way to end the season. The kids have been solid all year and whether they've competed or not, they've contributed in some way. It's great to see them run and represent themselves and the team as well. For many of our kids, it was the end of their season. It was a great way to end on a high note, running (personal records) or times they haven't before."

-- by Bill Stone

Junior varsity race

Glenbard West junior Annika Manning didn't get much enjoyment from her seventh-place finish in the junior varsity race at the 2012 West Suburban Conference Silver Division Meet.

Manning was the Hilltoppers' No. 1 finisher, but she competed slightly injured, and her time wasn't fast enough to earn a spot for the team's IHSA-limited, 12-runner postseason lineup.

"I was on the top 12 (team) freshman and sophomore year and then last year I didn't get it. I got seventh, but my time didn't cut it," Manning said. "This year, my goal was to get in it. I really pushed myself a lot harder because it was a disappointment last year not getting up there."

In her return to the JV race at the Silver Meet Saturday, Oct. 19, at Proviso West, Manning was way up there as she finished third to two strong competitors.

Manning (19:57.3 for 3.04 miles) broke 20:00 and was beaten only by York junior Hannah Wahlgren (19:24.8) and Hinsdale Central junior Sara Folliard (19:25.9). Manning was 22 seconds ahead of fourth-place Hinsdale Central junior Molly Leahy (20:19.3).

"The feeling going into it was just like, 'I have to put it all out there. It's going to be my last race so just put it all on the course and see what I get,'" Manning said.

"My goal was to be in the top 10 today. I don't even remember getting seventh last year. I've worked for it this year. I'm proud of it. Just working hard and what you get out of that is just good."

More important, Manning's effort achieved way more than just a significant improvement in place. She had the Hilltoppers' 11th-fastest overall time among Saturday's three races in which they competed and accomplished her return to the state series team.

"I was very proud of what Annika did. She's a great trouper as far as what we've asked her to do," Glenbard West coach Paul Hass said. "She gives her best effort and it's great for her to get some of that recognition. That was a very solid performance in that meet, but it's also the best season of her career."

Junior Hannah Arduino was 23rd (21:05.7), seven places from the race's final all-conference spot, followed by junior Colleen Luczak (41st, 21:40.2) and Julia Kochert (51st, 22:09.7), seniors Amanda Ortiz (63rd, 22:34.6) and Faith Bischoff (67th, 22:46.2), junior Morgan McEnroe (94th, 23:36.2), senior Madelyn O'Gorman (103rd, 23:52.7) and juniors Emma Gambol (114th, 24:14.4), Jessica Wulffen (123rd, 24:30.2), Jessica Hajny (125th, 24:45.9) and Madeleine Winter (132nd, 25:10.1).

Glenbard West (134 points) finished fifth and fifth in the final overall team standings.

Manning put herself among the lead pack of five runners who crossed the mile at 6:13. Wahlgren and Folliard began to take charge, but Manning wouldn't relent, only trailing them by four as she crossed in 12:55, 14 seconds ahead of fourth place.

"I felt accomplished," Manning said. "I wasn't first at first but I still stayed up there. I tried to stay with (Wahlgren and Folliard) in the beginning, right up with them, but I just wanted to get third after they split off."

Wahlgren is working her way back from injury after being 15th in last year's varsity Silver Meet, one of 10 non-seniors who were varsity all-conference in 2012. Folliard entered Saturday as Hinsdale Central's No. 7 runner, but the Red Devils only used six in the varsity race.

The way Manning got herself back towards the top of the Hilltoppers' powerful lineup is pretty simple.

"Just in workouts, trying to stay up with the top people so that in a race maybe I can try and do that, too," Manning said. "Really pushing in the workouts (is the key) because that's what you do in the race then. The same thing comes."