

Norton Cross Country wins in season opener

By Dick Boyd

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Coach George Rossi's Norton Community High School girls and boys cross country teams opened the 2012 season on a winning note Thursday by earning championships in their own Norton Invitational held on the Prairie Dog Recreation Association Golf Course south of Norton.

It was the seventh straight championship of the Norton event for the Lady Jays and the fourth in a row for the Blue Jay boys.

"Mother Nature must know when we have our meet because she turned up the heat again and gave us another 100 degree day," said coach Rossi. "I'm extremely proud of how well we ran in again winning both championships on our course."

The Norton girls won with a score of 27, followed by Oberlin, 64; Plainville, 67 and Wheatland, 79.

The Norton boys also won with a score of 27 and were followed by Phillipsburg, 69; Plainville, 72; Stockton, 76 and Oberlin, 95.

GIRLS

Sophomore Sierra Griffith was first to hit the finish line for the Norton girls with a time of 17:55 for the 2.5 mile course and she was third overall.

Placing right behind Griffith in fourth individually was junior Darcy Bainter in 18:26. Junior Katelyn Engelbert was eighth and third best for Norton in 18:59.

Freshman Molly Maddy had an outstanding time in her first high school race for the Lady Jays with a clocking of 19:01 and ninth place finish.

Rounding out the top five team scoring for Norton was senior Julia Kent with a tenth place and time of 19:12.

Also running for Norton and their times and finishes were: senior Kamilla Jones, 19:33, 12th and junior Marisa Maddy, 20:22, 16th.

Top ten runners were: Taylor Tustin, Wheatland, 17:41, first; Marlee McKenna, Hoxie, 17:49, second; Sierra Griffith, Norton, 17:55, third; Darbi Rouse, Oberlin, 18:09, fourth; Darcy Bainter, Norton, 18:26, fifth; Leslie VanLoenen, Hill City, 18:43, sixth; Cassidy Rathbun, Plainville, 18:56, seventh; Katelyn Engelbert, Norton, 18:59, eighth; Molly Maddy, 19:01, ninth; Julia Kent, 19:12, tenth.

Three Norton girls competed in the junior varsity race. Freshman Raene Patterson placed second in 21:34, Kylie Perez was fourth in 22:45 and senior Steph Hager placed fifth in 24:00.

Two Northern Valley girls competed in the junior varsity race. Brooke Baird won the race with a time of 20:34 and Allison Keith was eighth in 28:53.

"Today our girls 1-5 split was 1:06 compared to 1:56 a year ago and that is a great improvement," said coach Rossi.

"All of our girls ran very well with Molly Maddy being the best surprise with a fantastic race.

"This team just outworks so many people and they compete very well.

"Our junior varsity girls also had a great race with all girls finishing in the top five.

"We have a great deal of work ahead of us as we head to Wamego. We made a good first step

today and we just need to keep moving in the right direction."

BOYS

Junior Marc Miller was fastest for the Norton boys in the 3.1 mile course, hitting the finish line in second place with a time of 19:24.

Freshman Brendon Frack performed well in his first high school competition with a third place finish in 19:50. Next, came sophomore Dalton Vanover in fourth place with a clocking of 20:09. Junior Alec Hager was fourth fastest for Norton with a sixth place finish in 20:13.

Rounding out the top five for the Blue Jays was senior John Renner, who placed 15th in 21:48.

Also running for Norton and their times and finishes were: junior Keith Sander, 23:18, 24th and senior Ryan Bainter, 24:47, 30th.

The top ten finishers were: Wyatt Ratzlaff, Phillipsburg, 18:28, first; Marc Miller, Norton, 19:24, second; Brendon Frack, Norton, 19:50, third; Shane Jones, Hill City, 20:03, fourth; Dalton Vanover, Norton, 20:09, fifth; Alec Hager, Norton, 20:13, sixth; Ethan Hamel, Stockton, 20:14, seventh; Jon Compton, Northern Valley, 20:15, eighth; Reed Stephens, Stockton, 20:29, ninth; Matthew Helm, Oberlin, 20:30, tenth.

Macy Kasson, Northern Valley, placed 23rd in 23:11

Five Norton boys competed in the junior varsity race. Finishing highest for the Blue Jays was freshman Weston Erbert who placed sixth in 24:30. He was followed by freshman James King, seventh, 24:59; junior Chris Chambers, 11th, 26:32; junior Kailen Kauahara, 13th, 27:41;

sophomore David Smith, 14th, 27:49; freshman Skylar Johnson, 16th, 27:55.

Camden Cox, Northern Valley, was tenth in the junior varsity race in 26:28 and the Huskies' Cody Land placed 20th in 37:49.

"Our boys really stepped up and ran well," said coach Rossi. "The 1-4 split was 1:11 and that is one of the best splits we have had.

"Freshman Brendon Frack and sophomore Dalton Vanover had fantastic races with Dalton running two minutes and seven seconds faster than he did last year.

"John Renner did a good job of passing several runners in the last mile and making the final spot.

"The junior varsity boys also did a good job learning a little about what cross country is all about.

"Thanks from coach Bailey and myself to all of the staff from Norton Community High School and Norton Junior High School who helped with the meet.

"It takes a lot of people to run a good meet. "A special thanks to Chase Lozar at the Prairie Dog Recreation Association who set sprinklers out to help cool the runners off and had the golf course ready for our race in the middle of getting ready for a huge golf tournament this weekend."

Next action

Norton will compete in the annual Wamego Invitational this Saturday.

The Class 1-2-3A girls will run at 11 a.m. and the 1-2-3A boys will compete at 11:30 a.m.

Norton volleyball team takes tough losses in Colby

By Dick Boyd

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After season-opening wins over Plainville and Northern Valley, the Norton Community High School volleyball team traveled to Colby for three more matches last Tuesday where they did not play quite well enough to win.

The Lady Jays lost to Holcomb 11-25, 17-25, were edged by Osborne 25-27, 24-26 and were outscored by Colby 15-25, 20-25.

Holcomb

"We came out very flat in our opening match with Holcomb and didn't play very well," said Norton head coach Kevin Jilka. "In both games we gave up several points in a row and we can't afford to do that."

Senior Bri Karnopp had Norton's only three kills in the match. Leading setter was junior Johnnye Ruder with three. Junior Bailey Ambrosier led in digs with three, followed by senior Rachel Slipke, senior Katherine Boteler and senior Alec Melvin with two each.

Osborne

"Both games with Osborne were very close and we had chances to win both of them but failure to serve the ball when we needed it let us down," said coach Jilka.

"We have to learn to be able to put teams away when it comes time and we make dumb

mistakes at key times costing us wins."

Karnopp had two kills for Norton and Melvin had one. Ruder had two assists and senior Teslee Nickell had one. Melvin had two blocks and Ambrosier and Boteler had one each.

Melvin led in digs with ten, followed by Karnopp, five; Slipke, three and Ruder, Ambrosier, Boteler and Nickell, two each.

Colby

"Our match with Colby was our best of the night by far," said coach Jilka.

"Again, we led in both contests but we gave up too many points at one time and you can't do that against a team like Colby."

Nickell had one kill, Karnopp had one assist, and Ambrosier and Karnopp each had one block.

Ambrosier led in digs with 10, followed by Slipke and Karnopp, three each; Melvin, two and sophomore Kaitlyn Bohl, one.

Overall comments

"Our serving has to get better along with hitting the ball consistently," said coach Jilka.

"We are struggling in both those areas and we need to get it fixed before Tuesday when we go to Phillipsburg.

Junior Varsity

The Norton junior varsity also played three matches. They

lost to Holcomb 17-25, 25-18 and 11-15; lost to Osborne 25-14, 11-25 and 5-15 and lost to Colby 24-26 and 23-25.

Holcomb

"We had a slow start in our first game against Holcomb," said Norton assistant coach Jodi Ward. "They took an early lead and we were never able to catch up.

"In the second game, we passed a little better, made more serves and held them off for the win.

"Then, we just couldn't put things together in the third game and lost."

Freshman Peyton Renner led in kills with four, followed by sophomore Kenzie Esslinger, three; sophomore Morgan Farber, three; sophomore Casey Ambrosier, two; freshman Hanna Brooks, two; freshman Kirstin Georgeson, one.

Assists leader was Georgeson with six, followed by Renner,

five; Ambrosier, one; sophomore Adrienne Hager, one.

Ambrosier had one block.

Farber led in digs with five, followed by Esslinger, three; Renner, three; Georgeson, two; sophomore Sheridan Dillehay, one.

Hager served three aces.

Osborne

"Again, we played flat," said coach Ward.

"We missed serves and didn't hit the ball very well."

Renner had five kills, followed by freshman Nickala O'Hare, two; freshman Lauren Mordecai, one; Farber, one; Georgeson, one.

Assists leader was Georgeson with seven, followed by Renner, three; Farber, two.

Renner had one block.

Renner and Dillehay each had four digs, followed by O'Hare, three; Hager, Brooks, Mordecai, Georgeson, one each.



Varsity tennis finishes runner-up in Hays Invitational tournament

By Dick Boyd

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After their 2012 season opener at Trego was postponed due to rain, the Norton Community High School varsity tennis team started the campaign with a runner-up finish in the Hays Invitational last Thursday.

Hays won the championship with 37 points, followed by Norton, 27; Russell, 21; Colby, 13; Victoria, 2.

"I was extremely pleased with our team's play and proud of our second place team finish," said Norton head tennis coach Jim Green.

Norton senior Tawni Griffey was unscored on during the tournament in placing first. She shutout Shelby Dinkel, Hays, 6-0; shutout Rhett Brown, Russell, 6-0; shutout Jenessa Williams, Colby, 6-0 and shutout Sara Kuhn, Victoria, 6-0.

"Tawni played extremely well in defeating Dinkel, who is a very solid and consistent player," said coach Green.

"Rhett Brown is an experienced player who hits the ball hard and has no problem returning difficult shots but Tawni was able to win over her as well as the other two opponents.

"Tawni was at the top of her game, moving her opponents from corner to corner with hard, well placed shots."

Juniors Rickete Green and Ashley Hildebrand played No.1 doubles and placed fourth. They lost 6-1 to Megan Bird and Janae Gagnon, Hays; lost 6-1 to Abby Dreher and Brooklyn Sidebottom, Russell; lost 6-0 to Haley Wallingford and Keana Keck, Colby and defeated Ariel Bowman and Anna Schmidberger, Victoria, 6-1.

"Rickete and Ashley played together last year

as our No.2 doubles team," said coach Green. "This was their first time playing No.1 doubles. The competition is better there and a lot more experienced. They gave us a win to add to our team points."

Norton senior Sierra Black placed second in No.2 singles. She lost to Brooke Forinash, Hays, 7-5; defeated Hayle Mader, Russell, 6-2; shutout Sarah Lamm, Colby, 6-0 and beat Meagan Karlin, Victoria, 6-1.

"Sierra had a good day on the courts," said coach Green. "She played a close match with Forinash of Hays which could have gone either way. She closed out the rest of the day winning three matches easily to place second. Sierra does a great job of consistently returning the ball and staying in the points."

Sophomore Molly Scott and junior Jessica White played No.2 doubles for the Lady Jays and placed second. They lost to Kelsea DeBoer and Taylor DeBoer, Hays, 6-0; then defeated Russell's Lizzy Rhodes and Tristen Hayes, 6-2; shutout Madison Rogers and Alexa Schindler, Colby, 6-0 and outscored Victoria's Bailey Hobbs and Brianna Leiker, 6-3.

"Molly and Jessica are new to the varsity and were playing together for the first time as a doubles team," said coach Green. "Both of these girls have more experience as singles players and are still learning to play doubles. They had a great day, winning three matches and placing second."

Next action

Norton played Tuesday in the Phillipsburg Tennis Quad.

Results were not available at the Telegram's press time.

five; Ambrosier, one; sophomore Adrienne Hager, one.

Ambrosier had one block.

Farber led in digs with five, followed by Esslinger, three; Renner, three; Georgeson, two; sophomore Sheridan Dillehay, one.

Hager served three aces.

Osborne

"Again, we played flat," said coach Ward.

"We missed serves and didn't hit the ball very well."

Renner had five kills, followed by freshman Nickala O'Hare, two; freshman Lauren Mordecai, one; Farber, one; Georgeson, one.

Assists leader was Georgeson with seven, followed by Renner, three; Farber, two.

Renner had one block.

Renner and Dillehay each had four digs, followed by O'Hare, three; Hager, Brooks, Mordecai, Georgeson, one each.



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Colby

"We played two close games with Colby but errors at critical times let the Eagles prevail," said coach Ward.

No statistics were available from this match.

Next action

Norton competed on Tuesday versus Phillipsburg, Osborne and Stockton in Phillipsburg.

Results were not available at the Telegram's press time.

Attention: Norcatour

The Decatur Health Systems Outreach Clinic at the former school will be open from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 11.

Call the Family Practice Clinic at 475-2015 for more information and to schedule follow-up visits.

James E. Reeves
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