

Port boys live up to top billing on way to sectional crown, berth in Div. 1 final

Living up to expectations was not a problem for the Port Washington boys' cross-country team last Saturday.

In fact, it was all in a day's work for the Pirates, who raced to a WIAA Division 1 sectional title and a berth in this week's state run with an impressive showing at Tendick Park in Saukville.



Placing all of its scoring finishers in the top 17 of a 76-runner field, Port scored just 49 points, well ahead of runner-up Germantown's 80 points.

In the process, the Pirates earned their first full-team trip to state since 2010, when they finished third in the Division 2 final.

"Things went about as we hoped," Port coach Mark Pasten said. "The guys executed their plan to perfection."

That plan, Pasten said, was to go out fast as a group, set a winning pace early and keep the pressure on other teams.

Run as a team, win as a team

Written by STEVE OSTERMANN
Wednesday, 30 October 2013 15:27

Eagan Norman led a tight pack finish by the Pirates with a 5,000-meter time of 16 minutes, 45 seconds, good for fifth place. Right on his heels was fellow junior Nick Michalowski in sixth (16:46).

Seniors Billy Ernest (16:59) and Taylor Godersky (17:00) placed 10th and 11th, respectively, and junior Tom Knowski was 17th (a personal-best 17:25).

Rounding out the Pirates' finishers were junior Lucas Bischoff in 19th (17:29) and senior Mason Purtell in 29th (17:45).

Norman and Michalowski ran well but "could have competed a little harder," Pasten said.

"But that's OK because our goal is to run the hardest next week," he added.

Norman returns to state for the second straight year, having qualified as an individual last season.

The top two teams in sectional meets advanced to the state level along with the top five runners not on qualifying squads.

Wauwatosa West missed qualifying by the narrowest of margins, taking third with 91 points. Rounding out the team standings were Menomonee Falls in fourth with 114 points, followed by Whitefish Bay (125), Cedarburg (146), host Homestead (186), Wauwatosa West (213), Milwaukee King (230), Milwaukee Arts/Carmen (261) and Nicolet (271).

The individual champion was Wauwatosa West senior Taylor Floyd-Mews (16:04).

Familiarity with Tendick Park helped his team, which was running on the course for the third straight week, Pasten noted.

Like the Port boys, the Whitefish Bay girls had no trouble winning their portion of the sectional meet. The Blue Dukes had all five of their scoring finishers place in the top nine of a 73-runner field and scored 25 points.

Wauwatosa East was a distant-second with 83 points, followed by Nicolet (103), Germantown (105), Homestead (118), Port Washington (164), Cedarburg (164), Wauwatosa West (173), Milwaukee King (207), Menomonee Falls (236) and Arts/Carmen (342).

East's Natalie Schudrowitz won the individual title with a 4,000-meter time of 15:00.

Senior Maggie Kotecki was Port's top finisher with a 22nd-place time of 17:03. The Pirates'

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other scoring runners were junior Brenna Russell in 25th (17:06), senior Abby Kotecki in 30th (17:14), freshman Brenna Kautz in 42nd (17:46) and sophomore Alli Klotz in 45th (18:04).

Also for Port, freshman Anja Smith was 49th (18:10) and sophomore Alexa Brown was 69th (20:19).

“Our girls ran really well as a pack,” Port girls’ coach Joe Adamak said.

Adamak was impressed with the dedication shown by his team, which continued to improve with a blend of experienced and young runners.

“I think the young girls are hard workers who really enjoy cross country,” Adamak said.

Likewise, the Koteckis clearly showed their love of the sport, he noted.

“Every day, they showed up smiling. They relaxed and had fun running,” he said.

The Port boys will take aim at state honors at The Ridges Golf Course in Wisconsin Rapids at 2:25 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 2. Rejoining the lineup after sitting out the sectional meet will be sophomore Andrew Cashin.

“Realistically, we should probably finish in fifth to 10th place,” Pasten said, “but if we have a good day, it could be even higher.”

Image Information: MEMBERS OF THE Port Washington boys’ cross-country team were happy to display their championship plaque after racing to top honors in a WIAA Division 1 sectional meet at Tendick Park in Saukville. Shown are (front row, from left) Nick Michalowski, Billy Ernest, Mason Purtell, (back row) Lucas Bischoff, Taylor Godersky, Eagan Norman and Tom Knowski. Photo by Sam Arendt