

1994 State meet...

Summer of hard work pays off for Ross boys

By **BOB MARKER**
Sports Editor

John Elder had a hunch the middle of the summer this Fremont Ross High School boys cross country team was going to go places.

"Back in June, the kids would come over to my house — they would be out running," Elder said. "Maybe two, other times three, would come over. One time it may be Dane Snyder and Doug Jibilian or Jeremiah Wagner and Clint Hill or any combination of that group...maybe Kurt Snyder, too.

"That was all without prompting. They all decided they really wanted to run cross country. I think that is where it began...the foundation."

The foundation was solid. Those five along with Jeremiah Smith and Jake Smith, set a lofty goal on the eve of the season.

"These kids were talking about the state meet," Elder said. "The GLL (Great Lakes League title) was not in their minds; they

wanted to go to the state meet."

The mid-summer visits and the lofty thinking have paid off. Saturday, at 12:35 p.m. at Scioto Downs in Columbus, Elder's team is one of 17 taking the starting gun.

That will mark the culmination of months of hard work.

It began with the summer jaunts and continued with preschool runs that began in the dark.

The majority of the team met Elder at the high school at 6:30 a.m. three or four times a week for a 30-35 minute run. After that, it was a shower and a visit to Elder's room for donuts while getting ready for school. After school, it was a meet or more running.

"Mainly the top six (Wagner, Jeremiah Smith, the Snyders, Jibilian and Hill) were in the morning runs," Elder said. "That is dedication and commitment that has paid off."

After settling for a third place in the GLL, Ross bounced back

the following week with a second-place finish in the district meet — the first step toward Columbus.

This past Saturday, the Little Giants reached their lofty goal with a third-place finish in the regional meet.

"One thing about this past week," Elder said, "and it is a key...everyone was healthy. They were not healthy at the GLL. But the past two weeks, they have been running great."

Wagner, Smith, the Snyders and Jibilian have broken the 17-minute mark and the sixth, Hill, has a best time of 17:14.

Dane Snyder and Jibilian are seniors, Wagner and Hill are juniors, Kurt Snyder and Jeremiah Smith sophomores and Jake Smith a freshman.

"I don't think anyone of them cares where they finish individually, but only as a team" Elder said. "They want to do what they can as a team."

It's worked so far.



News-Messenger/Jeremy Wadsworth

DOUG JIBILIAN (left) of Fremont Ross smiles as coach **John Elder** (center) takes a close look at the Division I boys runner-up trophy following the state cross country meet Saturday.

Little Giants surprising 2nd

By **MARK GRIFFIN**
Staff writer

COLUMBUS — Fremont Ross boys cross country coach **John Elder** expects to see a different attitude — an extra bounce in his team's step next season.

A performance like Saturday's at the state meet will do that to a team.

Ross, which took third in its region behind Cleveland St. Ignatius and Toledo St. John's, leapfrogged over St. John's to take second in the Division I race at Scioto Downs.

"We thought top five was a realistic chance," Elder said. "Beating St. John's was a goal; it seemed like the last three weeks, what they wanted to set out to do, they've done it. I'm just glad I was able to be around them this year."

Defending champ St. Ignatius, the state's top-ranked team all season, won with 76 points followed by Ross (142) and Beavercreek (151). St. John's was sixth with 179.

"Our team goal was to come in the top three and hopefully beat St. John's," Ross sophomore **Jeremiah Smith** said. "We had to step up. We had to have **Dane (Snyder)** and **Doug (Jibilian)** and all of them behind us step up, too."

"This is great. I never thought we'd be able to do it." **Jeremiah Wagner** had the top finish for the Little Giants, taking 11th in 16 min-

utes, 14 seconds. **Smith** was 24th in 16:35 followed by **Snyder** (47th, 16:50), **Jibilian** (80th, 17:18), **Kurt Snyder** (85th, 17:24), **Clint Hill** (111th, 17:48) and **Jake Smith** (145th, 18:34).

Wagner's top-25 finish earned him All-Ohio honors.

"I was going for top 12," said **Wagner**, a junior. "I was going fast. We ran the course (Friday) night and I was feeling pretty good. There's some pretty tough hills, and I just kept taking those hills as hard as I could. This is the state meet, and that's all there is to it."

"I was trying to stay with **Brad Mills** of Oregon Clay. He finished two places ahead of me at regionals. A few people passed me at the end that I'd like to beat, but I'll take it."

Sam Bell of Findlay was the individual champion, in 15:45. **Mills** took eighth in 16:12.

"**Dane (Snyder)** had to race better today than he did last week," Elder said. "All seven of them ran great races. We wanted to get our top two kids in the top 15 or top 20. We wanted to go top five or even top three if we could."

How will Saturday's runner-up finish affect the Ross program?

"I hope it's going to bring a lot more people out," Elder said. "Now, the attitude can be, 'Hey, what are we scared of? Other teams have to run with us.' Before, it was like, 'Boy, I wish we could run with them.'"

Complete Results

COLUMBUS — Results Saturday from the 66th boys and 17th girls state cross country championships at Scioto Downs.

BOYS

DIVISION I

TEAM SCORES

1. Cleveland St. Ignatius 90, 2. **FREMONT ROSS** 142, 3. Beavercreek 151, 4. Ashland 168, 5. Cincinnati St. Xavier 173, 6. Toledo St. John's 179, 7. Hudson 205, 8. Cincinnati Elder 230, 9. Kent Roosevelt 230, 10. North Canton Hoover 240.

TOP INDIVIDUALS

1. Sam Bell (Findlay) 15:45.4, 2. Dean Fulmer (Cincinnati LaSalle) 15:46, 3. Fitz Reed (West Chester Lakota) 15:51, 4. Patrick Kelly (Cleveland St. Ignatius) 15:59, 5. Brett Baddorf (Findlay) 16:00, 6. Chris Bollman (Cincinnati St. Xavier) 16:06, 7. Chris Marchal (Toledo St. Francis) 16:10, 8. Brad Mills (Oregon Clay) 16:12, 9. Chris Head (Cleveland St. Ignatius) 16:12, 10. Scott Mullan (Toledo St. John's) 16:13.

ROSS INDIVIDUALS

11. Jeremiah Wagner 16:14, 24. Jeremiah Smith 16:35, 47. Dane Snyder 16:50, 80. Doug Jibilian 17:18, 85. Kurt Snyder 17:24, 111. Clint Hill 17:48, 145. Jake Smith 18:34.

DIVISION II

TEAM SCORES

1. Mogadore Field 100, 2. Bryan 117, 3. Hebron Lakewood 137, 4. Sandusky Perkins 151, 5. Ashtabula Edgewood 202, 6. Avon Lake 204, 7. Napoleon 210, 8. Tuscarawas Valley 228, 9. Hamilton Badin 239, 10. Copley 243.

TOP INDIVIDUALS

1. Chris Cave (Tuscarawas Valley) 15:58.6, 2. Ben Myers (Fairfield Union) 16:07, 3. Benji Ellis (Bryan) 16:19, 4. Travis McAfee (Hebron Lakewood) 16:20, 5. Court Lilly (Eastern Brown) 16:20, 6. Mike Almond (Painesville Harvey) 16:23, 7. Geoff Simpson (Avon Lake) 16:25, 8. James Van Dress (Chesterland West Geauga) 16:27, 9. John Zimmerman (Elyria West) 16:28, 10. Matt Miller (Van Wert) 16:33.

AREA INDIVIDUALS

47. Ben Ingersoll (Clyde) 17:14, 72. Mike Ziebler (Bellevue) 17:38.

DIVISION III

TEAM SCORES

1. Anna 105, 2. Attica Seneca East 110, 3. Burton Berkshire 144, 4. New London 146, 5. Magnolia Sandy Valley 146, 6. Caldwell 166, 7. Gallon Northmor 163, 8. Columbus Grove 220, 9. Findlay Liberty-Benton 224, 10. Convoys Crestview 227.

TOP INDIVIDUALS

1. Vincent Fries (Attica Seneca East) 16:02.7, 2. Randy Hesson (Caldwell) 16:11, 3. Steve Chapa (Liberty Center) 16:17, 4. Dave Mooney (Peninsula Woodridge) 16:25, 5. Luke Siefker (Columbus Grove) 16:27, 6. Brad Koverman (Anna) 16:29, 7. Anthony Lattavo (East Canton) 16:30, 8. Rick Heitkamp (Fort Recovery) 16:31, 9. Joe Cobs (Magnolia Sandy Valley) 16:32, 10. Paul Myers (Huron) 16:36.

AREA INDIVIDUALS

15. Brock Cleveland (Old Fort) 16:40, 37. Jon Burroughs (St. Joe) 17:08, 46. Steve Smith (Gibsonburg) 17:16.

GIRLS

DIVISION I

TEAM SCORES

1. Sylvania Southview 74, 2. Toledo Central Catholic 77, 3. Cincinnati Anderson 108, 4. Strongsville 127, 5. Rocky River Magnificat 164, 6. Cincinnati Colerain 169, 7. Upper Arlington 194, 8. Beavercreek 210, 9. Hudson 214, 10. Pickerington 217.

TOP INDIVIDUALS

1. Nicole LaSalle (Dayton Chaminade-Julienne) 18:12.8, 2. **JAMI TOEPE (Fremont Ross) 18:39**, 3. Katie McGregor (Willoughby South) 18:43, 4. Lisa Claypool (East Liverpool) 18:43, 5. Andrea Gohol (Youngstown Austintown Fitch) 19:53, 6. Alyson Butlerfield (Thomas Worthington) 19:00, 7. Stephanie Humphrey (Lancaster) 19:02, 8. Bethany Witmer (Sylvania Southview) 19:03, 9. Heather Kingpatrick (North Canton Hoover) 19:06, 10. Tiffany Smith (Massillon Perry) 19:09.

DIVISION II

TEAM SCORES

1. Cleveland Heights Beaumont 65, 2. Dover 76, 3. Avon Lake 129, 4. McConnelville Morgan 142, 5. Dayton Carroll 146, 6. Clyde 158, 7. Alliance Marlington 154, 8. Richfield Revere 190, 9. Cincinnati Nicholas 195, 10. Ashtabula Edgewood 213.

TOP INDIVIDUALS

1. Katy Radkewich (Cleveland Heights Beaumont) 18:09.1, 2. Sara Monteleone (Dover) 18:56, 3. Jackie Conrad (Marysville) 19:00, 4. Colleen Byrne (Avon Lake) 19:02, 5. Melissa Graham (Alliance Marlington) 19:06, 6. Kately Favret (Cleveland Heights Beaumont) 19:21, 7. Rikki Cerret (Dover) 19:32, 8. Mindy Heberbrand (Ashtabula) 19:34, 9. **KELLY TAYLOR (Clyde) 19:35**, 10. Amy Vernace (Napoleon) 19:39.

Clyde INDIVIDUALS

52. Jenni Staats 20:52, 68. Lori Lyons 21:24, 73. Rachael Salazar 21:32, 74. Kelly Skeels 21:36, 99. Sherah Norman 22:46, 101. Kristi MacDonald 22:49.

AREA INDIVIDUALS

20. Stephanie Hall (Margaretta) 19:54, 23. Becky Riggle (Margaretta) 20:04, 46. Karen Ruffing (Bellevue) 20:42.

DIVISION III

TEAM SCORES

1. **ELMORE WOODMORE 75**, 2. Findlay Liberty-Benton 99, 3. Convoys Crestview 136, 4. Cincinnati Madeira 136, 5. Attica Seneca East 158, 6. Peninsula Woodridge 158, 7. Fredericktown 159, 8. West Muskingum 172, 9. Burton Berkshire 193, 10. Pemberville Eastwood 206.

TOP INDIVIDUALS

1. Becky Testa (McDonald) 18:35, 2. **LINDSEY HAMILTON (Elmore Woodmore) 18:38**, 3. Katie Sabine (Peninsula Woodridge) 19:01, 4. Amanda Blackwelder (Cincinnati Madeira) 19:47, 5. Kristy Norman (Convoys Crestview) 19:48, 6. Cheryl Maggio (Cleveland Villa Angela-St. Joseph) 19:48, 7. Angie Kubick (Peninsula Woodridge) 19:58, 8. Julia Kuhar (Martins Ferry) 20:05, 9. Liz Testa (McDonald) 20:06, 10. Abigail Phillips (Attica Seneca East) 20:09.

WOODMORE INDIVIDUALS

23. Kim Damschroder 20:29, 28. Rachel Harder 20:33, 49. Cari Robenstine 21:06, 54. Lindsay Kurlman 21:12, 57. Mandy Opler 21:15, 95. Andrea Jensen 22:10.

AREA INDIVIDUALS

17. Sarah Yeager (St. Joe) 20:19, 78. Jamie Chapman (St. Joe) 21:51.

Toepppe is runner-up

By MARK GRIFFIN
Staff writer

COLUMBUS — Fremont Ross freshman Jami Toepppe said part of the reason for her second-place finish in the Division I girls race Saturday at the state cross country meet can be directly attributed to what she witnessed earlier in the day.

Toepppe, who finished in 18 minutes, 39 seconds to finish behind race winner Nicole LaSelle of Dayton Chaminade-Julienne, watched the Ross boys finish second in the Division I race.

"It kind of pumped me up," Toepppe said. "I wanted to be in the top three."

LaSelle finished well ahead of Toepppe, running the 3.1-mile Scioto Downs course in 18:12.

"I tried to stay with her," Toepppe said, "but she took off at about the mile mark. I just stayed back with the second-place girl."

Jon Burroughs' goal was to finish in the top 15 in the Division III boys race. Burroughs, a sophomore from Fremont St. Joseph Central Catholic, fell short of that goal by placing 37th in 17:08.

"I didn't feel real good," Burroughs said. "I just wasn't moving. I had to run a little better. I thought it (the course) would be a little easier than it was. I didn't have a good race."

"I wanted to try to stay with Steve (Smith). I thought he was way ahead."

Smith, a junior at Gibsonburg, took 46th in 17:16. Smith ran 16:31 (fifth) at the regional.

"We went out pretty fast and I wasn't used to that," Smith said.



News-Messenger/Jeremy Wadsworth

JAMI TOEPPPE of Fremont Ross runs along with the lead pack during the Division I girls race Saturday at the state cross country meet.

"I was boxed out for the first mile. At the second mile mark, I just figured to finish as hard as I can."

Seneca East freshman Vincent Fries won the Division III event in 16:02.

"I've got next year," Smith said. "I have to train harder. It's a lot faster and there's more competition here. I can't wait until next year."

Old Fort's Brock Cleveland earned All-Ohio honors, given to the top 25 runners in each race. Cleveland, a junior, took 15th in 16:40.

In the Division III girls race, St. Joe junior Sarah Yeager earned All-Ohio honors by taking 17th in 20:19. She also was an academic All-Ohio honoree, an award given to state qualifiers

with a 3.5 grade-point average or higher.

Yeager's St. Joe teammate, junior Jamie Chapman, was 78th in 21:51.

In the Division II boys race, Clyde junior Ben Ingersoll crossed the finish line in 17:14, good enough for 47th place.

"I was expecting higher than that," Ingersoll said. "Usually I have a good idea where I want to be by the second mile. I start out slow, then I work my way up and go faster the second and third mile."

"I started picking up people who were falling off, and I wanted to be further up. I just pushed, but I couldn't (do that). I might have moved up on five kids."

Bellevue senior Mike Zieber was 72nd in 17:38.