

2013 NORM BRAY INVITATIONAL

CROSS COUNTRY

# Lakota's Reese: A runner who's always on the go

By Kevin Shields  
Sports writer

FREMONT — Lakota's Cariss Reese can't get enough running in.

Moments after running to a third-place finish in the girls Division II-III race at Saturday's Norm Bray Invitational, the senior practically ran another race in her cool down, running from one end of Walsh Park to

the other, showing minimal signs of exhaustion.

"I'm trying to get my mileage up and get in as good of shape as I've ever been," said Reese, who ran a time of 20:39.71. "Last year was a pretty down year for me and I didn't PR (set a personal record) at all. Plus, I really want to go back to state."

Reese qualified to the Division III state meet in both 2010

and 2011. She was 23rd at the regional meet in 2012, missing the final transfer spot to state by seven positions.

"We tried a bunch of different things last summer with my training, and apparently, they didn't work out too well," Reese said. "I just didn't come into last season as strong as I normally am."

Reese ran a 21:35.90 at the Norm Bray a year ago, finishing

second in the girls open division race.

"I'm really happy with that drop," she said. "We run this course so many times, so I think that helps with the times."

Eastwood freshman Hannah Sponaugle won the girls Division II-III race with a time of 19:51.25. Trinity Gephart of Oak Harbor was seventh as the Rockets (21:21.11) finished fourth as a team with 126 points,

behind Eastwood (47 points), Perkins (71) and Toledo Christian (73).

Oak Harbor had six girls in the top 36, including Taylor Dunn (28th), Kennedy Preston (32nd), Summer Swope (33rd), Coral Petersen (34th) and Madelaine Newman (36th).

Clyde, led by Olivia Hammon's eighth-place run, was

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seventh (181 points) and the Raiders, whose second-highest finisher was freshman Amanda Lane (41st), were 10th (219).

Old Fort's Kayla Garza and Jackie Becker were 13th and 14th respectively in the race. The Stockaders competed only as individuals.

A total of 42 schools ran in the six-event meet hosted by Ross.

Thanks to Louis Guardiola's fourth-place run of 16:38.80 and Tyler Edmonds' ninth-place effort of 17:05.61, the host Little Giants were seventh in the boys Division I race. Saturday was the start of a season filled with high expectations for both of the seniors.

Guardiola — who finished 44th at the Division I state meet in 2012 — ran a time of 16:00 last September, qualifying him to the Foot Locker Midwest Regional Meet at Wisconsin-Parkside in Kenosha, Wisc. He also set the Little Giants record at 15:42.9 at the Three Rivers Athletic Conference Championships, hosted by Findlay at Sycamore Springs Golf Course last October.

"Today was the first race of the season and I really wasn't looking for anything too particular, I just wanted to work on my strategy," Guardiola said. "First-place finishes are something that will come in time. I just have to be patient."

Edmonds, plagued by a variety of injuries as a junior, has been Ross' No. 2 runner and someone coach John Elder believes could join Guardiola at state this year if he lives up to potential.

"Tyler is looking good so far, as is the whole team," Guardiola said.

Ryan Schaffer, another Ross senior, had the third-best finish for the Little Giants, taking 48th.

Guardiola said this year's Little Giants squad is the best he's run for thus far. As a senior captain, he's used the word "family" to stress the importance of working together and bonding as a group.

"That's my goal as the captain," Guardiola said. "I want

this to team to get to that point and I think we've accomplished that so far. Now, we just have to keep going with it and try to continue that teamwork."

Valerie Bixler was 16th, while Faye Sloma finished 32nd for the Little Giants — 12th-place finishers in the Division I girls race — who had five runners in the top 49 spots. Cassidi Lovell crossed the finish line in the 37th position, Kim Hetrick was 44th and Sarah Szymanowski was 49th.

Unlike most other runners at Saturday's competition, Oak Harbor's Tyler Sievert is a standout runner currently participating in two sports. Also a member of the boys soccer team, the junior was third (17:17.59) in the boys Division II-III race, leading his team to a fourth-place finish (98 points) behind the likes of Perkins (56), Otsego (74) and Eastwood (84).

Sievert was also third at the Upper Sandusky Invite this past Tuesday.

"He's really setting the tone for his season," said Rockets coach Eric Buckman of Sievert. "For him to start out in the high 16's and low 17's at both of the meets we've run thus far is a great accomplishment."

Adding a seventh-place run for Oak Harbor was Jake Wistinghausen, Tim Poiry (another soccer player) was 16th, Bryce Buderer 26th and Tristen Eppling was 46th.

"We've could have done better today, but we will do better," Sievert said. "Sooner or later, Jake is going to be up there running with me."

As for the juggling act with cross country and soccer?

"It gets stressful at times," Sievert said. "But both coaches do a good job of keeping me and Tim (Poiry) as fresh as possible."

Brad Bannister was 19th for Old Fort, which also received 28th- and 29th-place runs respectively from Tito Lopez and Donald Young in a sixth-place (182) team effort. Lakota, paced by Luke Baker's 12th-place and Caleb Tolento's 41st-place runs, was ninth (233), while Austin Gale (36th) was the top finisher for Clyde (307), which placed 12th.

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