

2001 Norm Bray Invitational...

CROSS COUNTRY: Norm Bray Invitational



News-Messenger photos/Ben French
STACY HALL of Fremont Ross leads a pack of runners down the Walsh Park flood wall during Saturday's Norm Bray Invitational. Hall won the individual title in the Division I race.

Hall, Streaks capture titles

St. Joe runners torch Walsh Park

By SCOTT BLACK
News-Messenger correspondent

They came, they saw and they conquered.

Area boys cross-country teams descended on Walsh Park for the Norm Bray Invitational, and they tamed the beast with hardly a whimper.

Inside: Ross second in girls meet. **Page B4**

Walsh Park is considered one of the toughest cross country courses in the state and yet personal bests were shattered like so many clay pigeons at a clay shoot.

Last year, the top runner crossed the finish line in 17:02. This year, six boys broke the 17-minute barrier, two of them for St. Joe Central Catholic. The Crimson Streaks won the Division II-III Bray title with 43 points.

"We just did excellent team-wise today," St. Joe coach Jamie Gilbert said. "I never expected two guys under 17 minutes. I am just really excited about our prospects for the rest of the year if we keep improving. If they stay focused and keep everything under control, I think they can go to state."

Leading the way for the Streaks were Jeremy Velliquette, who finished third in 16 minutes, 44.64 seconds, and



DAN CHUDZINSKI of St. Joe heads down the hill Saturday at Walsh Park. Chudzinski finished fourth as the Crimson Streaks won the team title.

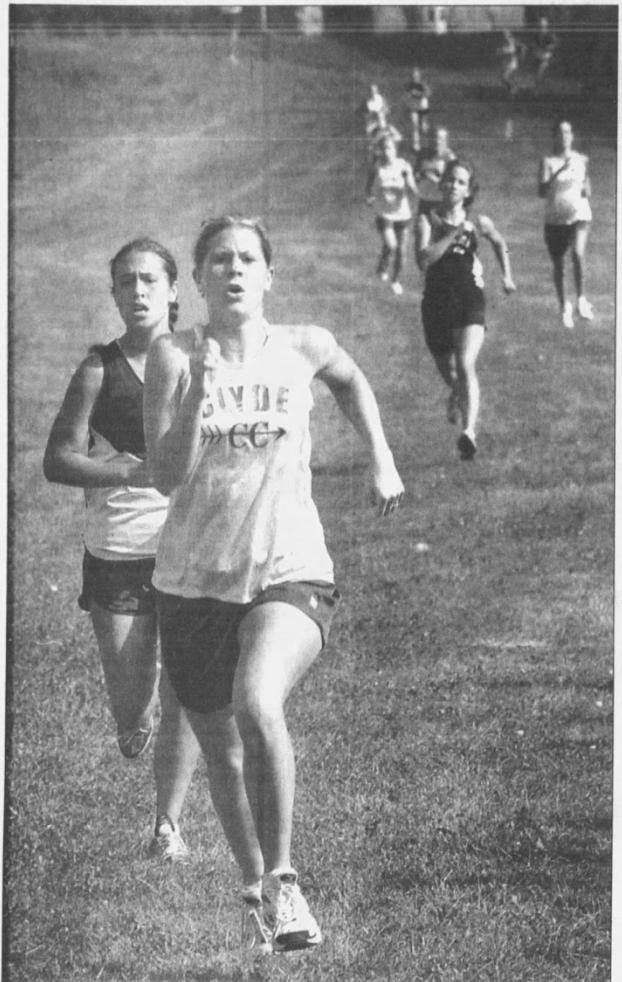
Dan Chudzinski, who ran a 16:50.77 and came in fourth.

"I am really pleased because I ran a PR on this course," Velliquette said. "We feel that this is the hardest course we run on and to set a PR on it is awesome. I'm really proud of that. I'm also surprised how

well we did as a team. Two guys under 17 minutes and first place, I'll take it."

Dan Lane of Toledo Christian won the race with a time of 16:33.15, edging out Craig Reinhart of Hopewell-Loudon by almost five seconds.

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News-Messenger/Ben French

KARYN SCHRICKEL of Clyde and Maryanne Pickett of St. Joe, left, chug down the straightaway Saturday at Walsh Park.

Hall goes all out to win Norm Bray

Munoz finishes fifth, leads Lakota to third

By SCOTT BLACK
News-Messenger correspondent

The Norm Bray Cross Country Invitational was held Saturday morning at Walsh Park with beautiful weather that the girls used to help tame a very difficult course.

Fremont Ross finished second in the Division I class with 48 points to winner Bowling Green's 21 points. Maumee was third with 57 points.

"Our girls did an awesome job today," Ross coach Cathy Esposito said. "Bowling Green is a tough team, and they had just beat us on Tuesday. But we really closed the gap on them today. Our goal is to become a solid pack running team and we're getting better at it. All of our times are dropping and we're on the right track."

Stacey Hall won the Division I title with a time of 20 minutes, 27.8 seconds.

"I tried to do something a little different during this race," Hall said. "I went out very hard early and then tried to keep it up. Maybe I'll have to pursue that course in the future because I really felt good. The weather was perfect. The wind was with you on the firewall."

"Never did I think that I would win it. I just did my best to stay up front. When I saw that finish line, I just kept saying I've got to get this over with. It was my best time."

Wendy Farrell finished eighth at 21:49.2 to round out the top 10 for Ross.

Katia Crispen (11th), Megan Neely (13th) and Brittney Doehan (15th) rounded out the Ross scoring.

Hopewell-Loudon won the Division II-III class with 31 points. Carine Reinhart of Hopewell won the race with a time of 18:27.56.

Huron was second with 37

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— Stacy Hall, Ross runner

points and Lakota was third with 100 points.

Among other area teams, St. Joe Central Catholic was fourth, Margaretta sixth and Clyde eighth.

"The team just did excellent today," SJCC coach Jamie Gilbert said. "Each one of them cut at least a minute off of their times today. This is a very tough course. I ran on it in high school, and I didn't like it. But it's a good, challenging course and it's our home, but it still comes down to how fast you run it."

"I was very pleased with everyone today, but Trischa Snyder really stepped up and ran like we knew she could."

Rachel Munoz of Lakota was the top area finisher with a time of 20:41.83, good for fifth place.

"This was a typical good race here," Munoz said. "The weather was great. I don't like the course, but I used that hill to my advantage. We all had good times for this early in the season."

Lakota coach Don Windom was happy with his team's third-place finish.

"This is the best weather I have ever seen here," Windom said. "It's enough to spoil you. Rachel ran extremely well today. Time-wise the whole team was better than we thought it would be. The girls packed well and moved up. We are very pleased with the way we ran right up through the open race. This course shows you what you're made of."

Running in the top spot for SJCC was Trischa Snyder with a 21:43.96, good for 12th place.

"This is one of the hardest courses around and for all of us to run our best races is just outstanding," Snyder said. "We are a very young team."

"I can't say that I like the course. You fight the wind and sun on the floodwall; you have to be mean on the bridge and fight your way through and then there's Butt Buster (hill)."

Clyde finished in eighth place, but coach Ken Cheek was happy.

"As a team they did really well," Cheek said. "They had a game plan and they stuck to it. They all wanted to be together at the end of the first mile, and they were. We wanted them at between 7 and 7:20, and there they were all five of them just a holding hands after one mile at 7:04. At two miles they were still pretty close, but then the stronger runners started to pull away. This is probably the best we've ran here since I've been coming over. If we keep improving, we will be a pretty good team barring injury. We're not fast, but we're learning. They really charged that hill. I liked that."

Karyn Schrickel was the first Clyde runner in at 23:11.77, which was good for 29th place.

"It was hard out there. This is my first year of running cross country," Schrickel said. "I stayed with my partners on the team, and then I kicked it at the end. It was hard, very tough, that hill is definitely a butt buster. I didn't like it. I liked running in the woods though. There's a spot where the course narrows and you come to a bridge. You can hear all of the girls breathing hard and you have to push your way through. Cross country is different."