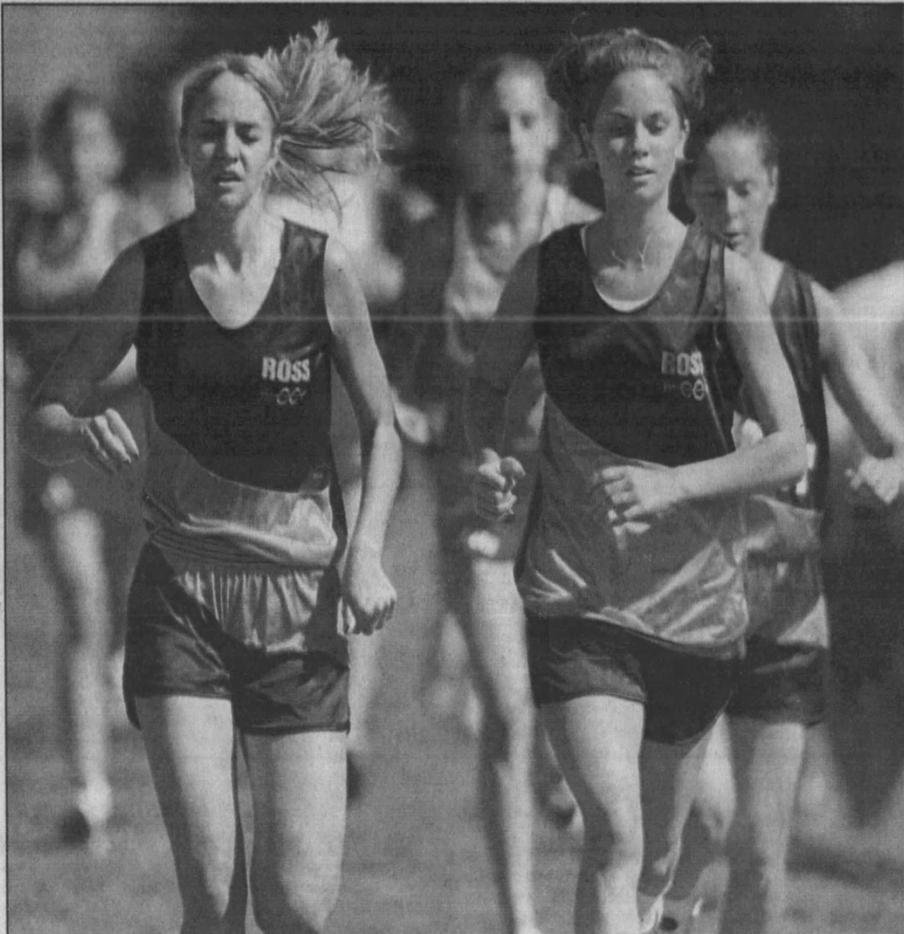


1999 Regional meet...

Cross country

# Ready for regionals



News-Messenger file photo

KELLY BIEHLER, right, and teammate Stacy Hall (not pictured) will compete in Saturday's Division I regional cross country race.

## Three young Little Giants are prepared

By SCOTT TAPPA  
Sports editor

Jeremy Framstad has made a new friend in his cross country career this year, and it's a good thing he did.

Framstad, a Fremont Ross sophomore, will be running to earn a trip to the state meet in the Division I regional race Saturday at Tiffin's Hedges-Boyer Park, a course with which he didn't always see

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### eye-to-eye.

"It's difficult and hilly, it's tough. I don't think it's as tough as Walsh, but it's a tough course," said Ross coach John Elder. "Until this year, he didn't really like it, he kind of let the course beat him. Then, at the (Tiffin) Carnival, he ran a 17:06, and his comment was that he beat the course. He's thinking positive."

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## Two St. Joe teams aim for top three

By SCOTT TAPPA  
Sports editor

If you look at Saturday's Division III regional cross country races at Tiffin's Hedges-Boyer Park, both the St. Joseph Central Catholic girls and boys teams face long odds in advancing to state as a team.

"The girls were second at districts, and there are four districts there, so two times four is eighth," said SJCC coach Gary Logsdon.

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don. "Boys-wise, they took third at districts, and three times four is 12th."

But multiplication tables get thrown out the window at this time of year.

In a season that has seen the Streaks' boys team exceed expectations and the girls team's performance fluctuate depending on health, anything is possible.

## Ross trio is young

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Framstad, who qualified for regionals last year as a freshman, is the lone Little Giant boy to reach Saturday's 2:50 p.m. race. He advanced by finishing 10th overall in 17:05 at last Saturday's Division I district race at Oregon's Pearson Park.

Framstad has run two races at Hedges-Boyer this season. On Aug. 31, he ran the course in 18:32, and his 17:06 on Sept. 11 at the Carnival was good for 34th place.

He must finish in the top 15 at Tiffin to move on to state, a task made tougher by the level of competition.

"It is tough in Division I, extremely competitive," Elder said. "The kid from Whitmer has beaten Jeremy all year, he's very good, the kids from Findlay have beaten him before. Ashland is coming to this regional, they're always tough. We've got the regional from Cleveland coming over, and that includes Brunswick, they're third in the state (actually first).

"I don't think he's in the top 15 time-wise, but if he's in the top 30, anything can happen. I've seen good runners go out way too fast and die, I've seen runners give in."

Framstad finished 60th overall in 17:50 last year. Despite a tendon injury in his hip, he has been Ross's top runner all year.

"I'm surprised he's come along this far, since he's coming off an injury," Elder said. "He sure has gone above and beyond."

Also going above and beyond are the two Ross girls headed to regionals, freshmen Stacy Hall and Kelly Biehler. Coach Cathy Esposito said that when the two asked her earlier this week about where they might expect to finish Saturday, she was stumped.

"They asked me to tell them the truth, and I couldn't tell them," Esposito said. "They've surprised me so much, I said, 'You guys could make it out of here.'"

Hall finished 11th at Pearson Park in 20:40, and Biehler was 15th in 20:55. Like Framstad, they will face long odds simply because of the strong teams which will be competing.

"You've got Findlay, Notre Dame and Defiance, those teams are just amazing this year," Esposito said. "They take the top 15 individuals (to state), and if you take those three teams times five, that's 15 awesome runners."

Hall and Biehler have run two races at Hedges-Boyer this year. On Aug. 31, Hall finished in 23:01, Biehler in 23:38, and at the Sept. 11 Carnival Hall finished in 22:03, Biehler in 23:13.

"The first meet of the year isn't a good estimate, but when we ran at the Carnival, we did really well, basically that's when their times started coming down," Esposito said. "Every meet they better their times."

Earlier this week, the Ross girls team practiced at Hedges-Boyer, and ran what Esposito called "a really awesome workout."

"I had Monica McElfresh start off early, and (Hall and Biehler) had to chase them," she said. "The seniors ran with them, and Molly Gocke and Jenny Gabel just look awesome."

In Division I, Ross sophomore Jeremy Framstad finished 33rd in 17:17, not bad for an ultra-competitive field, said coach John Elder.

"I thought it was a great race," Elder said. "He's kind of disappointed in his time, but everyone's time was slow. I asked him what he wished he could do, and he said, 'I'd get new legs.'

"I think he had a great season. He's been running on fumes for the past couple weeks."

In the girls race, Ross freshmen Kelly Biehler and Stacy Hall finished in the 50-70 range, Hall in 21:30 and Biehler in 22:33.

"For freshmen in their first year of running 3.2 miles, they really surprised me," said Ross coach Cathy Esposito. "Kelly wasn't even the number 1 or 2 runner as an eighth grader, she really has improved. Stacy is a really good athlete, and she didn't run a whole lot this summer because of basketball."