

2000 District meet...

High School Cross Country

D-Day on the way



News-Messenger/Ben French

FREMONT ROSS GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY TEAM MEMBERS (first row, from left) Stacy Hall, Wendy Farrell and Lindsay Swope lead their teammates down the hill at Walsh Park during a workout Thursday.

Runners confident about first step of postseason

By TIMOTHY R. WOLFRUM
Sports editor

The Fremont Ross boys and girls cross country teams are not among the favorites to advance out of Saturday's Division I district meet at Pearson Park in Oregon.

But each team's leader is looking not only to reprise a regional-qualifying performance from last year, but set the stage to take another step as well.

Jeremy Framstad, the junior leader of the boys team, and Stacy Hall, the best of nine sophomores on the girls team, are confident heading into the district because they like Pearson Park's terrain.

Ross runs in the Clay Invitational, which is also held at the park.

"I think it's probably one of the fastest courses," said Hall, who finished 11th at the district last year. "It's flat, and most of it is in the woods, so even if the wind is bad, you don't feel it too much."

Said Framstad, a two-time regional qualifier: "It's a nice course.

Inside: Cross country district capsules. **Page B4**

You can PR on it."

The top three teams and individuals who finish in the top 15 will advance to next week's Division I regional at Tiffin.

The Ross boys run at 1 p.m. Saturday in the first of two Division I races. The Little Giant girls run at 2:20 p.m.

Ironically, the two Ross teams are the only area teams that won't be running in Fremont on Saturday. The other 10 area high schools will be at Terra Community College in Fremont. There will be four Division III races and two Division II races beginning at 1 p.m. Saturday. The top four teams and individuals who finish in the top 15 will qualify for the Tiffin Regional as well.

Among the team favorites at Terra will be the Woodmore girls,

District schedule

Following are the times and places for Saturday's district cross country meets involving area teams:

AT PEARSON PARK, OREGON

1 p.m. — Div. I boys (Ross).
2:20 p.m. — Div. I girls (Ross).

AT TERRA COMM. COLLEGE

1 p.m. — Div. III boys (Bettsville, Lakota, St. Joe, Gibsonburg).

1:40 p.m. — Div. III girls (Bettsville, Old Fort, Woodmore, Lakota, St. Joe).

2:20 p.m. — Div. III boys (Old Fort, Woodmore).

3 p.m. — Div. III girls (Margareta, Gibsonburg).

3:40 p.m. — Div. II boys (Bellevue, Clyde, Margareta, Oak Harbor).

4:20 p.m. — Div. II girls (Bellevue, Clyde, Oak Harbor).

See DISTRICT, B4

District meet set for Saturday

Continued From B1

ranked fourth in the state in Division III, and the St. Joseph Central Catholic boys, ranked 14th.

Framstad is shooting for a top-five finish to prepare himself for a run at state berth next week. He was 10th at the district last season, when he ran a 17:05.

At the Clay Invitational earlier this season, Framstad ran a 16:32.

"He just knows that course real well," Ross coach John Elder said. "We're on it twice a year every year. I don't look at Clay as a course that is strong for some runners and not for others because it's so flat."

Framstad said his training regimen has prepared him for a run at state.

"I don't feel as bad," he said. "Last year, coach Elder tapered me earlier for the league and district meets. This year, he's kept my workouts tougher than the other guys to get me ready for regional."

Hall, who finished 11th at last year's district as a freshman with a time of 20:40, has run a season-best of 20:20 this season.

While she's looking forward to getting another shot at regional, Hall doesn't want to look any farther down the tournament trail.

"I think it's down the road," Hall said of a potential state berth. "I can't see it happening this year, maybe just come close."

But Hall's coach, Cathy Esposito, said there's no reason to put a cap on her potential, even this season.

"She's definitely better. Her times are faster," Esposito said.

"Against this competition, she would easily make it into the top 15. She's very consistent."

As for the Ross teams, both coaches are optimistic about solid, upper-division finishes. Esposito has been reminding her girls that the 1996 team that qualified for state finished third in the Great Lakes League. The Little Giants were fourth in the GLL last weekend.

Wendy Farrell, Brittney Dohanos, Megan Neeley, Lindsay Swope, Kaylie Crispen and Morgan O'Connor are part of a deep group of runners who could turn it on and surprise seeded teams Bowling Green, Toledo Notre Dame and Sylvania Northview.

"The mood has been very good," Esposito said. "At this point, it has nothing to do with me and all about what they want. It's all mental now."

The boys, who have struggled to field a team all season, were pleased to welcome sophomore Carl Sabins, who moved in to the district from Indiana last week. Sabins finished third on the team at the GLL meet.

"For our team, he couldn't have come along at a better time," Elder said.

Jay Ohms is the Ross's second runner, followed by Noah Grayson, Josh Ohms, Art Neeley and Dan Burris.

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Giants send 2 to Tiffin

News-Messenger reports

OREGON — Jeremy Framstad and Stacy Hall of Fremont Ross are headed back to the regional cross-country meet.

Framstad finished sixth in the Division I boys race, Hall 12th in the Division I girls race Saturday at Pearson Park. Both the Little Giant boys and girls teams took fifth place, two places out of regional qualification.

Framstad, a junior, will be making his third consecutive trip to the Tiffin Regional after running a time of 16 minutes, 44 seconds.

Before the meet, Framstad and Ross coach John Elder said they were shooting for a top-five finish. But Framstad finished just three seconds behind fourth-place Mike Smith of Toledo Start.

"His time was as good as anybody else's," Elder said. "He could have as easily been third as he could sixth."

Defiance won the boys race with 33 points. St. John's and Maumee picked up the other two regional spots with 69 and 75 points, respectively. Toledo Woodward was fourth with 151 points, and Ross came in fifth with 157 points.

Also for Ross, Jay Ohms was 24th in 17:30, Carl Sabins was 35th in 18:20, Josh Ohms came in 40th in 19:20 and Noah Grayson finished 52nd in 19:35. The Ross times are unofficial.

Hall, a sophomore, will be making her second trip to regional after turning in a time of 20:48.

The Ross girls scored 152 points and finished behind Toledo Notre Dame (29), Sylvania Northview (57), Whitmer (80) and Bowling Green (84).

The Little Giants, led by intrepid sophomore Brittney Dohanos, ran to the front of the pack early in the race and held on for dear life. Dohanos set the pace for the first half-mile before falling back.

"It was awesome," Ross girls coach Cathy Esposito said. "It was a great performance by the whole team. I was real pleased.

"They tried so hard to stay in front as long as they could. It was neat to see them finally go out like that."

Wendy Farrell placed 30th in 21:52, Lindsay Swope was 32nd in 21:57, Megan Neeley came in 35th in 22:04, Dohanos was 47th in 22:52, Monica McElfresh placed 50th in 23:04 and Kaylie Crispin was 54th in 23:26.

In the girls open race, Morgan O'Connor of Ross finished fourth in 22:45. Eighth-grader Emily Grayson turned in a 23:27.