

Soccer rules MCC, but cross country is on rise

CBC graduate Krull won the Class 4A title last year, three Cadets from state team return

By Alex Hyde
Staff writer

Everyone knows that soccer has an abundance of talented players and teams that vie for state titles year-in and year-out in the Metro Catholic Conference, but it might be surprising to learn that the MCC also has its share of talented cross country runners.

CBC, Chaminade and DeSmet all return runners from state teams last year, but also suffered losses to graduation.

The Cadets may have the strongest team this year. While losing Missouri State High School Activities Association Class 4A champion Mike Krull and seventh-place finisher Adam Sullivan, CBC returns three key members from last year's squad that took home the third-place trophy at the MSHSAA Class 4A meet.

"Last year was great for us, but this year we should have as many as seven seniors who can contribute," CBC coach Gaylerd Quigley said. "That's what a strong program is all about and up until last year it was unheard of for us to have a whole group of seniors contribute like this. It really gives the younger guys an idea of what it's all about."

Seniors J.P. LaVenture and Dan O'Brien should shore up the Cadets depth with senior leadership and state experience, while junior Tim Bradley comes back as CBC's highest placer of a year ago.

"CBC has a lot of depth, their (Nos. 7-15) guys are all interchangeable," Chaminade coach Mike Lampe said. "Their program is so deep and that puts them at the head of our conference which maybe one of the toughest in the state."

Other CBC seniors who can contribute with times of under 18 minutes are; Tommy and Zack Roy, Andrew Danner, David Gerrie and David Glennon.

On the CBC horizon are sophomore brothers of two past top-10 CBC state runners. Matt Hagenhoff and Tom Banksten

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will start making contributions this year and are the highlight of the next batch of running Cadets.

Also competing on the 4A level is DeSmet. The Spartans finished ninth overall at last year's state meet and despite losing third-place finisher Pete Eicholz return seniors Pat Kenney and Kevin Childress and junior Antonio Parker.

"DeSmet is another program that makes our conference so tough," Lampe said. "They lost some key people, but they have people from their state team back this year as well."

Running at the 3A MSHSAA cross country championships and bringing home an eighth-place finish in 1998 was Chaminade. The Flyers continue to improve and return five of the seven runners that went to the state meet last year.

"We were thrilled to bring home an eighth overall finish," Lampe said. "This year we're hoping for a top five finish. The team came up with that goal and I like that. I like that they've set such a challenging goal."

Senior Joe Balmer is Chaminade's No. 1 runner and should be able to cut as much as a minute off of last year's state time of 18 minutes 9.96 seconds. Just 4-5 seconds behind Balmer is junior Ted Benken. Benken leads a group that includes seniors Nate Goff and Jim Roewe, junior Tom Niedringhaus and sophomore twins Michael and Timothy Farrington as the deepest Nos. 2-7 runners Chaminade has had.

For Chaminade to achieve its goal it must rely on talent alone and not experience.

"I'm hoping to cut one minute on everyone in our top five," Lampe said. "But no one except Joe has run cross-country before coming here so they don't have that much experience."

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