

# LADY CAV RUNNERS BENEFIT FROM INNOVATIVE (ACCIDENTAL) MOTIVATION



**Above:** Avery Thornton, Crockett County Invitational held on CCHS campus. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** Crockett's girls finished third overall with a solid team effort. Pictured (from left): Ashley Boone, Alivia Hale, Claire Evans, Kate Davis, and Avery Thornton. Not present for photo: Olivia Mann and Harmony Walker. (Photo by Ron Barry)

## By Ron Barry

Sometimes the best motivator is an accidental lie.

Lady Cavalier cross-country racers Avery Thornton and Claire Evans found themselves on the fringe of what they thought was medal territory Tuesday during the closing stage of the Crockett County Invitational, the lone home meet of the season. Both girls sprinted hard toward the finish line, because Coach Julie Nass had told them there were medals for the Top 15 runners.

Motivated to earn an award in front of the home folks, the final dash netted Thornton a 13th-place finish and Evans a 14th, separated by 0.78 seconds - less than one tick on a watch.

Imagine the duo's surprise when Nass discovered - while laying out the medals to be awarded - that she had actually ordered 20 for each of the races (girls and boys) to be run Tuesday.

"I honestly forgot that I must have ordered 20 back when we planned this thing," Nass laughed.

"We were pushing like crazy at the end because we thought we had to be in the Top 15," Evans said. "Then Coach announces at the ceremony that the Top 20 would get medals. So we would have made it even without the late sprinting."

Nobody was complaining, of course, because the medal placements of Thornton and Evans - combined with a 28th-place run by freshman Alivia Hale, a 40th-place effort from sophomore Olivia Mann, a 47th-place performance from senior Ashley Boone, and a 64th-place race by freshman Kate Davis - provided the points Crockett needed to get a team trophy for a third-place finish overall.

"We wanted to do well on our home course because it's the only time some of our friends can see us run," Boone said. "So with a lot of Crockett folks here, it helped us all give our best efforts."

Thornton said the race strategy didn't really change that much by running on the home course.

"The advantage is that we knew where all the mud holes were, with all the rain we had in the last few days," she said, "so that helps some."

"I just ran right through them all," Davis smiled, intimating it was okay because she's a freshman.

Nass was ecstatic with the third-place finish, noting that the region Crockett competes in is stacked with talent this season.

"But the competition has been so close," she added. "We've finished third, then eighth, then third again in our last three races, so it just shows you what it can be like this year."

One thing that was not close was the race's individual winner, McKenzie freshman Abigail Wallace, who separated herself from the rest of the pack by nearly 90 seconds over the 5K journey - the second time Nass has seen her do it in three weeks. Nass dubbed her "the Katie Ledecy of West Tennessee cross-country."

But Nass also commended Crockett senior Harmony Walker, who has been sick for a week yet wanted to run in her final home meet. She finished 93rd - but she finished. And Nass saluted her for it.

"Harmony is usually one of our top five runners, so she obviously wasn't feeling anywhere close to her best," she said. "But I admire her determination for sticking it out and making it all the way. I know she didn't feel like racing, but she still came out and gave it a shot."

Nass was equally pleased with the showing of her boys team, which garnered a seventh-place finish despite the absence of flu-ridden Leck Lucky, who was Crockett's third-best runner in its previous meet.

But even a man down, in a field of 156 racers, the Cavs' five runners were all in the Top 100, with juniors Lane Foster (22nd) and Aidan Klonowski (24th) nearly medaling and freshman Uriel Diaz (35th) surprising everybody. Sophomore Hutsen Stephens – in his first year of competition – placed 58th, and another freshman, Mase Utley, was 92nd.

Klonowski may have done even better if he hadn't lost a shoe in one of the muddy spots. "I had to stop and stick it back on," he said, "but other than that, it was a good run for us."

Foster said Crockett's course isn't easy. "It may be a little flatter overall than some of the places we run," he said, "but the terrain is rough and there aren't many stretches that you can strategize on. It's a lot of rolling hills – plus, today, it was really wet and slick in a lot of spots."

One other highlight of the meet came when CCHS School Resource Officer Matt Mosier had to free five Obion County boys team members from a school dumpster in which they had managed to trap themselves. When asked what they were doing in there in the first place, they responded, "We don't know."

Crockett's teams will run again next Tuesday in the TCA Invitational in Jackson.

**GIRLS TEAM RESULTS:** 1. Obion County 34; 2. McKenzie 75; **3. Crockett County 104**; 4. Lexington 106; 5. Huntingdon 116; 6. Munford 159; 7. Henry County 188; 8. Tipton Christian Academy 193; 9. Gibson County 219; 10. WTHEA 244. Other teams with entries: Greenfield, Union City, Tate Titans, Chester County, Westview, USJ, Hollow Rock/Bruceton, Bradford, Madison Academic, Dyer County, South Gibson, Dyersburg, USJ, Fayette-Ware, Milan, and Brighton.

**Individuals:** 1. Abigail Wallace, McKenzie (20:15.40); 2. Cara Bruce, Munford (22:41.07); 3. Brenley Little, Greenfield (22:53.21); 4. Emeri Lee, Obion; 5. Brylee Patrick, Obion; 6. Quinn Kelley, Huntingdon; 7. Kevlia Campbell, Obion; 8. Klacey Campbell, Obion; 9. Brooklyn Trosper, Lexington; 10. Ainsley Beard, Union City; 13. **Avery Thornton, Crockett (24:36.18)**; 14. **Claire Evans, Crockett (24:36.96)**; 28. **Alivia Hale, Crockett (27:19.82)**; 40. **Olivia Mann, Crockett (29:46.97)**; 47. **Ashley Boone, Crockett (30:33.97)**; 64. **Kate Davis, Crockett (33:28.62)**; **93. Harmony Walker, Crockett (38:04.98)**. Total runners: 98.

**BOYS TEAM RESULTS:** 1. Huntingdon 41; 2. Madison Academic 68; 3. South Gibson 118; 4. Obion County 124; 5. Munford 125; 6. Lexington 129; **7. Crockett County 155**; 8. Dyer County 197; 9. Milan 269; T-10. Brighton 298; T-10. McKenzie 298; 12. Fayette-Ware 336. Other teams with entries: Greenfield, Adamsville, Union City, South Fulton, Henry County, Dyersburg, USJ, McNairy Central, Tate Titans, Haywood, Gibson County, Jackson South Side, WTHEA, and Bradford. **Individuals:** 1. Blaine Todd, Huntingdon (17:36.26); 2. Jonathan Lewis, SGC (17:42.00); 3. Deegan Arant, Greenfield (17:58.00); 4. Logan Baker, Madison; 5. Woodrow McKinnis, Union City; 6. Clark French, Dyer Co; 7. Jack Lewis, Adamsville; 8. Shawn Simpson, Huntingdon; 9. Cael Mathis, Greenfield; 10. Rushdon Howell, Union City; **22. Lane Foster, Crockett (19:51.81)**; **24. Aidan Klonowski, Crockett (20:15.62)**; **35. Uriel Diaz, Crockett (21:15.89)**; **58. Hutsen Stephens, Crockett (22:26.05)**; **92. Mase Utley, Crockett (24:28.88)**. Total runners: 156.

**CCHS GOLF:** Crockett closed out its home season by winning a three-way match with Jackson South Side and a composite squad of Halls/Ripley. With Jack Shaver tying for low medalist with a 38, the Cavaliers received 43s from Max Woods and Luke Carter and a 44 from Tyler Rathbun to post a 168 team score, just better than South Side's 170 and well ahead of the combined squad. Wyatt Guthrie of South Side matched Shaver's 38 in the round, played at the Crockett Golf & Country Club.

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For Crockett's girls, Rachel Crossnoe posted a 51 but the Lady Cavs lost by a single shot to the Halls/Ripley composite team. Addalynn Dunn shot a 62 for the Lady Cavs.

**CCMS SOFTBALL:** Coach Duke Kail's Lady Cavaliers jumped to a 5-1 lead and then held on for dear life to escape Medina with a 5-4 victory over South Gibson Middle School, improving Crockett's season record to 9-4.

Emilee Chandler hit two doubles, scored a run, and pitched a complete-game four-hitter to spark the triumph. Lily Cole went 2-for-3 with a double, a run scored, and another driven in. Khylee Cobb and Mahaley Hicks also had RBIs for the winners. Kendall Savage and Reagen McCoy collected the remaining Lady Cav hits.

South Gibson had the tying run in scoring position in each of its last three innings, but couldn't get it across the plate.

**CCMS SOCCER:** Coach Doug Wede's Lady Cavalier soccer team pummeled Obion County in a lopsided district game 9-0 Monday evening. Obion was not expected to give Crockett any trouble, and the forecast was accurate.



Above: Ashley Boone. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** Cavalier juniors Aidan Klonowski (left) and Lane Foster (right behind him) lead a pack of runners into a turn during the first of two laps around the CCHS campus. Foster placed 22nd and Klonowski 24th for the Cavs. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** Claire Evans (18) and Avery Thornton (23), who generally try to stay within a few yards of each other while they race, are working the strategy well during the opening lap of the 5K distance. The two both earned medals for their placements in the race. (Photo by Ron Barry)

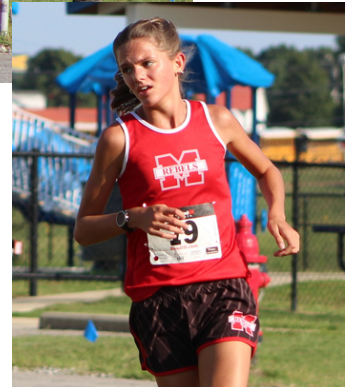


**Above:** Crockett freshman Alivia Hale (19), who finished a highly credible 28th, shows that a cross-country runner can compete at just about any size. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** Perhaps the biggest surprise of the day for Crockett was the performance turned in by freshman Uriel Diaz (424), who placed 35th out of 156 finishers. He was Crockett's third-place runner for the meet. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** The lead pack of the first-lap front runners in the boys race makes its way toward the center of the CCHS campus. The race's eventual winner was Huntingdon's Blaine Todd (476), who was pacing himself well here. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** The individual winner of the girls race was incredible McKenzie freshman Abigail Wallace, who was almost 90 seconds ahead of the runner-up. Crockett Coach Julie Nass dubbed her the "Katie Ledecky of West Tennessee cross-country runners." (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** Claire Evans. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** Olivia Mann (21). (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** Lane Foster (421). (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** Kate Davis (17). (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** Aidan Klonowski. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** Alivia Hale. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** Mase Utley. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** Uriel Diaz (424). (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Far Right:** Crockett sophomore Jack Shaver tied for low medalist with South Side's Wyatt Guthrie, posting a 38 to spark the Cavalier golfers to a 168-170 win over the Hawks. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Right:** Emilee Chandler slammed two doubles, scored a run, and limited South Gibson to just four hits in pitching CCMS to a 5-4 win over the Lady Hornets Tuesday. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Right:** Hutsen Stephens (426). (Photo by Ron Barry)

