

CAV XC RUNNERS HIT PR TIMES; CCMS SOCCER RUNNER-UP; MAURY CITY COLOR RUN



Above: Alivia Hale -- just a freshman -- was Crockett's top finisher Saturday evening in the girls 5K at the Frank Horton Classic at Shelby Farms, shaving 90 seconds off her previous best time. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: The brilliant season of sixth-grader Kalynn Lewis ended Saturday as she scored the lone Crockett goal in a 4-1 loss to host TCA in the West Tennessee Middle School Regional Tournament. (Photo by Ashley Owens)

By Ron Barry

Julie Nass takes her CCHS cross-country teams to one of the premier races in Memphis every year because she believes it makes them better, even when they know nobody's going to get a medal. This year it was the Frank Horton Classic, run Saturday evening at Shelby Farms, and Nass labeled the performances of her runners as "fantastic."

"We went to this race to expose our athletes to the 'best of the best' from five states, and to compete with mostly AAA schools," she said. "The boys' winner broke the course record and has one of the top times in the country. I loved that our athletes got to see what running a sub-15-minute 5K looks like."

That racer was Asher Oates of Independence High School (Thompson Station, TN), who finished the 5K in 14:50.0, clipping a full 22 seconds off the previous course record and distancing himself from the second-place finisher by 46 seconds.

But it was the effort of her own limited group of runners that excited Nass even more.

"We weren't able to compete as a team due to athletes being on vacations with their families for fall break, but those that could run had a fantastic meet," Nass said, beginning her praise with a freshman girl: Alivia Hale. "She has been our biggest surprise and asset. She ran a 24:07.6, cutting almost 90 seconds from her PR (personal record) and establishing a top region time. Alivia was our first finisher of the day, and I can't wait to see what she does in the future."

Hale was 120th in the overall race, demonstrating the quality of the field of 207 racers, headed by individual winner Lauren Thompson of Jonesboro High in Arkansas, who completed the 5K in 18:39.2. Next up for Crockett was Claire Evans, who had been battling a cold all week. She finished 167th in a time of 25:52.4.

"Claire was our only non-PR racer Saturday due to her cold, but she had a solid race and was very excited for her teammates' success," Nass said.

The third runner for the Lady Cavs Saturday -- Harmony Walker -- looked to begin to turn her season around after being slowed thus far with some shin issues

"Harmony got off to a slow start this year because of the injuries," Nass said, "but she is getting back to her normal times and it's encouraging to know she's getting back to where we need her for the region race." Walker was 173rd Saturday in Memphis at 26:24.9, but that was 90 seconds better than any previous race this fall for her.

The three male racers for Crockett Saturday all earned positive remarks from Nass.

"Lane Foster has been trying to break 19 minutes for two years and finally got his goal in 18:30.5," she said. "Lane ran a fantastic race." Foster was 114th overall out of the total of 261 runners.

"Aidan Klonowski has been trying to break 20 minutes for two years and achieved his goal and then some with a 19:04.5, almost dipping into the 18s as well," Nass said. Klonowski placed 136th.

The remaining Cav racer showed the biggest improvement of all for the weekend.

"Zaul Sanchez is still finding his feet in cross-country," Nass said. "He is an experienced road racer (he won his age group in the Jackson road half-marathon last year), but says running on grass and trails is so different. But he is figuring it out and ran a 20:19.1, which cut almost 2:30 off his previous cross-country PR."

MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCCER: Coach Doug Wede's CCMS soccer team completed its magical 13-2 season with a runner-up finish in the West Tennessee Regional Tournament, falling to host TCA 4-1 in the championship game.

The Lady Cavs were the first Crockett girls team to win a regular-season district championship. Sixth-grader Kalynn Lewis, the squad's leading scorer all season, tallied the lone goal Saturday for CCMS.



Above: Zaul Sanchez improved his previous personal record time by a full 2:30 when he ran a 20:19.1 at the Frank Horton Classic in Memphis. (Photo by Ron Barry)

MAURY CITY COLOR RUN: A different kind of athletic event was on display Friday at Maury City Elementary School, which added a new wrinkle to its annual fundraising Fun Run, which had begun three years ago.

"We wanted to do something a little different this year," said assistant principal Kiley Doyle. "We had thrown around the idea of a color run, but were a little nervous about doing it since it was all new to us, but we decided to give it a try."

A color run consists of a race layout with various stations along the trail. As the runners pass, they can hit with colored powder, or spray paint, or silly string – anything that will make them a total mess when they finish. But a colorful mess.

"We set a goal of raising \$12,000 for some new playground equipment," Doyle said. "We asked students to find business sponsors, as well as family and friends sending in donations to support our run. We were amazed that our students were able to recruit over 60 business sponsors!"

The school awarded different prize levels for the amount of money each student raised.

"They could earn prizes to use for the color run such as silly string, crazy socks, sweatbands, and their own personal color powder to throw on their friends," Doyle said. "Students who raised \$400 or more will get to have a field trip with pizza in the park. The students were motivated by the prizes and we raised over \$27,000!"

Doyle said MCES was still calculating the donations to get the exact amount. The school will use the funds to enhance the educational experiences for the students and to purchase new playground equipment.

"Students and parents commented on how much fun the day was," Doyle said. "We want to say thank you to everyone who donated to support our school."



Above: MCES Principal Christine Schwartz gives instructions to the next grade level to go through the Color Run layout. Following this shot are several scenes of the kids and teachers who made the event such a rousing success ... (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Nobody minded getting messy -- especially these guys -- at the Maury City Elementary School Color Run Friday, which raised over \$27,000 for the school. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: Marley Thornton delivers a powerful boot to clear a ball out of the box area in Saturday's CCMS match with TCA. (Photo by Ashley Owens)

Below: Olivia Barger searches for an open teammate as she advances the ball against TCA Saturday in the West Tennessee Regional Tournament. (Photo by Ashley Owens)



Below: Ruth Gourley will be moving up to the high school level for her next official soccer match after the CCMS team finished as runner-up in the West Tennessee Regional Tournament Saturday at TCA. The Lady Cavs completed a 13-2 season, including a regular-season district championship -- the school's first. (Photo by Ashley Owens)



Above: If you have to play soccer on a Saturday, you may as well apply a few college football moves to your game. Crockett's Nataly Amador goes high to try to intimidate this TCA player in the West Tennessee Regional Tournament. (Photo Ashley Owens)



