

LADY CAV XC TEAM QUALIFIES FOR STATE; URIEL DIAZ GETS IN ON THE BOYS' SIDE



Above: Section 5 runners-up and bound for State as a team (from left): Marley Thornton, Hannah Wede, Claire Evans, Alivia Hale, Avery Thornton, and Caroline Scruggs. (Photo by Ron Barry)

The race strategy: Keep the Obion County girls in your sights. If you stay close to them, you're always going to be all right in a West Tennessee cross-country race.

The young ladies from Troy have been the local race queens for quite a while now, but Crockett County Coach Julie Nass may have them looking over their shoulders in the next few years.

On Tuesday at the Martin Recreation Complex, with dark clouds hanging overhead and a barely discernible misty rain falling, Crockett's Lady Cavalier racers finished as runners-up in the Division I-AA Section 5 regional and earned a berth in next week's TSSAA State Championships at Shelby Farms in Memphis.

They did so by having four of their six runners set new personal records for a 5K race and the other two missing that same achievement by just a few seconds.

So what was the thought process before the race began? "Just go as hard as you can," said sophomore Alivia Hale, who placed tenth and was one of three Lady Cavs to medal as a Top 20 finisher.

The other medalists – senior Claire Evans and junior Avery Thornton, who came in 15th and 16th, respectively – said there was a little more to it than that.

"We were looking for girls in Obion shirts," Thornton said. "If we saw them pass somebody, then we needed to pass them too. If we stuck close enough to the Obion runners, we knew we'd be in good shape."

Evans concurred. "Just stick close to the best Obion runner you can hang the longest with, and you're going to the State. We stayed bunched up pretty well today, and that made the difference."

Nass was ecstatic with her team's performance. "When almost all of them get a PR (personal record), how could you not get excited about that?" Nass laughed. "We knew before the race started that we had a decent shot at second place, but until you get out there and see how the race is flowing, you never know for sure. But in this one, we could tell from the very first mile that we were in good shape."

So well did Crockett's girls follow their strategy that Hale beat three of Obion's racers and Evans and Thornton finished ahead of two of them. Freshmen Caroline Scruggs and Marley Thornton – who placed 22nd and 23rd – were right on the Lady Rebels' heels, and their bunching allowed the Lady Cavs to distance themselves from third-place team Chester County despite the fact that the Lady Eagles had two of the race's top four runners. The top four team scores qualified those squads for the State.

Hometown racer Alaina Uselton from Westview was the region champion with a spectacular time of 19:54.35, defeating runner-up Bella Lamb of Chester County by 57 seconds. Obion's Brylee Patrick was third, 40 more seconds behind Lamb.

Nass was just as excited with the effort put forth by boys' team member Uriel Diaz, who became the first Cavalier runner to qualify for a State individual berth in several years.

"Uriel has come so far so quickly," Nass said. "When we were looking at past races and comparing times, we told him if he could get down to around 19:30 he'd have a chance to go to State. He'd never been below 20 minutes before that conversation."

"His whole attitude changed after that," said assistant coach Walker Williams. "When he realized he wasn't that far away from having a shot at it, it just turned him around. He's cut almost half a minute off his time."

Nass also had high praise for senior Aidan Klonowski, who was Crockett's top runner until developing what seemed to be a severe case of shin splints. It turned out to actually be a stress fracture.

"But he ran on a broken bone today just so his teammates would have a chance to get to the State," she said. "It didn't work out that way, but his willingness to run shows how dedicated he is. He put in over 400 miles this summer. That's why he was able to get out there and run such a great race today (finishing 30th), even after missing so much time. That's what it takes for a cross-country runner to have a great season. You actually earn State berths by what you do in the summer; you can't just wait until the fall and flick a switch. It doesn't work that way."

As if to illustrate that point, as the last stragglers were leaving the Martin complex Tuesday night, there were two silhouetted figures re-running the 3K course in the dark and in the rain: girls' champion Uselton and boys' race winner Jack Mantoath, also from Westview. The great ones know what it takes.

Girls Top 20 Individuals: (1) Alaina Uselton, Westview 19:54.35; (2) Bella Lamb, Chester Co 20:51.72; (3) Brylee Patrick, Obion Co 21:31.25; (4) Claire Coleman, Chester Co; (5) Klicey Campbell, Obion Co; (6) Ainsley Phillips, Westview; (7) Lauren Carpenter, Hardin Co; (8) Eva Lewis, Lexington; (9) Allisson Catalan, Hardin Co; (10) Alivia Hale, Crockett Co 23:19.24; (11) Clara Younger, McNairy Central; (12) Jillian Menees, Obion Co; (13) Alexis Matlock, Covington; (14) Bailey Haliburton, Dyer Co; (15) Claire Evans, Crockett Co 23:39.54; (16) Avery Thornton, Crockett Co 23:47.71; (17) Chloe Anderson, Obion Co; (18) Avery Coffey, Obion Co; (19) Peyton Tharp, South Gibson; (20) Millie Davis, Lexington. Other Crockett Co Runners: (22) Caroline Scruggs, 24:39.68; (23) Marley Thornton, 24:41.88; (40) Hannah Wede, 29:42.75. Total Finishers: 46.

Girls Team Scores: (1) Obion Co, 40; (2) Crockett Co, 64; (3) Chester Co, 78; (4) Hardin Co, 91; (5) Lexington, 95; (6) South Gibson, 124.

Boys Top 20 Individuals: (1) Jack Mantoath, Westview 15:55.64; (2) Jonathan Lewis, South Gibson 16:16.49; (3) Silas McManus, Chester Co 17:21.47; (4) Ian Hall, Chester Co; (5) Cooper Thompson, Chester Co; (6) Reese Harber, Dyer Co; (7) Dominic Ledezma, Westview; (8) Hayden Blakley, Obion Co; (9) Brady Dunn, Obion Co; (10) Cooper Sparks, Chester Co; (11) Ethan Armstrong, Lexington; (12) Ryder Barr, Chester Co; (13) Zach Chumley, Obion Co; (14) Jackson Woodrough, Westview; (15) Clay Pruet, South Gibson; (16) Cole Springer, South Gibson; (17) Preston Sparks, Chester Co; (18) Uriel Diaz, Crockett Co 19:34.73; (19) Jacob Pace, Lexington; (20) Chase Wells, Chester Co. Other Crockett Co Runners: (30) Aidan Klonowski, 20:41.81; (37) Jose Diaz, 21:38.91; (39) Hutsen Stephens, 21:49.82; (42) Mase Utley, 22:12.85; (44) Leck Lucky, 22:22.05. Total Finishers: 56.

Boys Team Scores: (1) Chester Co, 32; (2) Westview, 70; (3) Obion Co, 76; (4) South Gibson, 81; (5) Lexington, 118; (6) Crockett Co, 155; (7) Hardin Co, 163.

MIDDLE SCHOOL BASKETBALL: Both CCMS teams completed play in the Blue Suede Tournament in Medina as the girls fell to Jackson Christian School 26-23, but the boys posted a 34-21 victory over USJ. Jayce Cobb was selected to the boys' All-Tournament Team, while Trinity Pankey and Addie Whitby earned that distinction for the girls.

On Monday CCMS played Trenton, with the Lady Cavs winning 44-16 while the boys – after pushing their hosts to two overtimes – dropped a 57-53 decision to the Golden Tide.

JCS 26, Crockett Girls 23

Crockett – Trinity Pankey 11, Addie Whitby 9, Khylee Cobb 3. 2-Pt FG: 9. 3-Pt FG: 1 (Whitby). FT: 2-12. Record: 1-2.

JCS – Abbi McCurry 17, Caroline Casey 4, Gabi Boykin 3, Thea Irvin 2. 2-Pt FG: 6. 3-Pt FG: 1 (Boykin). FT: 11-16.

Crockett Boys 34, USJ 21

Crockett – Jordan Young 8, Cade Reasons 6, Jaylen Frye 4, Easten Stephens 4, Jayce Cobb 3, Kamden Lewis 3, Messiah McCurry 2, Roman Barker 2, Theo Lawrence 2. 2-Pt FG: 13. 3-Pt FG: 2 (Frye, Lewis). FT: 2-8. Record: 2-1.

USJ – Dean Jacobs 7, William Miller 5, Caleb Garrett 3, Luke Haltom 2, William Hight 2, Haynes Stoots 2. 2-Pt FG: 5. 3-Pt FG: 2 (Garrett, Miller). FT: 5-6.

Crockett Girls 44, Trenton 16

Crockett – Addie Whitby 15, Trinity Pankey 9, Khylee Cobb 7, Till Holyfield 5, Addison Ward 3, Anna McCoy 2, Madison Cathey 2, Bradlee Dodd 1. 2-Pt FG: 13. 3-Pt FG: 4 (Whitby 2, Cobb, Holyfield). FT: 6-8. Record: 2-2.

Trenton – Eryce Mayberry 7, Aubrey Olson 4, Nevaeh Simon 4, Jaden Simmons 1. 2-Pt FG: 6. 3-Pt FG: 0. FT: 4-12.

Trenton 57, Crockett Boys 53 (2 OT)

Crockett – Jordan Young 13, Jaylen Frye 12, Jayce Cobb 9, Cade Reasons 7, Messiah McCurry 6, Easten Stephens 3, Theo Lawrence 3. 2-Pt FG: 13. 3-Pt FG: 5 (Young 2, Frye 2, Cobb). FT: 12-30. Record: 2-2.

Trenton – CJ Porter 20, Kylan Wells 15, Ty Autry 8, Jontavious McElrath 8, Keylen Ganaway 4, Kingston Turner 2. 2-Pt FG: 21. 3-Pt FG: 1 (Autry). FT: 12-30.



Above: Alivia Hale and Avery Thornton in Tuesday's Section 5 regional cross-country race; both medaled with Top 20 finishes. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: Crockett's Aidan Klonowski (left), despite running with a stress fracture, leads this pack around a late turn and finished 30th in the boys' race. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Left: Uriel Diaz qualified for a State meet berth by finishing 18th. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Alivia Hale's 10th-place posting led the Lady Cavaliers to another State berth. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Right: Senior Claire Evans placed 15th, good for a medal and another State meet trip with her teammates. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: Jose Diaz (left) and Hutsen Stephens ran most of Tuesday's race close together over the 5K layout. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Caroline Scruggs placed 22nd as a freshman and helped Crockett's team stay closely bunched, ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

Right: ... along with fellow freshman Marley Thornton, who was right behind her in 23rd. (Photo by Ron Barry)



10/28/2025



Above: Leck Lucky (center) and Mase Utley (right) prepare to pass a South Gibson runner late in Tuesday's regional. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Crockett's boys team (minus Mase Utley), from left: Aidan Klonowski, Hutsen Stephens, medalist Uriel Diaz, Leck Lucky, and Jose Diaz. (Photo by Ron Barry)

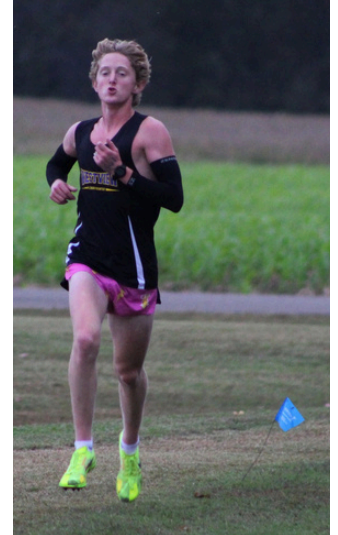


Above: Crockett's Claire Evans (left) and Avery Thornton (right) shoot past a McNairy Central runner on the backstretch of the final mile. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: Westview's Alaina Useton was the girls' race champion Tuesday. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Westview's Jack Mantooh zoomed to the boys' championship. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Crockett's Lady Cavalier regional medalists: Claire Evans, Alivia Hale, and Avery Thornton. (Photo by Ron Barry)