SEVERAL CROCKETT XC RUNNERS ATTAIN PERSONAL BESTS AT FRANK HORTON NIGHT CLASSIC





Right: Junior Alivia Hale posted another personal-best time in Memphis Saturday night. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Far Right: Jose Aguirre -- just a freshman -- continued his outstanding first-year efforts. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Early every fall, many of the top cross-country runners in the area surrounding Memphis come to the city's Shelby Farms Park for a massive 5K race – at night – called the HOKA Frank Horton Night Classic. It's so big, and featuring so many quality teams from the region, that each of the boys' and girls' divisions is broken into three classes.

There's a Gold division – for the elite of the elites – a JV division, and a Purple division – for teams like Crockett County, which want to compete against the best possible competition, even though they know they're likely not to excel in the overall standings.

Crockett coach Julie Nass likes it because it brings out the best efforts of her racers (time-wise) despite often being closer to the back end of the finishers as to the front end.

Saturday night's race was no different for the Cavalier teams, which are also usually missing some pieces because the Horton Classic tends to fall within the school's Fall Break. But – as Nass stated afterward – "Those that were able to attend did fantastically against eight states' worth of top competition." In fact, no less than nine Crockett runners achieved their personal-best 5K times this year, with four of them slicing their previous PR (personal record) by a minute or more.

The Lady Cavaliers' top runner, junior Alivia Hale, broke the 23-minute barrier for the first time this season, placing 72nd out of 249 total finishers with a time of 22:39.20. The Thornton sisters – Avery (178th in 26:13.80) and Marley (186th in 26:34.60) – were next. Following them were two Lady Cavs who trimmed more than a minute off their PRs: Anahy De La Rosa (210th in 27:45.50) and Cesia Sanchez (217th in 28:15.80). Addie Davidson placed 241st with a time of 32.13.90).

On the boys' side, Cav freshman Jose Aguirre was 92nd with a PR of 18:40.70; Uriel Diaz, almost breaking 19 minutes for the first time in his career, was 114th in 19:02.30; freshman Nathan Bailey broke 21 minutes for the first time, placing 207th in 20:47.40; Jose Diaz was 241st with a PR time of 21:40.70; Mase Utley cut a minute off his PR, finishing 263rd in 22:13.20; and Javier "JJ" Aguirre was 284th in a PR time of 22:54.70, also knocking a minute off his previous standard. There were 319 total finishers in the boys' contest.

Crockett's next action will be Tuesday, October 13 at the Dyer County Invitational, followed by an October 15 race at TCA and an October 20 run at Martin in the Westview Invitational which will conclude the regular season. The Region Championships are on October 27 at Martin and the State Championships are the week of November 1 back at Shelby Farms in Memphis.



Left: Anahy De La Rosa shaved more than a minute off her PR in Saturday's Memphis race. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Mase Utley cut a full minute off his previous PR. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Left: Cesia Sanchez also chopped more than a minute off her former PR. (Photo by Ron Barry)