LADY XC TEAM HEADED BACK TO STATE; TWO FRESHMEN BOYS ALSO GAIN BERTHS



Above: Crockett's 2026 TSSAA State Cross-Country Championships qualifiers (left to right): Cesia Sanchez, Jose Aguirre, Olivia Barger, Marley Thornton, Alivia Hale, Avery Thornton, Ruth Gourley, Anahy De La Rosa, and Nathan Bailey. (Photo by Ron Barry)

The girls didn't quite beat Obion County Central, and the boys just missed qualifying as a squad. But Crockett County's cross-country teams performed quite nicely at Tuesday's Section 5 Region Championships, with the Lady Cavaliers gaining a return trip to the TSSAA State Championships as a team and two members of the boys unit – both freshmen – earning individual spots in the competition.

Coach Julie Nass watched an amazing six of her girls place in the Top 20 to win Regional medals. But perennial powerhouse Obion County placed its first four runners in the Top 10 and its next two closely enough to the Top 20 to edge past Crockett 44-51 for the team championship in the 5K race held at the Martin Recreation Complex.

In the boys run that followed, the Cavaliers finished just six points away from the fourth place they needed to earn a team berth in the State, but freshmen Jose Aguirre and Nathan Bailey qualified as individuals by being among the first five runners not already on a qualifying team.

"You can see how close we were," said Nass, who was hoping to qualify both teams in the same year for the first time in school history. "Seven points behind Obion in the girls for the championship, and just six points away for the boys as a team. On the girls side, Obion bested us again and credit to them. They knew we were coming for them and they gave it their all. But I'm still proud of having six medalists and such a great score."

"At least we scared Obion this time," assistant coach Walker Williams joked. "It's been a while since anybody did that."

Junior Alivia Hale had one of the best placements in Crockett history, snatching third with a run of 22:39.41. Only Westview's phenomenal Alaina Uselton (19:43.47) and Obion's Klicey Campbell (22:01.70) beat Hale to the finish line.

But only a couple of minutes later came Crockett's maroon wave. Freshman Olivia Barger – fighting through a painful side stitch that hampered her most of the way – was 11th (24:15.80). Sophomore Ruth Gourley was 13th (24:57.33). Senior Anahy De La Rosa – who has shaved multiple minutes off her times as the season has progressed – was 15th (25:21.08). Senior Avery Thornton was 16th (25:26.01). And sophomore Marley Thornton was 19th (25:33.34). Every single one of them is also on Crockett's soccer team, as is Cesia Sanchez, who placed 29th (27:09.85).

"That makes what they achieved even more significant," said assistant coach Charles Evans. "People don't realize the work these girls put in to prepare themselves for this, and if you're also playing soccer, you don't often get to participate in organized cross-country practices. These girls run long distances on Saturday mornings and other times, with little outside motivation. There are no cheerleaders or bands playing or television crews. But they work and they work and they work some more. It's so good to see that work rewarded like this."

In the boys race, Aguirre finished sixth overall (18:21.82) and was only 46 seconds behind individual champion Clay Pruett of South Gibson County. Bailey – who only a year ago was battling cancer at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis (more on that story coming later in November) – just missed a medal, placing 21st (19:51.32), but he grabbed the final available individual spot to be able to join Aguirre in the State meet.

"For freshmen to perform as well as these two did is tremendous," an ecstatic Nass said. "Jose has been terrific all season, and to think of what Nathan has had to battle through just to be here just makes this extra special."

The Division I-AA TSSAA State Championships will be held on Friday, November 6 at Shelby Farms Park in Memphis. The boys will run at 12:30 and the girls at 1:20 that afternoon.



Above: Crockett's Cavaliers finished sixth at the regional, but were just six points away from a State berth as a team. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Above: Crockett's swarming defense held the Hawks to minus 40 rushing. Here, Chris Vance (15) hits a South Side runner low as Keyo (87) hits him high and Davis Porter (9) prepares to hammer his r (Photo by Ron Barry)

By Ron Barry

Final Results: Div I-AA Section 5 Regional at Martin

Girls Team Scores: (1) Obion County Central 44; (2) Crockett County 51; (3) Lexington 89; (4) South Gibson County 98; (5) Westview 106; (6) Chester County 111. [The top four teams advance to the State Championships.]

Girls Individual Top 20: (1) Alaina Uselton*, Westview 19:43.47; (2) Klicey Campbell, Obion 22:01.70; (3) Alivia Hale, Crockett Co 22:39.41; (4) Eva Lewis, Lexington 22:51.46; (5) Peyton Tharp, SGC 23:14.27; (6) Chloe Adcock, Obion 23:16.12; (7) Claire Coleman*, Chester Co 23:20.46; (8) Avery Coffey, Obion 23:23.44; (9) Jillian Menees, Obion 23:24.74; (10) Bailey Haliburton*, Dyer Co 23:39.85; (11) Olivia Barger, Crockett Co 24:15.80; (12) Alexis Matlock*, Covington 24:35.29; (13) Ruth Gourley, Crockett Co 24:57.33; (14) Elayna Johnson, SGC 24:58.24; (15) Anahy De La Rosa, Crockett Co 25:21.08; (16) Avery Thornton, Crockett Co 25:26.01; (17) Hannah Redden, Lexington 25:29.15; (18) Hannah Cook*, Chester Co 25:30.61; (19) Marley Thornton, Crockett Co 25:33.34; (20) Selah Gallien, Westview 25:42.88. Other Crockett Finisher: (29) Cesia Sanchez 27:09.85. Total Number of Runners: 45. [*-denotes State qualifier as an individual.]

Boys Team Scores: (1) Chester County 36; (2) Obion County Central 63; (3) Lexington 86; (4) Westview 103; (5) South Gibson County 106; (6) Crockett County 109; (7) Hardin County 166. [The top four teams advance to the State Championships.]

Boys Individual Top 20: (1) Clay Pruett*, SGC 17:35.10; (2) Jackson Woodrough, Westview 17:51.80; (3) Ian Hall, Chester Co 18:07.62; (4) Cooper Sparks, Chester Co 18:12.68; (5) Jacob Pace, Lexington 18:13.07; (6) Jose Aguirre*, Crockett Co 18:21.82; (7) Preston Sparks, Chester Co 18:26.91; (8) Brady Dunn, Obion 18:30.45; (9) Easton Nelson*, SGC 18:32.14; (10) Ryder Barr, Chester Co 18:33.30; (11) Briar Lofton, Obion 18:34.68; (12) Chase Wells, Chester Co 18:36.62; (13) Zach Chumley, Obion 18:39.20; (14) Bryce Hutcherson, Obion 18:40.80; (15) Fulton Armstrong, Lexington 18:47.04; (16) Cayden Mobley, Westview 18:52.66; (17) Jamichael Reece*, McNairy Central 18:55.54; (18) Ryder Hutchison, Obion 19:25.26; (19) Griffin Armstrong, Lexington 19:26.01; (20) Jake Haley, Westview 19:26.30; (21) Nathan Bailey*, Crockett Co 19:51.32. Other Crockett Finishers: (26) Gabe Williams 20:14.31; (29) Uriel Diaz 20:37.62; (34) Hutsen Stephens 20:46.15; (38) Mase Utley 21:08.42; (42) Jose Diaz 21:27.60. Total Number of Runners: 59. [*-denotes State qualifier as an individual.]



MIDDLE SCHOOL BASKETBALL:

Tuesday, Oct 27 – at Trenton

CC 12 24 8 11 - 55
TR 2 0 11 2 - 15

CCMS Girls (55) – Trinity Pankey 15, Lond'n Armour 14, Jordin Bond 11, Laker Armour 9, Madison Cathey 4, Brynlee Bolding 2. FG: 26, FT: 2-10, 3-Pt: 1 (Laker Armour). Record: 5-1.

Trenton (15) – Brilee Myers 12, Haska Bradford 3. FG: 5, FT: 4-13, 3-Pt: 1 (Bradford).

CC 10 4 9 10 - 33
TR 3 0 12 6 - 21

CCMS Boys (33) – Nolen McDonald 9, Jordan Young 9, Reese Jones 6, Dre Thompson 4, Jaylen Frye 3, Jayce Cobb 2. FG: 14, FT: 4-8, 3-Pt: 1 (Young). Record: 4-2.

Trenton (21) – Kylan Wells 17, Brayden Henson 4. FG: 9, FT: 2-7, 3-Pt: 1 (Wells).



Left: Alivia Hale placed third in the girls race. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Jose Aguirre finished sixth in the boys race. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: Having six medalists in a single event is incredibly rare, but the Lady Cavaliers pulled it off (left to right): Olivia Barger, Marley Thornton, Alivia Hale, Avery Thornton, Ruth Gourley, and Anahy De La Rosa. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Freshman Nathan Bailey was battling cancer a year ago. Now he's headed to the State XC Championships as an individual qualifier. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Crockett's girls are the Region runners-up and are headed back to the State Meet in Memphis next week. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Below: Freshman Olivia Barger fought through a painful "stitch" in her side to finish 11th. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Left: Crockett had a "Maroon Wave" in the second ten in the girls race. Following Olivia Barger were Ruth Gourley in 13th, ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

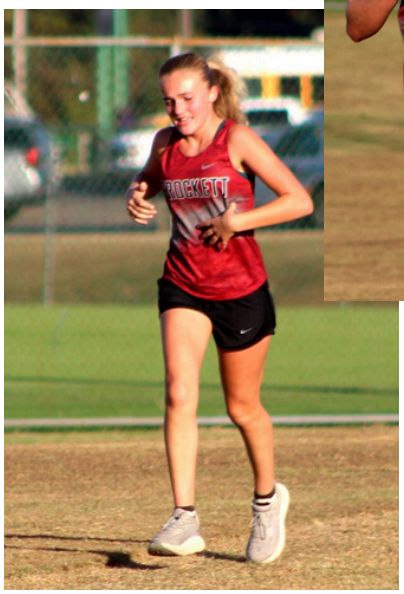
Right: ... Anahy De La Rosa in 15th, ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

Far Right: ... Avery Thornton in 16th, ...

Below: ... and Marley Thornton in 19th. (Photo by Ron Barry)







Below: State qualifiers from the boys team: Nathan Bailey and Jose Aguirre, both still just freshmen. (Photo by Ron Barry)









Above: The Cavs' Gabe Williams placed 26th in yet another respectable showing by a freshman runner. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Left: Senior Avery Thornton heads toward the setting sun as she tries to pass a few more runners over the final half of Tuesday's race at Martin. (Photo by Ron Barry)