Boys' Advance to State with 4th Place Finish

RCHS girls' Cross-Country team wins second straight regional championship

The RCHS cross-country teams competed in the Class 2A Region IV Championships held at Millennium Park in Boyle County this past Saturday. The competition featured three of the top ten girls' teams in the state, as well as two of the top ten boys' teams.

Coming into the contest, the RCHS girls' team was ranked 8th in the state in Class 2A. Regional rival Boyle County was ranked 7th and Lexington Catholic came into the meet ranked 9th. The RCHS girls' team has had a spectacular season thus far and hoped to repeat as regional champions after winning their first-ever regional title a year ago.

The girls' team got off to a great beginning in the meet with a very fast-paced start led by RCHS sophomore Kayla Hayes, a first team all-state runner last season. Kayla is currently ranked 7th in the state in Class 2A and finished 5th at the state championships a year ago after winning her first individual regional title. Kayla led the entire race with a spectacular performance. She won the meet for the second straight season with an awesome time of 21:10.69, more than thirty-six seconds ahead of Boyle County's Abby Piper, the 5th ranked girl in Class 2A. Sophomore Jessi Asher, also an all-state performer last season and one of the top runners in Class 2A, ran an awesome race and finished 5th overall. She covered the 3.1-mile course in 23:02.86. Junior Heather Hammond, running in only her fifth meet of the season, came through with a clutch performance. Heather, last year's Class 2A Female Athlete of the Year in track, finished 6th overall with an exceptional effort of 23:05.31. 3rd grade sensation Michaela Hunter, arguably the top young female prospect in the entire state, ran a superb race. Michaela finished 8th overall with an exceptional effort of 23:21.83. Sophomore Elizabeth Bussell ran a hard-fought race, battling a slight foot injury the entire time. She had actually taken two days of practice off prior to the regional meet. Her gutsy performance helped her finish in 23rd place overall with a respectable effort of 25:13.54. RCMS 8th grader Courtney Bullock has had a spectacular first season of cross-country. The past few weeks, Courtney had been very ill. Just before her illness, Courtney was consistently running under 23 minutes. Still suffering those effects, Courtney fought her way to a 31st place finish with a great effort of 27:23.08. Senior Anna Guilfoil, running in her last regional cross-country meet, came through with a great performance. Anna finished the 5,000-meter course in 34th place overall with an excellent time of 28:00.87.

When all was said and done, the RCHS girls' had won their second straight regional championship title, defeating Boyle County by one point, 37-38. Lexington Catholic finished 3rd with 71 points.

Upon advancing to the state championships, the girls' team will attempt to better their 7th place finish from last year's Class 2A State Championship Meet. This marked the 10th season in a row in which an RCHS girl or girls' team has qualified for the state championships.

The RCHS boys' team began the season ranked 9th in the state in Class 2A. After dropping out of the top ten, the boys have worked hard to work their way back to the elite of Class 2A.

The boys' got off to a fast start in the race. Senior Andrew Nelson, ranked 20th in the state, and junior Brandon Cole, ranked 19th, led the way for Rockcastle early in the race. Eventually, Brandon made his way near the front of the pack. He finished an amazing race in 3rd place overall with a spectacular performance, possibly the best ever for an RCHS boy in regional competition. His time of 17:49.53 was only twelve seconds behind winner Patrick Morgan, one of the top five runners in the state in Class 2A. Andrew remained close to the front and finished a strong race in 6th place overall with an impressive effort of 18:18.17, despite having battled illness late in the season. Junior Bill Burdett continued to run as well as he has in the past few meets. Bill finished an impressive 8th overall with a superb effort of 18:41.44. RCMS 6th grader Blake Parsons ran a spectacular race, finishing in 27th place overall with an exceptional effort of 20:37.11. Sophomore Derrick Baker, in his first season of cross-country running, performed very well. Derrick finished a great race in 31st place overall with a time of 21:20.97. 6th grader Andrew Pensol ran an awesome race and finished 48th overall with a very impressive effort of 24:41.13.

The boys' solid team performance landed them a 4th place finish in one of the closest regional finishes ever among the top four teams. Boyle County took the team title with 44 points. Lexington Catholic placed 2nd with 54 points. West Jessamine finished 3rd with 62 points, while Rockcastle's 75 points placed them 4th. The boys' great team effort also earned them an opportunity to compete in the state championship meet.

The Class 2A State Cross-Country Championships will be held this Saturday at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington. The girls' race begins at 10:00 A.M. and the boys' race starts at 11:00 A.M.

The RCHS girls' cross-country team captured their second straight Class 2A Region IV Championship title this past Saturday at Boyle County. Team members include, front from left; Elizabeth Bussell, Michaela Hunter and Jessi Asher. Back row from left; Kayla Hayes, Heather Hammond, Anna Guilfoil and Courtney Bullock. Not pictured was Ashley Bullock.

MVES third grader Michaela Hunter placed eighth in the regional meet. Michaela is arguably the top young female running prospect in the state.

The RCHS boys' cross-country team placed fourth at the Class 2A Region IV Championships, earning a berth in the state championships. Team members include; Andrew Pensol, Derrick Baker, Brandon Cole and Bill Burdett. Not pictured were Andrew Nelson and Blake Parsons.

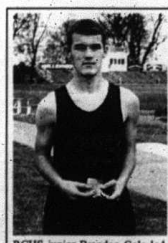
RCHS junior Bill Burdett finished eighth at the regionals.

RCHS sophomore Kayla Hayes won her second straight regional championship. She currently ranks seventh in the state in Class 2A.

RCHS junior Heather Hammond finished sixth in the championships.

RCHS sophomore Jessi Asher finished fifth in the regional championships.

RCHS senior Andrew Nelson finished sixth in the championship meet. Andrew ranks 20th in Class 2A.



RCHS junior Brandon Cole led the boys' team with a third place finish at the regionals. Brandon currently ranks 19th in Class 2A.

State Cross-Country Meet this Saturday

End season with win over Knox Central, 55-6

ROCK to host Lawrence in first round of play-offs

By: Richard Anderkin

Friday night the Rockcastle County Rockets will begin the play-off part of their season in an effort to win their fourth straight regional title.

The Rockets have also been state runners-up in Class 3A the past two seasons.

Last Friday night the Rockets traveled to Barbourville where they defeated Knox Central 55-6 and secured a second place finish in the district.

The Rockets ended the regular season 8-2.

This Friday the Rockets will host Lawrence County in the first round of the play-offs. The Rockets have met Lawrence County three times before in the play-offs and have won two of the three games.

Rocket head coach Tom Larkey said he like his team's chances against Lawrence County, a team that is 6-4 and also has to make the two and half hour trip from Louisa.

"We will have to do a good job of tackling, because they run the ball most of the time," he said.

If the Rockets win on Friday night they will have to face a Mason County team, which is highly respected and a team Larkey said is very capable of winning the regional title.

Mason County has at least four division one prospects and are 9-1 on the season, losing only to Dunbar in overtime, 20-14.

Because the Rockets finished runners-up in district play they will have to make the long trip to Maysville for the game.

Friday night the Rockets racked up 394 yards of offense.

Offensive stats were as follows: Max Saylor, 87 yards on eight carries and he scored four touchdowns.

Jamie Howard had 34 yards on five carries.

Devin Taylor had 17 yards rushing on two carries, he caught one pass for 59 yards, which was good for a touchdown and he kicked five extra points.

Quarterback Matthew Burkhart threw two touchdown passes and had 101 yards passing. Both his completions were good for touchdowns. He also had ten yards on three carries.

Freshman Izak McQueary completed one pass, which was good for a two point conversion.

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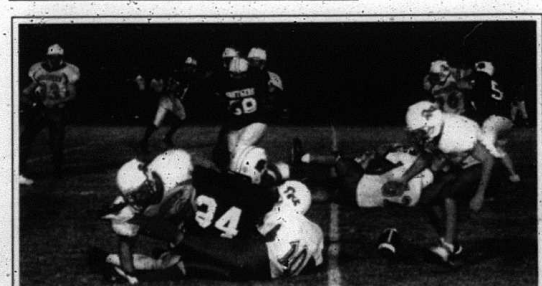
Rocket defensive back Brandon Reams brings down a Panther runner in Friday night's 55-6 win. The Rockets host Lawrence County on Friday night in the first round of the play-offs.



The Rockets defeated Knox Central 55-6 on Friday night. Shown above is Ricky Sandusky recovering a Panther fumble. Also shown in the photo are Chris Croucher and Caleb Blair making the hit.