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# PREPS
CROSS COUNTRY

CLASS 2A, 1A

## Drizzle puts Nevis girl in mood to win it all

By HEATHER RULE
Special to the Star Tribune

NORTHFIELD – The morning turned to a misty, drizzly afternoon on the St. Olaf College campus in Northfield for the cross-country state meet Saturday.

Just the way Nevis senior Jade Rypkema likes it.

"I always say I love running in the rain," Rypkema said. "It just sets me in a good mood to race."

Her good mood carried over to a great result when she finished in 17 minutes, 43.5 seconds, winning the Class 1A girls' championship. Murray County Central senior Amanda Overgaauw, last year's champion, was close behind at 17:49.0. They exchanged the lead throughout the race, Rypkema said.

The two hugged after the finish line. Murray County Central senior Ashley Overgaauw, Amanda's twin, finished third (18:52.1).

In the team competition, Perham won with a score of 56, followed by St. Cloud Cathedral at 78 and Staples-Motley at 107.

**Class 1A boys**

Nova Classical Academy's Henry Karelitz and Sauk Centre's Brandon Kampsen took second and third place in last year's Class 1A boys' championship race. This year, as seniors, Kampsen passed Karelitz, who led throughout the race, on the last hill to win the title.

"I was just trying to stick with him," Kampsen said. "He runs the two-mile in track, and I run the 800. So I got that little extra speed on him. I knew if I just stuck by his hip ... I could most likely take him in the last 200 meters."

Kampsen finished in 15:49.5. Karelitz in 15:55.6. Perham sophomore Bjoern Anderson finished third in 15:57.9.

In the team competition, Heritage Christian won with 99 points, with Luverne (102) second and Perham (133) third.

**Class 2A girls**

Last year, Luna Scorzelli watched from the sidelines as her St. Paul Highland Park teammates won the Class 2A girls' championship. She was out with tendinitis on the tops of her feet.

"My motivation and drive just went up after that," said Scorzelli, a junior. "I really wanted to be part of it, so I'm happy that I get to run this year."

She ran herself right into a state championship, finishing in 17:45.1. Last year's champion, Isabelle Schmitz of Hutchinson, finished second in 18:38.2.

St. Paul Highland Park won again, with 79 points. Alexandria finished second (103) and Marshall third (129).

**Class 2A boys**

Belle Plaine senior Emmett Gerres said he was in seventh or eighth place after about a mile of the Class 2A boys' race. That was when he made a move for the lead.

"I felt really good," Gerres said. "That was the first time I started leading. Didn't really look back."

Didn't need to. He won in 15:57.7. Cameron Stocke, a Rock Ridge senior, finished second in 15:24.0. Stocke helped his team to a second-place finish with a score of 113 behind winner Mankato East's 111 and ahead of Big Lake's 156. Stocke led the race until about the two-mile mark.

"Then Emmett made a really good move," Stocke said. "He kind of just slowly pulled away."

CLASS 3A GIRLS

Photos by GLEN STUBBE • glen.stubbe@startribune.com
Wayzata senior Abbey Nechanicky crossed the finish line jubilantly with a winning time of 16:47.61 Saturday in the Class 3A girls' race.

## Wayzata senior proves again she's in class by herself in 3A

By HEATHER RULE
Special to the Star Tribune

NORTHFIELD – Abbey Nechanicky's constant smile brightened the finish line on an overcast, chilly Saturday morning in Northfield. The Wayzata senior won the Class 3A girls' cross-country state title with a time of 16 minutes, 47.7 seconds.

"She's a happy leader, and that smile is by choice," Wayzata coach Addy Hallen said.

Nechanicky, ranked fourth in the nation by DyeStat.com, is the fourth Minnesota girl to break 17 minutes in a 5,000-meter race. Now she has done it four times, in her past four races.

Teegan Anderson, Nechanicky's classmate, took ninth and marveled at Nechanicky's championship efforts.

"You just look at her and you're like, 'Wow, I wish I could be like that,'" Anderson said.

For her final high school race, Nechanicky said she just wanted to have fun.

"It's my last cross-country race on Minnesota soil, so I wanted to leave my mark and be with my team," she said.

Wayzata took the team title (39 points), followed by Minnetonka (89) and Mounds View (127). Hopkins sophomore Sydney Drevlow finished as runner-up for the second consecutive year with a time of 17:39.8. Forest Lake sophomore Norah Hushagen came in third at 17:48.6.

Nechanicky hadn't run in the state meet since her freshman year, because there was no championship event in 2020 and most of her 2021 season was wiped out by injury. She was glad to be back. Being away from running last season made Nechanicky realize just how special the sport is to her.

"Now I just can't stop smiling," Nechanicky said. "I'm just so grateful."

No matter how much Nechanicky is hurting or pushing herself during a race, she always has that smile. It's something she learned, Hallen said, from a future University of Colorado teammate and past two-time Class 2A Minnesota state champion, Emily Covert. Hallen said Nechanicky told her Friday, "Emily used to run with a smile on her face, and when I was in eighth grade I wondered how she could do it. And now I get it."

"I think it's just pure joy."

After winning a state individual title by more than 50 seconds, Abbey Nechanicky was congratulated by another runner.

CLASS 3A BOYS

## City Conference's best share podium

GLEN STUBBE • glen.stubbe@startribune.com
Winner Aidan Jones, right, of Washburn and runner-up Sam Scott of Southwest did their league proud Saturday.

By HEATHER RULE
Special to the Star Tribune

Minneapolis schools landed a 1-2 punch Saturday in the Class 3A boys' cross-country championship race in Northfield.

Minneapolis Washburn senior Aidan Jones sprinted over the finish line first and used both hands to make a "W" gesture in honor of his school. He finished in 15 minutes, 11.8 seconds.

Southwest junior Sam Scott followed close behind in 15:15.3. The two athletes, who often cross paths running in their city, embraced following the race.

"Made my move on the hill ... and I knew it was just me and Sam right next to each other," Jones said.

Said Scott: "It just feels awesome to finally give the city some representation."

The results speak to the work being done for cross-country programs at the Minneapolis schools, Washburn coach Curtis Johnson said, pointing out that Roosevelt, South and Henry started programs recently.

"It really is a testament to a good district supporting the teams," Johnson said.

Wayzata successfully defended its team title with a score of 57. Rosemount finished second and Lakeville North third.

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