

Blue Jay girls, boys win Norton Invitational

By DICK BOYD

The Norton Community High School girls and boys cross country teams opened the 2006 season with a bang on Thursday by winning both team championships in the annual Norton Invitational Cross Country Meet held on the Prairie Dog Golf Course south of Norton.

One of the largest crowds in the history of cross country running in Norton was present for the competition and, needless to say, they were overjoyed with the results. "The crowd was huge," said coach Deyton Hager. "We had volleyball players out here doing the fight song and football players supporting us, too. It was the biggest crowd I've ever seen here for a cross country meet."

The Norton boys won the championship for the third straight year. They had an excellent 28 points to easily outdistance the second place team, Ellis, who had 83. Phillipsburg was third with 97, followed by Wheatland, 103; Ness City, 118; Hill City, 122; Trego Community, 161; Oberlin, 189.

The Norton girls, who placed second last year, won the championship with 39 points, followed by Ellis, 47; Hill City, 73; Phillipsburg, 82; Trego, 107.

Varsity boys

Norton sophomore Zach Bainter won the boys 3.1 mile run for the second straight year. Last year he ran it in 18 minutes, 45 seconds and this year he was clocked in 18:37.

Blue Jay teammate senior Logan Keiswetter was right behind him in second with a time of 18:47. Keiswetter was tenth last year in 19:24.

Third place went to Joel Lemon,

Hill City, in 18:58. Senior Kent Mann placed fourth for the second year in a row with a time of 19:03. His clocking last year was 19:12.

Justin Joslyn, Hoxie, finished fifth in 19:10, followed by Kyle Merklein, Phillipsburg, sixth, 19:29 and Scott Gugler, Ellis, 19:33, seventh.

Norton senior Jared Engelbert placed tenth in 19:53. He was seventh last year in 19:20.

Sophomore Jordan Bebb finished in 13th place with a time of 20:03 to complete Norton's five-man team. Also running for the Norton boys varsity were freshman Chris Maddy, who placed 15th in 20:09 and senior Jared Bebb, who finished 21st in 20:30.

"I couldn't have asked for my boys to run better," said coach Hager. "They did a super, super job of running. It was my last meet in Norton for me as their coach and also for our seniors. They ran their hearts out for me and themselves. It was amazing."

"We beat some good caliber teams today, including several state ranked teams. Our 28 points was big. It was the best score we've ever had in my nine years here."

"These young men are on a mission. They want to prove to a lot of people that they can run as well as the runners in eastern Kansas. We made a statement today. Our course is a tough one and they ran it well. Our runners want to place in the top three in the state meet this year. We were sixth last year but they are determined to do better."

Bryce Marble was the only boy running varsity for Northern Valley and he placed 22nd in 20:33.

Varsity girls

Norton sophomore Laura Lee



Norton varsity boys runners charge up the first hill in the Norton Invitational Cross Country Meet on Thursday at the PDRA Golf Course south of Norton. Shown are, from left, Kent Mann, Zach Bainter, Chris Maddy and Logan Keiswetter. — Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Baird placed third in the varsity girls race with a clocking of 17:16. She was first last year in 13:58 but the course was lengthened from 2.1 miles to 2.5.

Lady Jay sophomore Taylor Rossi placed fifth in 18:05.

Sophomore KaraJo Jones finished in eighth in 18:34. Junior Kylie Morel was 17th in 21:03 and freshman Amanda Ray completed the five-girl Norton team with an 18th place finish in 21:15.

Also running for the Norton girls varsity was freshman Hannah Waggoner, who placed 23rd in 22:43.

Aubrey Frederking, Ellis, won the race with a time of 16:37 and Sydnee Cole, Phillipsburg, was second for the second year in a row with a clocking of 16:55. Haley Wolf, Ellis, who was third last year, finished in fourth place in 17:33.

"Our girls team ran well," said coach Hager. "It takes a lot of heart to run the way we did. Kylie Mo-

rel is fighting tendinitis in both knees and ran through it. Amanda Ray has a hip problem and she also ran through that. Hannah Waggoner fought through asthma. We have some tough girls."

"It's been a number of years since our girls won the championship of this meet. I'm really proud of them. They ran together as a family and that's what we expect. "Baird, Rossi and Jones all ran an outstanding race for us but it took all five to win the championship."

"The meet ran really smoothly for us thanks to all the administrators, teachers and parents who were helping."

Junior varsity boys

Norton junior Luke VanSlike won the junior varsity boys race with a time of 20:47. Freshman Kaenon Keiswetter was second in 21:24 and senior Michael Ward was third in 21:33. Norton exchange student junior Matheus

Martins was eighth in 22:17, followed by freshman Grant McClymont, 14th, 23:48 and junior Andrew Black, 17th, 24:47; sophomore Josh Gallentine, 19th, 25:10 and freshman Matt Miller, 23rd, 26:11.

Sophomore Stanton Nelson of Northern Valley placed ninth in 22:30.

Junior varsity girls

Norton did not enter any junior varsity girls but Northern Valley had four girls running. Megan Cole, placed second in 20:14, followed by Amanda Hopkins, third, 22:14; Jessie Redeker, eighth, 24:59 and Jena Jessup, 11th, 26:35.

Sprint cars take on two towns

The Labor Day weekend will be filled with roaring motors, the smell of gas and tires burning out as a weekend of doubleheader racing action roars through Norton and Oberlin.

Saturday night, the United Rebel Sprint Series winged sprint cars compete for the first time at the half-mile Elmwood Park Speedway track in Norton starting at 7 p.m.

Norton will hold its fifth annual Vintage Classic that night and Sunday evening. Area promoters Don McMullen and the father/son team of Jerry Bantam and his son, Randy Bantam, have invited the Colorado Vintage Oval Racers, the Kansas Antique Racers, and the Big Car Racing Association to the historical fairgrounds.

Race fans will be able to see the vintage cars, which will be on display, and watch them race Saturday evening. At a lunch Sunday, fans can meet the drivers starting at noon, and they will race between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.

Sunday, the United Rebel Sprint Series will compete in the first annual Outlaw Fall Classic in Oberlin. Gates open at 5 p.m. and races start at 7 p.m.

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Lady Jays open season with two losses

By DICK BOYD

The Norton Community High School girls volleyball team opened the 2006 season on Tuesday evening in Colby with losses to Osborne of the Mid-Continent League and Colby of the Northwest Kansas League.

Norton lost to Osborne 25-15, 25-16 and to Colby 25-13, 25-10.

In the other match, Colby outscored Osborne 25-10, 25-18.

"Osborne is always tough and Colby has a state caliber team," said first year Lady Jay coach Chuck Zimmerman.

"Against Osborne, we played tentative as we did in the food scrimmage on Friday night. We will have to learn that, at the varsity level, there is no such thing as being tentative. You must attack the ball and aggressively protect the floor."

"Our serving was not anywhere close to where it has to be to be

competitive at this level while our passing, although adequate, will have to improve. As a team, we passed at a 1.8 rate but I would like them to be somewhere around the 2.3 to 2.5 range every game. A 3 is a perfect pass to the setter, who does not have to move. Our leading passers were Brianna Felton at 2.1 and Lacey Roe with a 2.0.

"Our setters took what was given to them and did a good job of setting our hitters. Courtney

Cox and Katharine Roy each had two assists. We just did not put balls down on the other side as we only had 10 points off spikes, which are called kills. This must improve also.

"Against Colby, a team with a lot of firepower, we at least moved better to cover the floor. But, when you have three six footers on the other side pounding the ball, it's tough to keep it off the floor. That's where my saying of 'you've gotta

give as good as you get' comes into play. And, at this time, we are not giving back the power we are having to defend against."

"Against the power of Colby, we passed at a 1.3 rate. But, at least, we gave them a battle, especially in the early part of the second game when we did move briefly into the lead."

"Roy had four assists in this match as the hitters had six points off spikes, two each by Courtney LeClair and Brianna Felton."

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