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North boys cross country aims high this season

By **PATRICK J. NAGY**
Reporter

The Williamsville North varsity boys cross country team should be even more of a favorite in Section VI this fall after several members attended Aim High Running Camp during the first week in August.

The camp, run by Dave and Jen Patrino of Syracuse, N.Y., is designed to teach runners race strategy and goal setting. Judging by the way North began the season (won Byron-Bergen and Franklinville Invitationals), the camp certainly paid off.

Spartans head coach Greg Stang said all of the North runners who attended—Mike Dobmeier, Jon Adler, Jeff Nelson, Kurt Wende, and Geoff Hurley, considerably dropped their times. Stang said Hurley's time dropped by 3 minutes while Adler's and Nelson's decreased between 2-3 minutes each. Adler told Stang that the camp experience inspired him to be a more focused runner.

Dobmeier, a senior, is the team's No. 1 runner. He placed fourth in Class 'A' at last year's New York State Championships. It was the highest finish for any North runner since Ron Markczich won the race in 1982.

"At the 2 mile mark, he takes off," said Stang. "He really knows how to pick up the pace. He's very determined to be the No. 1 runner in Western New York this season. I could really see him doing that".



Chris Deptula, front, leads Kurt Wende and Jon Adler during the 16th Franklinville Tournament Saturday. Deptula was 16th overall (17:11.4) followed by Adler (17:13, 17th) and Wende (17:14, 18th)

He already has made an impact this season, winning Byron-Bergen and Franklinville Invitationals.

Behind Dobmeier are, in no particular order, Chris Deptula, Jon Adler, John Bauman, Kurt Wende, Steve

Berus, Hurley, and Dave Johnson, who won the junior varsity race at Byron-Bergen and Franklinville.

Stang said Deptula can turn it up in the last mile of a race and is a mentally tough runner.

"He refuses to lose," said Stang.

Adler, a junior, has totally improved from last season and is one of the team's key juniors, said Stang.

Bauman, a senior, is a former soccer player, who qualified for the state meet in outdoor track in the spring for the half mile.

"He has a prototype distance runner physique," said Stang. "He's a Division I caliber athlete. He could be a sleeper like Mike Long was (senior two years ago who is now a top runner at the University of Pittsburgh.)"

Wende, also a senior, enters his fourth year on team.

"He has a tremendous amount of drive and dedication," said Stang.

Berus, another senior, is tri-captain with Wende and Dobmeier. Berus has been with the team since the eighth grade.

"He's been a leader for us for a number of years," said Stang. "He was one of our top runners at sectionals last year."

Stang said Johnson is really pushing Hurley and Berus for the sixth or seventh spot on the team. The Tuesday before Byron-Bergen Invite, Berus beat Johnson by a tenth of a second in practice to run in the varsity race. Only seven runners are allowed to run in a varsity race.

North was ranked fifth in Western New York large schools last year, finishing 11-3 overall in ECIC Division I. They were also second in Class 'A' at the Section VI Championships.

This year, the team has higher hopes.

"One of our goals is to beat Lockport in the sectional race, then after that, go after Fayetteville-Manlius (of Section V, one to the top teams in the country), at the state meet," said Stang. "They're a very talented group of runners with a strong work ethic and a lot of depth," he continued.

North runs Saturday in the East Aurora Invitational.



Williamsville North's Mike Dobmeier finished fourth at the New York State Championships in Class 'A'. He has won his first two invitationals this season.

North 2005 Schedule

- 9/24 at East Aurora Invitational (East Aurora High School) 10am
- 9/27 at W.S. West w/ Lancaster 4:30pm
- 10/1 at McQuaid Invite (Genesee Valley Park) 11am
- 10/3 at Hamburg w/Clarence (Chestnut Ridge Park) 4:30pm
- 10/7 Town of Amherst Championships 4:30pm (Sweet Home)
- 10/11 Sweet Home at North 4:30pm
- 10/15 at Alden Stampede (Alden High School) 10:30am
- 10/18 at Orchard Park w/Frontier 3:30pm
- 10/22 Clarence Invite at Akron Falls Park 11am
- 10/29 ECICs (Alden High School) 9am
- 11/4 Section VI Championships (Elma Meadows Golf Course) 11am