

WHS XC running strong

Written by Mike Kelly

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The Watauga High cross country teams turned in their second strong performance of the year on Saturday at the western North Carolina Cross Country Carnival at Jackson Park in Hendersonville, NC.

The WHS women, who dominated the competition at the Pioneers Clash of the Classes last weekend, turned in a fourth-place finish in the championship race; the men's team finished sixth. Both the Chapel Hill men and women won the championship races.

The WHS women had three runners in the top 15. Junior Hannah Barbour led the way by finishing fourth in 19:25.39; Darby Middlebrook was right behind her in fifth with a time of 19:29.78. Haylee Dawe of Charlotte Latin won the race in 18:48.62.

Madison Harman was 11th (19:57.14). Teamwise, WHS was fourth with 84 points; Chapel Hill won the meet with 62.

"We had a strong race (at the Clash of the Classes)," said WHS coach Randy McDonough. "But it's still early in the season. We have a long way to go, but I like the make-up of our team."

WHS blew the competition away last week in Boone, especially in the junior (seven runners in the top ten), sophomore (five in the top ten) and freshman (four in the top ten and six in the top 20) races.

In the men's race, WHS was led by Daniel Osborne, who was 16th (16:48.53); Andrew Vandenberg was 20th (17:08.30).

WHS finished sixth with 206 points; Chapel Hill won the race with 29. Morristown-Hamblen West was a distant second with 79 points.

The WHS women were tenth in the invitational race. Taylor Nelson was 48th and Suzanne Barker was 49th; the WHS men were tenth in the invitational race. Sam Littlejohn was 36th. The WHS women were seventh in the open race. Rebecca Nenow was 31st; the WHS men finished second in the open race. The Pioneers also had three runners finish in the top 20.