

Middlebrook Wins State Title

Written by Staff Reports

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Watauga High senior Darby Middlebrook, who lost her crown as state champion in cross country last fall, made up for it with a solid performance on Saturday at the Indoor State Championships at UNC-Chapel Hill. Middlebrook, who finished second at the Class 4A state cross country meet

in November, turned in a dominant performance.

She paced the Pioneers by winning the state championship in the 1,600-meter run and leading WHS's 4x800-relay team to a second place finish. She also finished second in the 3,200-meter run.

That 4x800 group (Julia Roberts, Hailey Middlebrook, Darby Middlebrook and Madison Harman) also shattered the state record as they crossed the finish line in 9:27.79. Green Hope nosed out WHS by two seconds (9:25.85) to win the title. Middlebrook also set a state record by winning the 1,600 in 6:04.52. Erica Amatori of Green Hope finished second in 6:07.62. Middlebrook closed out her day by finishing second in the 3200-meter run in 10:59.73. Harman finished fourth in the 3,200 (11:36.90); Taylor Drummonds finished eighth in the pole vault, clearing the bar with a jump of nine-feet, six inches.

On the men's side, Reid Harris had WHS's best effort of the day. He turned in a second-place finish in the pole vault. He cleared the bar with an effort of 14-feet, six inches. Austin Vegas of East Forsyth won the state championship as he cleared the bar with an effort of 15-feet. Max Ruble finished eighth in the pole vault event (12-feet).

Bryan Brackney was 8th in the 1000-meter run (2:41.32); Andrew Vandenberg had a personal-best time in the 3200 (9:47.93) and finished 7th.

"We got a lots of points from the distance kids on Saturday," said WHS coach Kevin Shaw.

"David Honea leads that group and does a great job of having the kids ready to run fast. "

Overall, the WHS women finished fifth as a team with 32 points; Wakefield won the state championship with 88 points. The WHS men finished 16th with 12 points. Southeast Guilford won the title with 46 points.

Photo Courtesy: Darby Middlebrook and Madison Harman, WHS Athletics