

Dallas runners enjoy a week-long high

Season ends with the third girls state championship, the second individual boys state champion and a total of five individual state medalists.

TOM ROBINSON
For The Dallas Post

The high school cross country season concluded on the Hershey Parkview Course Nov. 2, but for the Dallas teams the celebration continued into this week.

The most successful season for a program with a history of significant accomplishments culminated in the third girls state championship, the second individual boys state champion and a total of five individual state medalists.

When the team arrived back in the area, it was greeted by a parade of 12 fire trucks that led the team from the Dallas Shopping Center back to the high school. A pep rally in the gym during school Tuesday honored the efforts, which included four state medalists from the championship girls team and an individual state title for Dominic DeLuca.

"I can't believe what these kids were able to do," Dallas coach Matt Samuel said.

Dallas was just part of the latest impressive collective performance by District 2 runners.

DeLuca was followed

to the finish line by Lake-Lehman's Dominic Hockenbury in the Class AA boys race, which was won by Tunkhannock.

District 2 teams took half of the six titles with the Holy Cross girls also winning in Class A while DeLuca was joined among the individual champions by Tessa Barrett of Abington Heights in Class AAA girls. Regan Rome led the Class AA girls team title for Dallas by

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matching Hockenbury's second-place state finish.

Samuel said each state championship is a "big accomplishment and they all have their own story," but the program as a whole has never had a day like it had in Hershey following a regular season that featured both teams going unbeaten in the league and the girls winning a district championship.

"This year was different," said Samuel, who led the girls team to the state title twice in his first three years as coach

in 2003 and 2005. "I've never had four girls individual medals at the state race, let alone the state runnerup. Then, to come back and have a guy win the individual title. That's something completely different."

Dallas won the girls team title, 99-128, over Archbishop Wood.

Saucon Valley's Elizabeth Chikotas finished the 3.1-mile course in 18:43 to take the Class AA girls individual title.

Regan Rome finished in 19:10, 12 seconds ahead of the rest of the pack to move up one place from a year ago when she was third. The four-time District 2 champion — five-time if you count a junior high title as an eighth-grader — led the team to bump up one very important spot as well.

After finishing second in the team standings a year ago, the Mountaineers came out on top by getting four runners among the 25 medalists in the race.

Lindsey Oremus, Bryanna Dissinger and Ally Rome, Regan's sister, all made the medal list comfortably.

Oremus finished 14th in 19:41. She was followed by Dissinger and Ally



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Dallas cross country runner Regan Rome finished the state championship run in 19:10, 12 seconds ahead of the rest of the pack to move up one place from a year ago when she was third.



Dominic DeLuca of Dallas won an individual state title in cross country.

Rome coming in together in the next two spots in 19:47.

Regan Rome was first among the girls from the 21 teams in the competition involved in the scoring for that title. Oremus, Dissinger and Ally Rome were seventh, eighth and ninth among the team competitors.

While Dallas had four in the top nine, Palymra was the only other team with two of the top 10 and no other team did better than four in the top 30 of the team scoring.

The combination left Dallas with such a large margin that even if its other three runners finished in the last three

spots in the field, the Mountaineers would have had the second-best team score.

When freshman Riley Oremus crossed 74th out of team runners and 149th overall out of 236 in the field, the team title was clinched.

Allison Amos and Katie Grose completed the seven-runner lineup for the state champs.

All four girls state medalists and DeLuca are preparing to enter the Foot Locker Northeast Regionals in the Bronx, N.Y. Nov. 30. Regan Rome used that race last year to qualify for nationals where she finished 19th.

Tunkhannock had two

girls competing as individuals who finished in the top 37.

Maggie Toczko was 30th and Erin Rome was 37th.

DeLuca is the third Dallas boys runner to win a state title and the second to do so in cross country.

Hugh Mundy won the 800-meter run in track season in 1989. Oliver won the cross country championship in 1990 and the 3200-meter run in track the following spring.

DeLuca was one of four Dallas individuals competing at the state meet

after the Mountaineers were edged out of a potential state team spot by Tunkhannock and Scranton Prep, which wound up finishing first and fourth.

The state medal was the second straight for DeLuca, who opened an early lead on his way to a finish in 16:21, 15 seconds ahead of Lake-Lehman sophomore Hockenbury, also a two-time state medalist.

Bryce Mattson (58th), Kyle Borland (59th) and Travis Mattson (84th) all finished in the top half of the 226-runner field for Dallas.

Tunkhannock was led by state medalist Jack Tidball, who was fourth among runners from team contenders and 11th overall in 16:52.

Jacob Toczko was 28th overall, Ben Siegel was 34th, John Loomis 70th and Carson Ayers 71st to complete the team scoring. Justin Stonier and Joey Moffitt also ran for the Tigers.

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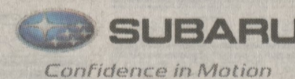
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