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Marmion, Barrington win Leavey titles



Marmion's Andrew Burroughs finished second, leading the Cadets to the championship at the Leavey Invitational at LeRoy Oakes Forest Preserve in St. Charles Saturday.

Laura Stoecker | Staff Photographer



John Lemon

Marmion and Barrington shared a common denominator Saturday in bringing home the boys and girls championships, respectively, at the Jeff Leavey Invitational at LeRoy Oakes in St. Charles.

Both teams put in extra hours this summer getting ready for the season, and the hard work already is paying dividends for both.

Marmion edged Downers Grove North 84-89 and Barrington followed with a narrow win of its own, 50-56 over Batavia, on a day boys and girls runners alike had to overcome the heat.

"I'm so proud of all my teammates," Barrington sophomore Jocelyn Long said. "We ran 40 miles a week, we put in a ton of work this summer. We toughed it up a lot from last summer. It's obviously working."

Long led the way for Barrington, winning in 17:19.6, a big step up from her ninth-place finish in this race as a freshman and 13 seconds ahead of the second-place finisher, Batavia sophomore Emma Stephens.

When Long and Stephens came through the halfway point of the race they were trailing leader Audrey Ernst from St. Charles North and Geneva's McKenzie Altmayer. But both couldn't keep up the pace in the second half of the race, Altmayer finishing third and Ernst fourth, falling to the ground momentarily after crossing the finish line.

"My coach told me to make a move around two-and-a half," Long said. "Right around the two (mile) I realized I had a lot more energy so I just started going. I just tried to stay positive mentally the whole time."

"McKenzie said she felt the heat," Geneva coach Bob Thomson said. "Ernst took it out a little and McKenzie went with it. She fought to stay with her and both of them faded a little. Nice to see them up there battling."

Barrington's pack keyed the team title. Samantha Samaryczew, Lauren Conroy and Sophie Hoeltgen finished eighth through 10th, and Eve Hoeltgen's 22nd-place finish was 10 spots better than Batavia's No. 5 runner, Anna Marie Malay.

There was a reason Malay and Batavia's six through eight runners were back.

"Somebody fell early and we got pinned behind it," Batavia coach Chad Hillman said. "They did the best they could to work their way up. Malay did a good job fighting her way into the 30s."

Batavia put four runners in the top 11: Stephens, Dakota Roman (fifth, 18:04), Marygrace Golden (sixth, 18:21) and Daphne Kolody (11th, 18:37).

"From a coaching standpoint I thought they looked pretty good for the first time out," Hillman said. "When conditions are like this you just kind of hope they get through it and everybody is healthy."

"We have a big gap to close if we want to be with the top teams around. It's girls who know how to close the gap and they did last year really well. We need top five battlers. That's the goal right now. That's the challenge now to keep closing."

Other area finishers included St. Charles in fourth with 148 points and Benet sixth at 174 with the Redwings followed by Montini, Wheaton North, St. Charles North, Geneva and Jacobs.

Hannah Ewald led the Saints in 14th while battling the heat; she was helped out of the chute after collapsing finishing the race.

Chloe Walsh was in the top 10 for Jacobs at the halfway point before finishing 16th in 18:53.

"She faded a lot," Jacobs coach Kevin Christian said. "I'm happy she didn't give up on the race. I'm expecting good things out of her."

"We had several girls set PRs. They are showing a lot of improvement. We'll be OK later in the year when they figure it out some more."

Boys race: Senior Andrew Burroughs led the Cadets to the championship with a second-place finish in 15:24, six seconds behind individual winner Alec Danner from Downers Grove North.

"I thought it was going to be a little cooler but once we got in there it was really hot," Burroughs said. "So lucky we got to run before everyone."

"Usually I like to go out hard. Maybe because it was hot I dialed it back a little bit but I still went out pretty hard."

Burroughs said his goal for first mile was to be in the top five. He was in third, and he stayed strong through the entire race to match the second-place finish his best friend and former Marmion runner Brady Bobbitt, now at Penn State, had at the Leavey last year.

Andrew Lifka also sparked the Cadets by finishing fourth in 15:46. Christian Surtz was eighth, Michael Ronzone 15th and Daniel Heineman 55th.

"Our goal was to have three guys in the top 10 and we did that," Burroughs said. "It was a good day for Marmion."

Downers Grove North would have won the invite but the Trojans had a runner disqualified who finished fourth. He was battling Geneva's Tyler Dau for third place for the final 30 yards in a physical finish into the chute.

"Tyler did real well," Thomson said. "I told him that the way you trained this summer I really believe you are a top 10 kid in most meets. I think the boys in general did a nice job putting some summer work in."

Geneva finished fourth with 112 points, just behind St. Charles East in third at 100.

Brian Caskey followed Dau in 18th.

"It's our best finish in a long time," Thomson said. "Some competition to start out with and I think we did well. Had a nice little pack. We're going to get better."

St. Charles East's pack stayed tight early in the race with its runners eventually finishing in ninth, 13th, 20th, 21st and 39th led by Michael Gerkin, Jake Rzepecki, Brett Izzo and J.B. Sandlund.

"We got out pretty well," Saints coach Chris Bosworth said. "We got good position and that's what we're going to have to do all season. We might not have that total front-runner but we are going to live and die by that pack."

Bosworth was pleased with the minute-split from his one through seven.

"A couple guys the heat got to them," Bosworth said. "We're focused on learning from it and moving forward and be ready by October."

Wheaton North took fifth followed by Jacobs, Oswego, Waubonsie Valley, Batavia and Benet in the top 10.

Matthew Beckerman finished fifth for Wheaton North, Batavia's Shea Bastian was sixth and Kyle Ross took

seventh for Jacobs who also got a lift from James Hennessy in 16th.

"Kyle had a good race," Christian said. "He ran where he was supposed to run all race. Our big surprise was our No. 2. James is a kid who has worked hard for four years and now he's one of our top varsity kids. Very deserving."