

Sep. 13 Cross Country

'Stars girls look good running as a team for the first time in years

By Rich Fisher

Fish4Scores.com

Sep. 13: The Nottingham High girls cross country team opened the season at Washington Crossing Park with three losses today.

But that's not the big story.

The big story is that the Northstars actually fielded a team that was eligible to win or lose for the first time in three years.

Nottingham fell to West Windsor-Plainsboro South and Allentown, and nearly pulled off a victory over Ewing before dropping a 26-29 decision.

"After not fielding a girls team in a very long time, we ran seven runners today," coach "Irish" Mike Walsh said. "We are very disappointed in our loss to Ewing...which I think means we actually have some expectations this year. We will keep training and see where that takes us.

Nottingham's top runners were Sam Williams (24:21), Melissa Bauerle (24:37), Rosa Colon (25:11) and Theresa Henry (25:21).

In boys action, Nottingham fell to WWPS (15-50), Allentown (19-36) and Ewing (26-29). Michael John led the way at 19:01, followed by Zach Helm (19:16), Eric Cougan (19:55), Ryan Struble (19:55) and Tre Foster (23:20).

"I'm very happy with our boys," Walsh said. "We expect to keep getting better."

Baldasari encouraged despite Hornets losses to ND and Ravens

The Hamilton West Boys fell to Notre Dame and Robbinsville, 15-50, but coach Lauren Baldasari said "I was proud of our team's efforts."

Top runner Ryan Meckel ran a 20:06, followed by Calvin Rowe (21:15), Isaac Gonzalez, Harold Ordonez, Billy Markley and Ian Reed.

"I expect Ryan to be close to breaking 19 by the end of the season," Baldasari said. "Calvin Rowe is already 45 seconds faster than his PR last year and Isaac Gonzalez finished over a minute faster than last year's PR."

In the girls meet, a clerical error meant Marlene Duda, the team's top runner and only returnee, could not run. Duda will be back next week.

Carly Gross led the Hornets, followed by Loren Rodas, Rebecca Campagnucci and Allison Ordonez. Hilary Hernandez dropped out due to a twisted ankle but should be healed by the next race.

"I'm pleased overall with our team's performance," Baldasari said. "We have a lot of work to do but the improvement of our returnees and the enthusiasm of our newcomers leaves me optimistic."