

# HIGH SCHOOLS

CROSS-COUNTRY STATE MEETS

## Carmel sweeps to team titles



Carmel's Kelsey Welch took charge at the 4,000-meter mark and held off Columbus North's Mackenzie Caldwell to win the girls title in 17 minutes, 53.9 seconds. ALEX FARRIS/FOR THE STAR

### Girls: Welch conquers hill to lead experienced Greyhounds

By Paul Shepherd  
Star correspondent

TERRE HAUTE — The Carmel girls completed an impressive trifecta at Saturday's state championship meet in Terre Haute.

The Greyhounds swept top-spot honors, winning the team title behind a first-place individual effort from senior Kelsey Welch, who was also named the Mental Attitude Award winner.

Welch said she would never have believed at the start of the season that she'd stand atop the winner's podium at the end of the year. The senior battled injuries late last season, managing to return to the semistate and qualify for the state meet, where she finished 17th. She missed the first four meets this year while battling through various injuries.

"I have never spoken with her about what her goals were for the season," said Carmel coach Mark Ellington. "I knew (it was to win a championship) and never presumed she needed my instruction on how to get to it. She certainly has trained well and has done great in practice. She had all the desire to be the state champion. I just think she had to convince herself of that early when she came back."

Welch topped Columbus North's Mackenzie Caldwell early in the season at the highly competitive Culver Invitational, so it was fitting those two would battle it out again Saturday for the individual title.

Caldwell established an early lead in front of the pack and held on to control the pace for much of the race. Welch said she knew she wasn't as strong of a kicker as Caldwell, so she made a move going uphill at the 4,000-meter mark on the 5,000-meter LaVern Gibson Championship Course, and held off Caldwell's late surge to win in 17 minutes, 53.9 seconds. Caldwell finished in 17:56.8.

"I knew she's a really strong kicker, so I figured I would have to kick and pick up the pace at some point," Welch said. "And I like hills. I was just trying to leave it all out on the course and give it everything I had at the end."

The top-ranked Greyhounds were convincing in winning their state-best 15th championship and fourth in a row. Carmel finished with 76 points, with Hamilton Southeastern second with 122. Columbus North (141) was third; West Lafayette (150) placed fourth and Avon (152) fifth.

Junior twins Haley and Kel-

sey Harris finished 14th and 17th, respectively for Carmel. Senior Gina Genco was 34th.

"I think the level of experience is the difference," Ellington said. "We have a few more girls with a little bit more (big) race experience. Kelsey and Gina, this is their fourth state meet. They've gone every year since they were freshmen and the Harris twins have run the last three. They're a lot more experienced than last year coming into the meet."

HSE junior Rachel Nichwitz improved on her 10th-place finish from a year ago to take fourth.

Other local finishers:

» Taylor Nicholson, Avon, fifth.

» Jessica King, Hamilton Southeastern, eighth.

» Alexandra Dalton, Greenwood, 10th.

» Malyka Abramson, Avon, 12th.

» Alex Buck, Pendleton Heights, 19th.

» Katherine Free, Cathedral, 24th.

The top 25 individuals earn All-State recognition.

Anna Rohrer, the defending state champion from Mishawaka, did not qualify for the meet this year after being injured during the season.

### Boys: As 'Hounds celebrate, so does TH South's Bertoli

By Paul Shepherd  
Star correspondent

TERRE HAUTE — In athletics, participants often talk about never assuming anything; never taking anything for granted. Truer words could not have been spoken in Saturday's dramatic boys cross-country state meet.

Top-ranked Carmel repeated as the team champion and hometown favorite Jackson Bertoli of Terre Haute South won the individual title in 15 minutes, 32.4 seconds.

For the Greyhounds, it was their state-best 13th team championship and third in six years. Carmel scored 64 points to runner-up Columbus North's 78 in a two-team race. Fort Wayne Carroll (192), Brebeuf in its first state appearance (198) and Terre Haute South (228) rounded out the top five.

Carmel sophomore Ben Veatch (15:44) finished fifth, despite missing much of the season with injuries. Senior Bobby Browning was seventh and won the Mental Attitude Award, and senior Ben Anderson placed 13th.

"We knew we had a good group up front," said Carmel coach Erhard "Doc" Bell. "We had good senior leadership. Five of the (top) seven were seniors. They wanted to go out on a high note and they did that very well."

Greenwood senior David Dalton was runner-up in 15:37 in his first state meet appearance.

"The past three years, I've done it wrong," Dalton said. "I've trained wrong. I've raced wrong. This year, I decided to step up my game and do the mileage consistently."

Much of the focus after the meet centered on Fort Wayne Concordia's Zachery Panning.

The lone representative for the Cadets, Panning looked like he would be the first Concordia boy to win the state title after being runner-up last year. The senior took the lead at the first 1,000 meters on the 5,000-meter course and held it almost to the end.

Panning was 30 meters in front of Bertoli about 100 meters from the finish, but suddenly slowed, stumbled and fell. Panning picked himself up, but fell twice more before collapsing at the finish line in 22nd place.

After Panning fell, Bertoli appeared shocked, twice looking over his shoulder as he headed to the finish before throwing his hands to his head in disbelief.

"I counted myself out coming down the homestretch and Zach took a spill," Bertoli said. "I don't know if it's necessarily the way I wanted to win a state championship, but it still feels good nonetheless."

Medical personnel tended to Panning for more than 20 minutes after the race and were called to treat him again later. He was initially loaded on a gurney but was not transported to the hospital. He told The Star afterward, visibly upset, that he wasn't sure what happened.

"I lost energy, I guess," Panning said. "I don't know. I felt like I was slowing down at first, then all of a sudden I just kind of lost my sight. After that, I just wanted to finish. I guess things happen for a reason. It just wasn't my day. There are more races."

By finishing in the top 25, Panning earned All-State status. Brebeuf's Zack Snider (10th), North Central's Solomon Rice (18th), Westfield's Colin Rinne (23rd) also made the All-State team.



Calvin Kraft of Fishers leads runners into a turn during the cross-country state meet Saturday. Jackson Bertoli of Terre Haute South won the individual title in 15 minutes, 32.4 seconds.

FOOTBALL

### Tech coach resigns after sectional loss

By Kyle Neddenriep  
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Tech High School football coach Emil Ekiyor has resigned. He informed his team after the Titans' 27-10 loss to Southport in Sectional 7 on Friday night.

Ekiyor was 16-15 in three seasons at Tech, including a 5-6 mark this season. He said it was his decision alone to step down.

"Yes, all the way," he said. "(It was a) tough decision, because I have so many great young players who have bought in."

Though this year's team was arguably Tech's most competitive in many years, the season was marred by an ugly incident in a Sept. 27 game against Fort Wayne South when a fight erupted and a Tech assistant threw a punch at an opposing assistant.

Ekiyor and Fort Wayne South coach Eddie Fields

were suspended for one game.

Ekiyor said the incident did not play a factor in his decision. More pressing was the fact that his day job with Indianapolis Public Schools was cut this summer. His position as coordinator for alternative education career programs was one of 59 positions cut, many of them held by coaches without teaching degrees.

"It is a different district with a different vision for the role of athletics," Ekiyor said.

Although the Titans weren't able to win the program's first sectional, Ekiyor said he felt he accomplished a lot in three years. "My boys now understand how to dream and the opportunities that are out there for them after high school," he said.

★ Call Star reporter Kyle Neddenriep at (317) 444-6649.

VOLLEYBALL SEMISTATES

### Carmel, Avon, Brebeuf in finals

Greyhounds, Orioles set for 4A rematch from 2012

By Jason Haddix  
Star correspondent

It's rematch time for the Class 4A state volleyball championship. And Brebeuf Jesuit could give Central Indiana two titles next Saturday in Muncie.

The IHSAA volleyball championships will be contested at Ball State University's Worthen Arena. Class 3A pits Brebeuf against Fort Wayne Concordia at 3 p.m., followed by Carmel-Avon at 5 p.m.

#### Class 4A

The Greyhounds-Orioles matchup is a familiar one. The teams hooked up in a five-set thriller to determine the 2012 state champion, won by Avon.

The Greyhounds earned a small bit of redemption this year with a three-set sweep during the regular season.

Top-ranked Carmel's semistate path on Saturday was one with few bumps. The Greyhounds swept No. 15 Fort Wayne Carroll 25-15, 25-13, 25-10 in the morning match

at Huntington North, then dismantled Elkhart Central 25-15, 25-9, 25-16 for the semistate title.

Avon, ranked second, followed a similar path at Seymour with straight-set wins against No. 6 Floyd Central (25-20, 25-22, 25-16) then No. 10 Columbus East (25-22, 25-17, 25-13). It is the third straight semistate crown for the Orioles.

University of Illinois commit Beth Prince led Avon with 26 combined kills. Rachel Griffin, an Indiana State commit, had 63 assists during the two games.

Orioles coach Scott McQueen said his team got off to a slow start and did not follow the scouting report as he had hoped early in the Floyd Central match. In all but the second set against the Highlanders, Avon held its opponent to a lower point total as the contest progressed.

This will be Avon's third straight trip to the state title match.

No. 17 Bishop Chatard had its run of beating ranked foes in the tournament ended by Columbus East 27-25, 25-21, 25-20 in the Seymour semifinal. The Trojans had previously defeated Cathedral and New Castle, both ranked No. 3

in the latest coaches poll.

#### Class 3A

Brebeuf's matches were a little closer at the Edgewood Semistate, but the ninth-ranked Braves prevailed, defeating No. 12 Northview 25-23, 25-19, 25-12. They followed that up with another three-set sweep of Brownstown 25-18, 28-26, 25-23.

First-year coach Anna Huse cited stellar teamwork as the reason for the two victories.

The Braves will be vying for their second state championship.

#### Class 2A

Speedway (35-3) saw its season come to an end when it fell to No. 1 Providence (34-4) 25-16, 25-21, 25-15 in the semifinal at Forest Park.

#### Class A

Lutheran's bid to reach the finals fell one match short as the Saints lost to No. 2 Barr-Reeve in four sets after sweeping Christian Academy in the morning.

The third ranked Saints won the opening set 27-25 against Barr-Reeve but dropped the next three 25-20, 25-23, 25-21.