

Sports Week

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GDHS top running school win five provincial team titles

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The Rebel Cross Country team brought the 1979 regular season to a rousing finish on Saturday at the provincial finals in Kingston, capturing five out of the six possible team titles.

The Georgetown runners had set off for the Ontario Federal Secondary School Athletic Association (OFSAA) competition, confident that they would show well against the other Ontario representatives. But, the final results were beyond their most optimistic predictions. To qualify for OFSAA a team must place first or second at one of the 17 divisional meets. The field are composed of the 34 best teams in the province. Winning even one team title over this top calibre competition is a tremendous accomplishment, but the unprecedented capturing of five titles shows Georgetown's complete domination of provincial cross country running.



Arlene Gray (No. 585) was one of the four midget aged girls who ran in the senior division. She finished 91st.

Saturday's ideal weather conditions and the scenic Glen Lawrence Golf Club sent the team's morale soaring as the bus wheeled into the parking lot. The routes were set up around the perimeter of the golf course, at times criss-crossing through the centre of the course, and the runners were visible for up to 90 per cent of each race. Hundreds of spectators, including Georgetown's contingent of voluble and very loyal parents and supporters, lined the courses.

The Midget Girls raced first. Georgetown's undefeated team, having scored a perfect 10 at the Peel-Halton, were favoured to win. They lined up with the other 220 provincial class runners, looking a little awed and nervous, however, their months of consistent training paid off as all five runners placed in the top 26. When diminutive Lyn McPhail came into view in 4th place, the Georgetown supporters went wild, spurring her on and helping her maintain this fantastic position. Not far behind her came teammates Susan Kirstensen at 16th, Kim Newcombe at 19th, Debbie Newman (who had to stop to put her shoe back on) at 21st, and Kathy Webb at 26th. With a total of only 60 points the lowest Rebel total of the day, the girls easily captured the championship.

The Junior Girls' race was next. The Georgetown team, all experienced runners, jogged down to the starting line filled with a certain amount of trepidation. Arch rivals Henry Carr and West Ferris had both moved their best midgets to junior in order to "stack" their junior teams. However, their gambles didn't pay off as the determined Georgetown team ran its best race to date, capturing the gold. Sherry Finucan led the team with a strong 14th place finish. Behind her, knowing every position was crucial, ran Sandra Marciniuk, 43rd, Heather Reed, 48th, Diane Jones, 53rd, and Liz Ramsay, 66th. They sprinted up the final gruelling hill, delighting the Georgetown spectators, who could sense the second Rebel victory of the day.

It was then the midget boys' turn to shine. They were undefeated this year and were hoping to bring back the trophy won by last year's team. Mark Ezard, Halton and Peel-Halton champion, led the way, placing 6th. His teammates started slowly and were towards the back of the congested pack as the runners headed down the first hill.

However, they fought their way back to the top quarter of the field. Harold Bransch placed 38th, Gary Hulbert, 55th, Stuart McLure, 57th and Doug Gillespie 147th. The boys' total of 156 was low enough to give them their 8th consecutive win of the year and the school's 3rd gold medal of the day.

The senior girls' race included the province's best, most seasoned 17 and 18 year old runners. This fact didn't phase the Georgetown squad which was made up of only 1 senior-aged runner, Helen Kristensen, and four midget-aged competitors, Cheryl Thompson, Denean Jones, Arlene Gray and Barb Gage. They all ran strong races over the 4000 m. course, each finishing in the top half of the very competitive field. Cheryl was the first local runner in with a placing of 62nd. Not too far behind here were Denean at 81st, Helen 82nd, Arlene 91st and Barb 104th. Their total of 316 was low enough to place them 9th in the province. Although this was the only Rebel team who didn't win a gold, in terms of effort, ability and recognition these girls deserve the same recognition as the other teams.

The Junior Boys were very keyed up. They knew the pressure to win was on as the field included teams to whom they had lost earlier in the season. Doug Smith, the team's strongest runner, finished an excellent 9th. David



Stewart McLure sprints towards the finish, to place a respectable 57th place at OFSAA.

Griffiths placed 29th, Jim McIntyre was 47th, Glenn Britton finished 78th and Scott Harris placed 110th.

Their total of 163 was low, but no one knew if it would be low enough. Pandemonium broke loose when the boys discovered they had defeated Brantford C.I. by the narrowest of margins - 1 pt. This made it the third year in a row that a Georgetown junior boys' team had won the championship.

The Senior Boys' race is always the climax of a cross country meet. This is where national calibre athletes compete in the day's longest and toughest race. This year, the Georgetown team viewed the race with a great deal of pride, but with a certain amount of regret, as it marked the final season for the 5 fantastic runners - Ian Clark, Arnold Brakel, Jon Lancaster, Fergus Barnes and Jim Allan. The Georgetown team was favoured in the race, but certainly wasn't a shoo-in for the gold; several other schools boasted strong squads. However, the Georgetown boys ran true-to-form and easily won the team title by 120 points. Ian Clark, Georgetown's world-class cross country runner and four time OFSAA champion outdistanced rival Dennis Stark to win the race. Ian ran up the final hill to the applause of the hundreds of spectators who paid tribute to Ian and his well-run race. Arnold Brakel, growing steadily stronger, finished 11th, and Jon Lancaster placed 14th.

Fergus Barnes came 38th and Jim Allan 45th. The boys' total of 64 guaranteed them the victory and the Rebel team's 5th gold medal of the day.

Georgetown's excellent showing on Saturday places the team at the top of the province's all-time medal winners. Since 1957, the first year of OFSAA Cross Country competition, no team has ever won more than 2 golds in the same year. In total, over the years, Georgetown has won eight golds and is now ahead of former powerhouse Lockerby, which has won seven.

The team is congratulated on a superb performance which culminates months of intensive training.

Raider Raps begin
Pages 32 and 33

Gems get standing ovation
Page 31

Minor hockey report
Pages 36 and 37 and 38