

Wildcats are kings of the cross-country hill

The W.I. Dick Wildcats ran their way to victory at the Optimist Club Cross-Country Meet in Georgetown last Thursday.

The junior male Wildcats blew away their competition with a half-dozen team members placing in the top 10. Leading the pack was second-place finisher Elliot McKerr while Derek Blanchard, Josh Caswell and Mark Wilson came in third, fourth and fifth respectively.

Brett Turner cross the finish line in eighth position and Don McKenna was ninth.

The intermediate boys were equally impressive with eight runners making it into the top 20. Meanwhile, Quinn Young placed second and Jon Taylor came 15th in the senior boys race.

W.I. Dick's female runner were also dominant, with the senior class cleaning up with eight runners placing in the top 20. Among them were

Tegan Miller who finished second and Kristen Keller who was hot on her heels for third. Teammates Jessica Simpson (fifth) and Katie Magee (ninth), weren't far behind.

Jennifer Wallace led the intermediate girls with a third-place effort while Krystal Hass came 11th and Jennifer Burgoyne 13th. The junior female Wildcats were led by Stephanie Sliemers, who came in fourth.

Flying high in motocross

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He also finished in the top 10 in the national open series. He started off with back-to-back third-place efforts but fell to 10th after crashing in the third race and missing the fourth. "I drifted wide on one turn and clipped a tree. My bike wasn't in any shape to race the final heat."

The top 40 racers from across Canada qualified for the nationals. Gaetan's qualifying campaign featured two seconds and two third-place finishes in the spring.

In addition to a strong national run, he competed at races in Michigan. His cross-border performances included back-to-back victories in the open class in Brighton August 3 and a fifth-place showing the following weekend in Stanton.

Gaetan — who began riding dirt bikes at age eight and started racing as a teenager — said a number of factors contributed to his successful return this year.

Topping the list was guidance from best friend Clifford Murray, a fellow racer who worked on strategy and technique with him this spring.

"I had always been strong on my starts and a very smooth rider overall, but jumps were my weak point. Most of my wipe-outs, which resulted in back and wrist injuries as well as my shoulder injury, came on jumps.

"We worked on this area all spring and I felt a lot more confident on them this season," said Gaetan.

Also providing a great deal of support was girlfriend Susan Kirkham, who not only cheers him on from the sidelines but acts as his chief mechanic.

With his recent success, and a rejuvenated love for competing, Gaetan says his return to racing is by no means a one-season deal. He hopes to enter more events in the U.S. next year and eventually move up to the Masters division.

"I love the speed, power, adrenaline and exhilaration of racing. It's like a roller coaster ride without the tracks," he said.

Tough go for Medics

Whether its been relinquishing a lead, being edged in a one-goal decision or being soundly defeated, the Docs & Dents major atom AA Winterhawks have been unable to secure a win in the first four games of their regular season.

Their season opener against north Halton rival Georgetown ended in a 2-1 heartbreaker, with Dan Dimeo backstopping the crew with 27 saves. Tyler Holman scored Milton's lone marker with help from Mark Hearn.

The 'Hawks were blanked 4-0 by Oakville in their next outing. Outshot 24-13, they trailed by just a goal heading into the final frame but allowed two more goals early on and a third in the final second of play.

Rory Johnston played well between the pipes. Kyle Saliba was steady on defense.

Milton held a two-goal lead in the second period over Brampton, but couldn't hold on as their opponents rallied for a 3-3 draw. Johnston, Brett Turner and Chris Coates registered goals with Hearn drawing two assists and James McIntosh and Andrew Claessens posting one each.

Burlington handed the 'Hawks their second four-goal loss in a 5-1 final. Johnston turned aside 33 shots to keep the score fairly respectable while Peter Schultz potted the lone marker.

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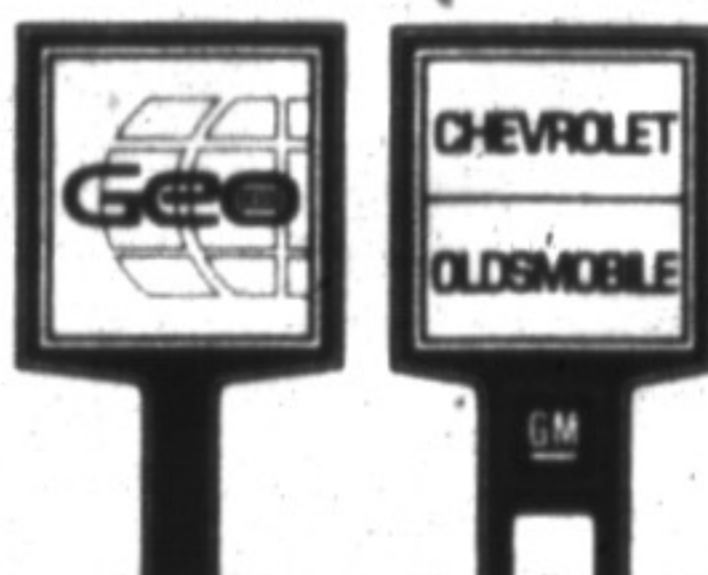
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