

State Bound | Cross Country, volleyball extend seasons

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Two WHS cross country runners are headed to state.

The cross country team hosted its regional meet Saturday, with two runners qualifying for the state championship. Sophomore Rebekah Stuhlsatz came in second in the girls race with a time of 21:46. Freshman Sienna Jones had an eighth place finish, with a time of 23:09 seconds.

Stuhlsatz says it's disappointing that the rest of the team won't get to compete at state alongside her, but she's excited nonetheless.

"The rest of the season was good for our team. I think we did good for the meets that we got to go to," she said. Stuhlsatz returns to state after an 11th-place finish her freshman season.

Jones didn't secure her spot until the very end of Saturday's race.

"We were all in a group and they pulled away during the race. About 100 meters from the finish line I sprinted past all of them," Jones said. "Everyone was yelling that I was in 11th. The girl in 10th kept speeding up and slowing down. She passed me on and off. When I finally passed her for good I passed a few other people as well," Jones said.

Jones said she improved a lot throughout her freshman season, and is excited to qualify for state. "I thought if I was going to go to state it would be as a team, not individually, so there's a lot of pressure now," she said.

The girls team fell just short of a spot at state, with a 3rd place team finish. For the rest of the runners, their season came to an end Saturday, including senior Kimi Buchanan.

"Our girls team came within 4 points of qualifying for State and within 5 points the first place team from Sacred Heart," coach Roger Alderman said. "Just two weeks ago Sacred Heart had beaten us by 75 points at the Riley County meet. Since then we have really been coming on strong and continued that trend by improving by an average of 1:03 from our times last week on this same course. The two teams that beat us today, Bennington and Sacred Heart, came into the meet ranked #4 and #6 in the State and we gave them a run for their money."

The boys team ended its season



The volleyball team celebrates after defeating Valley Heights Saturday to secure a trip back to state. "We were really an underdog going into the tournament, so it was a big deal to beat two ranked teams," libero Kaelyn Conrad said. Photo by Alexis Ford. Right: Sophomore Rebekah Stuhlsatz runs at the top of the hill "Betty." She placed 2nd and will run at state for the second year in a row. Photo by Jayna Keller.

with a 7th place finish, and was unable to qualify any runners individually. "Our boys team has suffered a lot of bad luck with injuries this year, but kept battling throughout. Before the season we had hoped to return five of the seven runners from last year's State Qualifying Team, but in the end only Eli Mumpower was able to run for us at Regionals, and we ran four freshmen at (Saturday's) meet," Alderman said.

Mumpower ended his senior season with a 14th place finish "Eli put himself in the hunt to qualify for State individually, but in the end came up 20 seconds short. Overall the boys improved by an average of about 30 seconds from last week's race. We had lots of boys gain some varsity experience for us this year, and that will pay off down the line," Alderman said.

In addition to Mumpower, the team graduates Isaac Lira and Peter Stuhlsatz.

The Chargers run for the final time this season 10:05 a.m. Saturday at Sand Plum Nature Trail in Victoria.

"I'm more excited than nervous



for state," Stuhlsatz said. "I'm super excited because there's a new course this year."

VOLLEYBALL ADVANCES AS #5 SEED

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For a third year in a row, Charger volleyball is headed to state.

It's the Charger's seventh state appearance in nine seasons.

"Our program has been building all decade," coach Tracy Capoun said. "I attribute that to the hard work our girls, parents and others put in during and outside of the season. They have a passion for the sport and seek out opportunities to play and get better all year long."

On Saturday, the team won Sub-State at Herington. In the first round the Chargers beat Washington County 25-21 and 25-22. The Chargers beat Herington in a thrilling three set match 25-18, 13-25,

FOOTBALL ENTERS PLAYOFFS

Football begins its postseason 7 p.m. Thursday at Pleasanton. Only 100 Charger fans will be allowed to attend because of county restrictions. Both teams are 3-5 on the season. The winner of this game will play the #1 seed Centralia.

and 25-23. In the finals, the Chargers faced Valley Heights and won 25-22 and 25-21.

In a strange season, a return to the state tournament was never guaranteed. "After a few of our players had to quarantine and miss some games, it was tough. Not only do you have a new dynamic and players on the court for a couple weeks, we had to try and pick up where we were with the quarantined players after missing two weeks of practice," Capoun said. "It's a mental and team shift when you're playing with different groups of people. We had a lot of younger players step up, during the quarantine which was also one of our toughest times of the season MEL play."

Despite setbacks during the season, Capoun said the team was playing well at the right time.

"I felt good about going into the Sub-State though. We were finally starting to get our groove back from that mid-season interruption."

The players were excited to continue the program's success. "It was a big year for us to prove people wrong," junior Lauren Schutter said. "A lot of people expected us to have a down year after losing a lot of seniors, and I'm glad to show that we can continue the tradition."

The Chargers traveled to Jefferson County North Tuesday to play in the State quarterfinal. The game was a best 3 out of 5 sets. A win would send the Chargers to the state tournament in Dodge City Friday. The Chargers are 26-10 on the season and Jefferson County North is 32-5.

"Jeff Co North has been a pretty consistent team the last few years. We played them last year at state. The top programs in the state are pretty consistently showing up during our post-season play or are ranked during the season. We have seen many of the same teams back at state the last 2 years," Capoun said.

Results from Tuesday's match were not available at press time. Check whscharger.com for updates during the week.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

What's your favorite Halloween memory?

"I went through the haunted house in Wamego with my Youth Group. The other three girls and I spent it clinging to my youth leader."

Junior Emma Alderman

"When I scared my older sister and she peed her pants."

Junior Brady Bayless

"My family and I were leaving a trunk or treat event at my elementary school and my little brother, Michael, dropped all of his candy on the ground. We were all picking up his candy and he picked up a piece of dog poop thinking it was candy."

Freshman Kinsley Peterson

"My favorite Halloween memory is when I went to a haunted house in Indianapolis during the FFA convention."

Junior Marek Boatwright

"My favorite Halloween memory is when after every year when I was done trick or treating I would come home, sort, and then eat all of my candy."

Freshman Kadence Guinn

"This weekend I went to Little Munchkins Pumpkin Patch with my boyfriend. The last time I went to the pumpkin patch was when I was in grade school. They've added a lot of activities and displays since I was last there. We had a lot of fun and carved our pumpkins when we came back to my house. I carved the Elmo fire meme and Sean carved the Browning logo."

Junior Sarah Vanstony

"When I got lost in Garden City and some old dude gave me a Capri Sun and I sat in his yard and cried until my parents found me. I was in a Winnie the Pooh costume."

Senior Melissa Campbell

"Going to Indian Caves in Nebraska, camping, and doing Halloween activities."

Junior Kaelyn Conrad

"When I was 10 I dressed up as Darth Vader and it was my favorite Halloween because I got so much candy and I was Darth Vader."

Freshman Miguel Hernandez

"Emma's uncle was dressed as a woman and when trick or treating in town he came up to us and started asking if she was Emma Alderman and she didn't know who he was."

Junior Cecelia Emmert

"One time... I took two pieces out of the bowl when it said to only take one."

Freshman Sienna Jones

"My favorite memory is from Halloween last year because that weekend was when we won state volleyball in Dodge City."

Junior Kara Hafenstine

"I loved the time when I wore a costume under my costume so half way through the night I switched then went to the same houses a 2nd time and doubled my candy."

Junior Jackson Havenstine

Opinion | First-time voters concerned about future

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With the first election coming up for eligible WHS voters, we set out to find what issues teen voters considered important for political candidates to address.

While some of the voters had little to say, others were passionate about several topics.

Several students expressed concerns for what candidates would do for our future. As people with most of our lives still ahead of us, we naturally have concerns about how policies will shape the country for the next 10, 50 or 100 years. We can't afford to simply think about the present.

Many of us already work and pay taxes, but we will soon be entering the workforce full-time and contributing more to our world, so it's important to consider how political decisions affect our future careers and the economy. To go even farther, how will our children and all generations after us be set up for success? Some of the problems we face now came from shortsighted decisions. WHS voters want to be better than that.

We also worry about each candidate's legacy? When we look back on the first president we voted for, will we be proud or ashamed?

Another main issue students brought up was COVID guidelines and how they would be changed/

handled. This included mask regulations, the opening of businesses and schools, and more potential stimulus. While this is obviously an unprecedented situation, the response from our government doesn't give us a lot of confidence, and we want to know that someone in charge is looking out for our best interests.

Other issues students cited include preserving civil rights like same-sex marriage, passing sensible 2nd amendment restrictions that control guns while preserving our rights, strengthening the agricultural community and boosting the economy.

It's important to know what is happening in our country and

where a person stands on issues regarding our country. This will help us all choose the candidate that best fits our ideals.

Unfortunately, several voters didn't really have any idea what was important to them. They hadn't done any research or watched the news to find out what was going on in the world, and they didn't really have an answer for how they were choosing to cast their vote.

I encourage our generation, and every generation, to get involved, do the research, pay attention to news from multiple sources, talk to parents and form your own ideas, so you can make sure your vote, and your participation in society isn't a waste.