

## Fredonia boys win league title

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The Fredonia Hillbillies boys' cross country team placed first in its league meet on Oct. 29, making them CCAC League Champions with a perfect 28-0 record.

OBSERVER File Photo

Pictured are members of the Fredonia boys' cross country team, which won the CCAC league meet Oct. 29. The Hillbillies finished a perfect 28-0 on the year.

"We're very happy for the boys," Fredonia coach Carol Zirkle said.

The Hillbillies scored 50 points as a team to win the championship, defeating Gowanda, which scored 60 points. Last season, Fredonia placed second behind Gowanda at the league meet and at sectionals. This season, the Hillbillies have beaten the Panthers

in their first two meetings and have just one more victory to go in what has become a friendly rivalry over the past few years.

"They know everyone's out there doing their best," Zirkle said.

Also running on Oct. 29, Maple Grove was third with 96 points, followed by Jamestown 141, Olean 170, Frewsburg 180, Falconer 202, Southwestern 245 and Allegany-Limestone 248. Silver Creek was 10th with 263, Dunkirk was 11th with 268, Sherman 12th (269), Franklinville 13th (312) and Ripley 14th (392).

Fredonia's top finisher was Josh Szukala, who was third in a time of 16:59.30, behind Maple Grove's Corey Wefing and Dunkirk's Alex Gonzalez in first.

"(Szukala) ran a good race," Zirkle said. "I feel the top guys all ran good races."

The Hillbillies' other top seven runners from the league meet were Alex Crise, who was seventh in a time of 17:28.11, Matt Meredith, who finished 11th in 17:43.81, Chaz Mancino was 12th, crossing the line at 17:53.21, Mark Dudek was 17th, finishing in 18:05.40, Vincent Ippolito was 18th with a time of 18:09.11 and Jacob Brown was 41st with a time of 19:09.71.

"We're very happy with how the top boys ran," Zirkle said. "They really ran a strong race. Alex Crise moved up from where he started the season. Matt Meredith and Vince Ippolito ran excellent races for us.

"All the top guys came out and ran what they needed to run," Zirkle continued.

These seven runners will represent Fredonia at the State Qualifying Sectionals race, which will be held at Elma Meadows this Friday. The boys Class C race starts at 2:30 p.m. The winning team at that race will go on to the State Championship race, along with the top five runners not on that team.

"I think that (being) county champions is nice, but that most teams' focus is sectionals more than the county meet," Zirkle said. "It's exciting, but our focus is on (the qualifying) race.

"We're looking forward to racing (this Friday) and putting our best race forward," Zirkle said. "They're going to have to run that well or slightly better. (The outcome depends on) which team is able to follow their game plan, which team has the fastest seven guys on that day, which team follows the smartest race plan. It depends on who is mentally tough enough and physically strong enough to handle whatever Mother Nature throws at them."



The girls' team placed third at the meet on Oct. 29, with 75 points, just behind Maple Grove who finished with 36 and Falconer, who tallied 73. Lauren Reyda was Fredonia's top runner in sixth with a time of 19:46.2, followed by Jessica Swoyer in 11th in 20:44.9, Michaela Tramuta in 13th recording a 20:49.1, Alyssa Goot in 22nd with a time of 21:40.3, Brittany Campaign in 23rd with a time of 21:45.6, Maitland Langworthy in 29th in 22:31.5 and Jillian Kowalski in 37th crossing the line in 23:04.7.

"Jessica Swoyer, Michaela Tramuta and Alyssa Goot, those three ran their top race of the season just by where they placed," Zirkle said, noting that Swoyer and Goot ran the same course in September and both were over a minute faster this time around. "That just shows how hard they've been working all season."