

Indiana High School Athletic Association

9150 North Meridian Street, Box 40650, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240-0650

Phone: 317-846-6601 Fax: 317-575-4244 Website: www.ihsaa.org

Blake Ress, Commissioner

MEDIA ADVISORY

October 30, 2004

VALPARAISO GIRLS THREE-PEAT, CONCORDIA'S MITCHELL TAKES FIRST

Valparaiso placed four of its five runners in the top 25 to run away with its third consecutive IHSAA state championship on Saturday at the LaVern Gibson Championship Cross Country Course in Terre Haute.

The Vikings tallied 87 points to outduel runner-up Westfield with 112. It was also the fifth state championship in six years for the Vikings with each coming under the tutelage of coach Karen DeVries. Indianapolis Cathedral placed third with 123, Carmel was fourth with 145 and Columbus North fifth with 155.

The future looks bright for the Vikings as each of their top four runners are underclassmen. Sophomore Lauren Hardesty finished fifth overall in a time of 14:57.5. She was followed by twin sister Amanda Hardesty in 16th (15:14.2), junior Andrea Kent in 18th (15:16.1) and sophomore Ashlee Karp in 25th (15:23.8). Senior Erica Johnson finished 42nd overall in 15:45.0 to round out Valpo's scoring.

Taking first place overall in this year's race was senior Adele Mitchell of Fort Wayne Concordia Lutheran. Mitchell crossed the line in a winning time of 14:34.5 and became the second consecutive Concordia runner to win the state championship following in the footsteps of Alissa McKaig, the 2003 state champion.

Wawasee senior Rachel Stichter, running with a stress fracture in her right foot, finished second in 14:40.6; freshman Alexandra Banfich of the Culver Academies was third in 14:43.4 and; junior Sarah Kehe of Chesterton was fourth in 14:53.7.

This year's meet, the 24th annual gathering for girls, was contested for the first time at the LaVern Gibson Championship Cross Country Course with Terre Haute North acting as the host school for the event. The event was run under a bright, sunny sky with temperatures in the mid-70s although strong wind gusts wreaked havoc on the runners. The NCAA Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships will be held on this same course November 22.

Penn's Laura Carr Named Winner Of Mental Attitude Award

Following the meet, Laura Carr of Penn High School was selected by the IHSAA Executive Committee as the recipient of this year's Girls Mental Attitude Award.

Academically, she rates tops in her class of 679 seniors with a GPA of 4.0. She is undecided about her college choice and field of study.

Carr finished 26th overall in this year's meet, her third consecutive appearance, to help her team to a 10th place finish. She has earned three varsity letters in cross country, served as team captain and was named this year's most valuable runner by her team and by the Northern Indiana Conference. She also has earned two varsity letters in track for the Kingsmen.

The award is presented to the senior in the state finals meet that best demonstrates mental attitude, scholarship, leadership and athletic ability during the four years of high school.

She is the daughter of Thomas and Dianne Carr of Granger.

Farm Bureau Insurance, the IHSAA's corporate partner, presented a \$1,000 scholarship to Penn High School in the name of Laura Carr.
