

IHSAA Boys Cross Country

1996-97 State Finals in Review

CARMEL SWEEPS IHSAA CROSS COUNTRY TITLES

Carmel swept the 1996 IHSAA cross country state meets November 9, 1996 at Conner Prairie in Fishers, winning the girls championship by a 40-point margin over Columbus East and the boys race by a 20-point edge over defending state champion Ben Davis.

This was the fourth time that Carmel has swept the IHSAA cross country state meets. The Greyhounds also won both titles in 1982, 1987 and 1988.

For the top-ranked Carmel girls, it was their second straight championship and eighth in the 16-year history of the event. Each of the titles has come under the guidance of coach Chuck Koeppen.

Sophomore Julie Ham became the first Carmel girl or boy to win an individual IHSAA cross country championship with a five-second victory over junior Erin Womble of Chesterton. Sophomore Brandi Silvonek of Chesterton was another four seconds back in third place.

Running in windy, 35-degree weather with three inches of snow on the ground from an overnight storm, Ham was clocked in 14:50 over the wet and muddy 4,000-meter course that was serving as the state meet site for the first time.

Carmel's other scoring runners were senior Brooke Bryenton in 14th at 15:22, junior Cody Sohn in 17th at 15:27, junior Angela DeVoe in 21st at 15:30 and sophomore Erica Wolf in 47th at 15:55. For team scoring purposes, Carmel's runners came in at 1, 8, 10, 12 and 25.

For the top-ranked Carmel boys, it was their first state championship since 1993 and their 10th IHSAA title overall. Koeppen has been the coach of all 10 state championship teams.

As a team, Carmel was able to use team balance to overcome a one-two Ben Davis finish by junior Fasil Bizuneh and senior Brad Bernhardt. Bizuneh ran four seconds ahead of his teammate in 16:09. Senior Damian Sherck of Elkhart Central was another seven seconds back in third place.

Senior John Vyverberg led Carmel with an 28th-place finish in 16:58. Carmel's other scoring runners were senior Josh Trisler in 35th at 17:02, senior Tito Downer in 45th at 17:10, junior Matt Hettlinger in 47th at 17:11 and junior Andy Smock in 48th at 17:11. For team scoring purposes, Carmel's top five runners came in at 11, 15, 23, 24 and 25.

Overall, the two 1996 cross country titles pushed Carmel's overall IHSAA championship count to 56, tops among all IHSAA schools. This also marks the 13th consecutive school year that Carmel has won at least one IHSAA state title.

Nicole Nigh of Lake Central was named the 1996 recipient of the IHSAA Mental Attitude Award in Girls Cross Country. Nigh, who finished sixth in 15:04, ranks eighth in a class of 579 students. Bernhardt of Ben Davis was selected as the 1996 recipient of Charles F. Maas Award for Mental Attitude in Boys Cross Country. He ranks 28th in a senior class of 827.

Farm Bureau Insurance, corporate partner of the IHSAA, will award \$1,000 scholarships to Lake Central High School in the name of Nigh and to Ben Davis High School in the name of Bernhardt.

BOYS TEAM RESULTS

Carmel	98
Ben Davis	118
Valparaiso	128
North Central (Indianapolis)	150
Portage	185
Lake Central	200
Hammond Gavit	207
Southport	218
Northfield	230

Terre Haute South	257
Floyd Central	292
Martinsville	314
Goshen	317
Fort Wayne Northrop	321
Franklin	349
Homestead	363
Richmond	383
Owen Valley	418
Bloomington North	419
LaPorte	435

BOYS INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

1. Fasil Bizuneh, junior, Ben Davis	16:09
2. Brad Bernhardt, senior, Ben Davis	16:13
3. Damian Sherck, senior, Elkhart Central	16:20
4. Jason Hochstedler, senior, Northwestern	16:24
5. John Warmoth, senior, Mishawaka	16:25
6. Rusty Niccum, junior, Westview	16:29
7. Clay Malayter, senior, Hebron	16:29
8. Ayron King, junior, Pike	16:30
9. Steve Casebolt, senior, Richmond	16:31
10. Evan Cooksey, sophomore, Brownsburg	16:34
11. Chad Andrews, sophomore, Northfield	16:34
12. Jason Walker, senior, Woodlan	16:35
13. Tom Taylor, senior, Portage	16:38
14. Jeff Headrick, senior, Concord	16:40
15. Jason Cussen, senior, Northfield	16:41
16. Ryan Schreiber, junior, New Prairie	16:42
17. Benjamin Norton, senior, Fort Wayne Snider	16:42
18. Joey Byrne, junior, Floyd Central	16:44
19. David Rudy, junior, Northwestern	16:46
20. Jonathan Jacob, senior, Mount Vernon	16:47
21. Jeff Glant, sophomore, Southport	16:48
22. Maurice Robinson, senior, Gary West Side	16:48
23. Matt Bliss, senior, Yorktown	16:50
24. Greg Borlik, sophomore, North Central (Indianapolis)	16:51
25. Michael Watts, sophomore, Westview	16:52