

## **Deja vu: Walton runners still rule**

Chris Whitfield - For the Journal-Constitution  
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Longtime Walton High School cross country coach Tom Williams has built a reputation at the Cobb County school of always putting championship-caliber teams on the course.

This season should be no different, even if Williams is downplaying that many of his fellow coaches are pegging the Raiders as the team to beat in Region 6-AAAAA.

"What do they know? I think there is going to be a number of quality teams this year," said Williams. "Hopefully, we will be in the mix. We certainly hope to be."

There are plenty of reasons to think that the Raiders will be in the mix after last year's second-place finish in the state meet. Even though defending state champion Sam Bryfczynski has moved on to college, Walton returns two other runners who finished in the top 10 at the state meet.

Junior Jay Heller recorded a 15:53 to finish fourth in the state last year, and senior Corey Hunter was seventh with 16:14. Add seniors Adam Bradley and James Walker, who missed his junior year with a knee injury, and the Raiders appear poised to fulfill some of their opposing coaches' predictions.

"We've been blessed to have some strong individuals in both boys and girls," Williams said. "I think that Jay and Corey will be a strong duo. I think that we all feel the expectations. It is a little bit of the old ones teaching the younger ones by example. The kids watched the older ones go through it and they know that it's now their turn."