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Norman, Harrison lead Cobb

By Greg Oshust

Marietta Daily Journal Sports Writer

CARROLLTON - Walton's Leila Norman and the Harrison girls cross country team led the way among Cobb County's girls teams at the Class AAAAA state cross country championships at Carrollton High School on Saturday.

Norman was the top Cobb individual finisher with a third-place effort and a time of 19:08.18, to finish behind state champion Jackie Drouin of Collins Hill (18:29.53) and runner-up and Drouin's Collins Hill teammate Erin Guglielmo (19:05.82).

Norman held on to second place for most of the race until Guglielmo passed her with 100 meters to go.

"I was in second for a while, but the girl from Collins Hill (Guglielmo) came out of nowhere, and she passed me in the last 100 meters," Norman said.

Harrison's Kylie Foley and Lassiter's Kathleen Williams were the other local runners in the top 10, with Foley finishing sixth (19:46.56) and Williams eighth (19:55.48).

Kennesaw Mountain's Lindsey Pickens, a top-five contender going into the race, finished a disappointing 48th (21:25.06).

Other top-10 girls finishers were South Forsyth's Jennifer Barbi (fourth, 19:22.95), Collins Hill's Alexis Nichols (fifth, 19:38.90), Peachtree Ridge's Sara Curry (seventh, 19:51.87), Collins Hill's Allyson McGinty (ninth, 20:00.73) and Grayson's Mandy Tennyson (10th, 20:06.35).

Led by Foley, Harrison scored 110 points and finished second in the team standings behind state champion Collins Hill (36). Walton finished fourth (152), and Lassiter was seventh (223).

Foley and Caroline Oshust (18th, 20:25.75) were the top-20 finishers for the Lady Hoyas.

For Harrison coach Kent Simmons, the Lady Hoyas' strong state performance was simply a matter of peaking at the right time.

"It was an awesome day," Simmons said. "The girls did a great, great job. It was our best race of the year and it was the best time to do it."

Walton also had two runners in the top 20, with Norman and Ellen Black (17th, 20:25.75) leading the Lady Raiders to their fourth-place finish.

Walton coach Tom Williams was pleased with the strong team effort by his Lady Raiders.

"We have a close team and it showed out there (Saturday)," Walton coach Tom Williams said.

"It was a good day for us."

Lassiter had two runners in the top 20 as well, with Kathleen Williams joined by Clara Densmore (15th, 20:22.95).

Campbell's Melanie Pray was the only other Cobb runner finishing in the top 20 individually, placing 16th (20:23.37).

Other Cobb teams competing were McEachern (12th, 289), Pope (14th, 360), Kennesaw Mountain (15th, 395) and Marietta (20th, 616).

goshust@mdjonline.com

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