

Vikes win regional; Lady Cards take 3rd

NILES — Thanks to a balanced effort, the Bronson High girls' cross country team won the Class C regional at Niles Brandywine Saturday.

The Vikings finished with 96 points, well ahead of runnerup Buchanan's total of 119. Kalamazoo Christian (124), Galesburg-Augusta (125) and Parchment (140) followed. By placing among the top three teams in the 13-team regional, Bronson advances to the Class C state meet Saturday at Cass City.

The regional title, the first ever for a Bronson cross country team, did not come as a surprise to Coach Keith Dykman.

"I kinda felt we had a good shot at it," said Dykman. "I was looking at Galesburg-Augusta, Kalamazoo Christian and Parchment (as the Vikings' toughest competition). I was surprised by Buchanan. Luckily their fifth runner came in 78th."

Dodie Wiler finished 11th in 20:52 to pace the Vikings. She was followed by teammates Jean Miller (16th, 21:23), Pam Smith (17th, 21:23), Heather Badgley (24th, 22:05) and Angie Cuthbert (33rd, 22:28).

Miller, the only senior placing Saturday, became the first Bronson runner to qualify for the state meet four times. Wiler, Smith and Cuthbert are freshmen and Badgley is a sophomore.

Stacy Kilburn of White Pigeon finished first in 19:01.

In the boys' race, Bronson finished 12th with 335 points and Union City was 17th with 471 points. Three Oaks River Valley won with 85 points.

L.D. Wiler led the Vikings by finishing 40th in 18:32. Darrell Vorce (61st, 19:20), Doug Anderson (83rd, 20:02), Neil Alger (84th, 20:03) and Gene Jones (86th, 20:05) were the other Bronson placers.

Union City was led by Jim Flowers' 73rd-place time of 19:40. Other Chargers runners included Brian Bartush (99th, 20:29), Rob Dow (105th, 20:46), Chris Mathis (109th, 20:58) and Brooks Blanton (119th, 21:48).

Class B at Bath

BATH — The Coldwater Lady Cards survived tough competition to place third Saturday in the Class B cross country regionals at Bath.

With six of the top 12 teams in Class B competing, fourth-ranked Coldwater finished with 110 points in qualifying for Saturday's state finals at Huron Meadows Metropark near Brighton.

Jackson Lumen Christi, the No. 1 team in the state, finished first with 71 points and third-ranked Chelsea was second with 78 points.

"It was almost as tough as the state meet," Coldwater coach Jim Bilsborrow said. "We feel very fortunate to have qualified out of this regional. The girls really came through and did what they had to do."

By placing in the top 15, Coldwater's Jill Strawser and Dawn Valle were named to the All-Region team. Strawser finished third in 19:36 while Valle was 11th in 20:19.

Other Lady Card placers were Joan Monroe (18th, 20:59), Tammy Huntley (30th, 21:39) and Mary Kay Nowak (52nd, 22:18). Joy Thayer (69th, 23:03) and Robin Brodt (79th, 23:30) also competed.

Heather Huhn of Mason finished first in 19:15.5.

Coldwater wasn't as fortunate in the boys' race, finishing in fifth place, just eight points shy of advancing to the state meet.

Okemos finished first with 53 points, followed by Jackson Lumen Christi (92), Hillsdale (132), Ionia (135) and Coldwater (140). Twenty teams competed.

It was a good day for Cardinals Shane Finney and Tad Thayer, however. Finney finished 15th in 17:14 and was named to the All-Region team, while Thayer came in 17th in 17:15. Both qualified for the Class B individual race Saturday.

Other Coldwater placers included Brian Licht (20th, 17:17), Jeff Rider (32nd, 17:39) and Pat Angle (56th, 18:15). Jim Barnes (86th, 18:54) and Paul Brown (109th, 19:30) also competed.

Okemos took the first three spots, led by Brandon Brownell's winning time of 16:28.

Class C at Bath

BATH — The Quincy Orioles finished sixth in the Class C girls' cross country regionals here Saturday.

Bath and DeWitt tied for first with 51 points and Quincy had 165.

Cary Coonce led the Orioles by placing 15th in 21:49. Teammates Loretta Tobolske (27th, 22:36), Dawn Russell (35th, 23:10), Lori Baker (36th, 23:13) and Shirley Delaney (52nd, 25:09) followed.

Quincy didn't have enough boys to field a complete team. Scott Marvin finished 83rd in 20:00 to pace the Orioles. He was followed by Shane Russell (85th, 20:04), Joe Stevens (90th, 20:29) and Donny Banker (100th, 20:59).