

# 'Amazing' Scots win 3rd in row

*Caledonia girls Class B champs again*

By Steve Kaminski  
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West Catholic's Len Skrycki has been coaching cross country for 33 years, and he said he had never seen anything like it.

In his three-plus decades of coaching, Skrycki doesn't ever recall a state finals meet being held in the cold and snow like the runners in Saturday's Class B meet had to endure. But the veteran coach also said he has never quite seen a team as dominant as the girls from Caledonia, which wrapped up its third consecutive state championship.

The Fighting Scots placed all five runners in the top nine, totaled 28 points and breezed to an easy win at the Grand Rapids Golf Club. The closest team to the Fighting Scots was Gaylord, which finished a distant second with 190 points.

"There have been dominant teams before, but most teams had two or three top runners," Skrycki said. "But Caledonia is a team with five top runners, and that's amazing."

Boys and girls team races, plus individual races were run through the golf course Saturday, marking the conclusion of the 1995 cross country season.

The Fighting Scots were the big favorites entering Saturday's meet, having gone undefeated in the regular season, followed by wins at the conference and regional meets. Caledonia coach Dave Hodgkinson said his runners approached the meet like any other.

"The girls were a little excited before the meet because everyone makes a big deal about it," Hodgkinson said. "But we try not to make a big deal about it, it's just another race. We just try to go out and run as fast as we can, regardless of the meet. It's always nice to run well, and this is what happens when you do."

The good news for Caledonia is that it won another state title this fall. What may be even better news is that the Fighting Scots will graduate only one of its top seven runners.

Junior Keri Bloem led the Fighting Scots when she placed third overall in 18 minutes, eight seconds. Elizabeth Fortuna was fourth in 18:14, Shannon Houseman fifth, also in 18:14, Brooke Wierenga seventh in 18:41 and Sarah Parbel ninth in 18:51. In addition, Audrey Warner was 13th for Caledonia, and Barbara Warner 32nd.

It wasn't a Caledonia runner who placed highest among area runners in the team race, though. Coopersville sophomore Julie David beat out the Caledonia contingent with a second-place finish in 18:03, leading the Broncos to a 13th-place finish overall.

Fremont was the highest finishing area team in the boys race with a fifth place, while Caledonia was eighth. Cedar Springs, which qualified for state for the seventh-straight year, was 15th overall. Senior Robert Curtis of Warren Woods was the winner of the individual race in 15:26, followed by Eugen Lebron of Albion in 15:34. Hudsonville's John Hazebrook and West Catholic's Jon Purwin recorded top 10 finishes, placing sixth and seventh, respectively.

The girls individual race was won by Kate Fall of Vassar, who went 18:26. Freshman Cami Moll of Hudsonville was sixth.