

<HTML><BODY BGCOLOR="#ffffff"><FONT BACK="#ffffff" SIZE=3
PTSIZE=10>They're off and running

Saturday, September 2, 2000

Key Dates: Sept. 12 - TVC West Jamboree at Bullock Creek, TVC East Jamboree at Frankenmuth, NEMC Jamboree at Gladwin, GAC Jamboree at Lake Fenton; Sept. 19 - SVL Jamboree at Heritage; Sept. 20 - CSAA Jamboree at Central Montcalm; Sept. 23 - Delta Invitational; Sept. 26 - TVC West Jamboree at Freeland, TVC East Jamboree at Birch Run, GAC Meet at New Lothrop; Sept. 28 - Tuscola County Meet at Mayville; Oct. 3 - SVL Jamboree at Delta College; Oct. 4 - CSAA Jamboree at Ithaca, JPC Jamboree at Roscommon; Oct. 7 - Midland County Meet at Bellevue, Heritage Invitational; Oct. 10 - TVC East Jamboree at Vassar, TVC West Jamboree at Swan Valley; Oct. 14 - Reese Invitational; Oct. 17 - GTC Meet at Reese; Oct. 18 - CSAA Jamboree at Lakeview, JPC Jamboree at Beaverton; Oct. 19 - GTC Meet at Mayville, SVL Jamboree in Grand Blanc; Oct. 21 - Saginaw County Meet at Frankenmuth, Thumb Area Meet at Caro, NEMC Meet; Oct. 24 - TVC Meets at Bullock Creek-Millington; Oct. 28 - Regionals; Nov. 4 - State Finals.

Top Returning Runners: Three-time Freeland all-stater Niki Suitor returns for her senior season after finishing fifth in the Class C state finals a year ago. As good as Suitor is, junior teammate Myra Markey should challenge her for the top spot in a lot of meets this season.

Markey is a two-time all-stater in the 1600-meter run, and holds the school record in the event as well. Freeland coach Dan Craig was granted the luxury of using Markey for Saturday invitationals although she plays basketball during the week.

"It was never our intent to take her out of basketball, because that's where she belongs," Craig said. "But you'll see that 10 of or 16 meets are on Saturdays."

Markey bested the field of 128 runners at the Benzie Central Invitational in the Falcons' first meet of the season. Suitor finished third at the same meet.

St. Louis junior Shannon Stanglewicz returns with the reputation she left with coaches after finishing fourth in the Class C state finals a year ago. The Sharks also fared well as a team finishing eighth.

On the girls side for Valley Lutheran, three-time state meet qualifier Hilary Ortner returns for her senior season. Ortner has medaled in the past two Class C state tournaments and hopes to up the ante this season.

Also the St. Louis boys team returns 5-of-7 runners from last season's fourth-place finish in the Class C state finals. Expected to lead the way is senior Jeff Luehm who finished just out of all-state contention at the Class C state finals.

Nouvel Catholic Central returns senior captain and four-year runner Brian Clark while sophomore Scott Allen spent some time as the Panthers' No. 1 runner last season and is expected to do the same this year.

Valley Lutheran didn't qualify for last season's Class C state finals for the first time in almost seven years. Senior Chris Schiemann, who medaled for the Chargers in the Class C state finals a year ago, hopes to help them avoid that problem this time around. Senior Brian Bender was a state qualifier as well.

Sophomore Noel Ortega laid claims on Swan Valley's top spot at the beginning of the season, while all-conference and all-county sophomore runner Kallee Wregglesworth just missed qualifying for the Class B state meet a year ago.

Junior Armon Mahajerin is the front runner for the young Heritage boys team's No. 1 spot, while junior Michelle Noble qualified for the Class A state meet on the girls side a year ago.

The Michigan Lutheran Seminary boys team returns a pair of letterwinners in junior Matt DeBeau and sophomore Marshall Milbrath while the girls return seniors Meagan Naumann and Tara Barancik.

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