

Gatos girls run to another CCS cross country crown

Middlecoff first girl to claim CCS title for Wildcats

By DICK SPARRER

A year ago, Miranda Middlecoff spent the fall pointing to one specific goal—to win the County Junior High School cross country title.

This year, she set her sights a little higher.

Middlecoff reached her goal last year when she raced to a first place finish in the county for Fisher Junior High. And this year she did it again, but on an even larger scale.

Middlecoff, though just a freshman, romped to the individual championship last Saturday at the Central Coast Section Division II finals, leading the Los Gatos High School girls' cross country team to a title in the process.

The outstanding Gatos freshman became the first girl in Los Gatos cross country history to win an individual CCS title, and what an impressive history that represents.

Los Gatos has now won five CCS championships in the last nine years, and the Cats have finished second in each of the other four seasons.

The Cats rolled up a low 34 points to win the crown this fall with Gunderson a distant second at 98 and Leland third at 112.

"We really put it all together," said Los Gatos head coach Willie Harmatz. "We scored 34 points, and that's the lowest score in Los Gatos and CCS history."

Leading the Cats to that impressive finish were a couple of freshmen, two sophomores and just one senior.

Middlecoff topped the list of Gatos—and CCS—finishers when she covered the 2.95-mile Crystal Springs course in a lifetime best 18:28 to win the individual title. Her time

was the second fastest in LG history (Monica Daly ran 18:06 on the course in 1983) and she is the first Wildcat to win a Section title since Scott LaForce won the boys' top spot in 1985.

Teammate Holly Malander, also a freshman, followed Middlecoff across the finish line, finishing third for the Cats in a lifetime best 19:30. Malander was second to Middlecoff just a year ago at those County Jr. High finals.

Sophomore Meg Veeder, who had won the CCS 800 meters title last spring as a freshman, finished third for the Cats and sixth overall in a life best 20:40 and soph Rosanna Saffaie was eighth overall in a season best 20:51, despite being slowed by a nagging illness.

Amy Graff, the lone senior in the crowd, rounded out the top five for Gatos by finishing 18th in the CCS field in a season best 21:40.

Sophomore Cathy Landers ended up 22nd for the Cats at 21:55 and senior Isabel Rucker was 24th at 22:09.

Los Gatos girls win again

They take Division II cross-country title

By Dave Payne
Mercury News Staff Writer

Los Gatos' girls won a CCS cross-country title for the fifth time in nine years. They finished second the other four years.

It would appear the Wildcats' success will continue. They won Saturday's race by 64 points over second-place Gunderson with two freshmen, two sophomores and a senior.

Girls' winner were freshman Miranda Middlecoff (18:29) of Los Gatos

The 5-foot-6, 104-pound Middlecoff, ranked fifth in the CCS in the Mercury News coaches' poll, ran away from the field, beating second-place Maria Pleyte of Hollister by 48 seconds. Pleyte also is a freshman.

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— Willie Harmatz,
Los Gatos girls'
cross-country coach

Los Gatos freshman Holly Malander (19:30) finished third, and sophomores Meg Veeder (20:40) and Rosanna Saffaie (20:56) sixth and eighth, respectively. Amy Graff (21:36) placed 18th.

"This is without a doubt the best young girls' team I've had," said Willie Harmatz, in his 13th year as the Wildcats' coach. "Miranda and Holly have fantastic potential."

Girls

Team results — Los Gatos 34 (1, Miranda Middlecoff 18:29; 3, Holly Malander 19:30; 6, Meg Veeder 20:40; 8, Rosanna Saffaie 20:56; 18, Amy Graff 21:36). 2, Gunderson 98 (5, Mona Leon 20:32; 9, Sam Caceres 21:00; 14, Angela Lermus 21:20; 31, Alvi Bellow 22:26; 43, Meron Negash 22:55). 3, Leland 112; 4, Hollister 124. 5, Salinas 140. 6, Monterey 169; 7, Mt. Pleasant 181; 8, Woodside 212. 9, Wilcox 224. 10, Santa Clara 247. 11, Piedmont Hills 286. 12, Alisal 320.

Individual (state-meet qualifiers) — Middlecoff; 2, Maria Pleyte (Hollister) 19:17; 3, Malander; 4, Vanessa Fuchs (Leland) 20:19; 5, Leon; 6, Veeder; 7, Kim Lanterman (Burlingame) 20:44; 8, Saffaie; 9, Caceres; 10, Jennifer Buehler (Monterey) 21:03; 11, Dee Dee Chavez (Hollister) 21:14.

191