



The Bulldog Bark

The Voice of Alhambra Cross Country
"Where Intensity is Not a Crime"

Saturday, November 23, 2019



North Coast Section Meet Of Champions

Hayward High School
Saturday, November 23, 2019

Division IV Girls

Team Scores

1	Piedmont	65
2	Miramonte	80
3	Bishop O'Dowd	111
4	St Mary's College	116
5	Marin Catholic	118
6	Acalanes	139
7	Sir Francis Drake	140
8	Analy	222
9	Albany	247
10	Arcata	262
11	Ygnacio Valley	319
12	Alhambra	366
13	Encinal	381
14	Eureka	417
15	Terra Linda	423
16	Moreau Catholic	430
17	Fortuna	454
18	San Rafael	464
19	Hercules	474

(130 finishers)

1.	Audrey Allen (Mira)	17:27	
24.	Kylee Phillips	20:12	PR: 1:23
69.	Kadyn Brown	22:00	PR 2:48
88.	Skye McKinsey	22:30	PR 4:11
94.	Alexia Hisquierdo	22:43	PR :19
101.	Jenny Duncan	23:05	PR 2:17
107.	Mia Padrique	23:36	PR 2:07
116.	Kaelyn Nguyen	24:19	

The girls had a very good day at the races. The mindset was one of controlled nervousness. We had to make a game-day adjustment when Reyna came down with a fever, and Mia was promoted from alternate to competitor.

We had a few team goals for this race. Individual improvement was clearly one goal. Team improvement was clearly another objective, as we could finish the season showing that we had arrived as a competitive unit. Both sets of goals were achieved in strong fashion.

Kylee stormed out hard as usual, and was perhaps a bit surprised to see that she was in the top 20 of the race from the start. The rest of the girls, although well back of Kylee, were in a great little pack with Kadyn

and Skye narrowly ahead of Alexia with Mia and Jenny on their tails. Kaelyn's shins acted up to hobble her efforts.

Mid-race saw this team effort still in effect. Kylee was right in the mix of the second pack of runners behind the breakaway leaders. Kadyn had recently adopted a race strategy of planned surges during the race, and this kept her right in the middle of the race. Skye was determined to keep Kadyn in sight and was not far behind her. Alexia was battling right behind Skye. Jenny had moved up as the race progressed, as is her wont, and had moved in behind Alexia. Mia stuck with Jenny, and Kaelyn was reduced to holding a pace with her shin pain.



Skye and Alexia are a nice tandem in the first mile.

Kylee had the fine finish to nail down an excellent effort. Kadyn saw the straightaway finish and turned on the jets. Skye was strong to the line with a huge PR, and Alexia was right behind her. Jenny came dashing in with some dramatic elbow-bumping with an opponent. Mia topped off her good race as an emergency fill-in. Kaelyn gutted out her finish on tweaked shins.



Kylee caps off a very good season with a top finish.

The huge PR's tell the story. For a team that consistently was the trailing team at our league center meets, and never ran as a complete varsity in any invitational, this squad certainly came together today. Kylee moves to #16 on the All-Time list for this course. The girls (except the injured Kaelyn) all had excellent if not magnificent PR's. This was an excellent culminating event of a season by a fine exhibition of individual intensity and team effort.

Great job, ladies.

Division IV Boys

Team Scores

1	Sir Francis Drake	44
2	Acalanes	67
3	Bishop O'Dowd	149
4	Alhambra	158
5	Piedmont	206
6	San Rafael	214
7	Marin Catholic	231
8	Moreau Catholic	233
9	Miramonte	263
10	St Mary's College	290
11	Eureka	302
12	Arcata	311
13	Terra Linda	313 (103)
14	Albany	313 (107)
15	Fortuna	385
16	John F. Kennedy (Fre)	386
17	Ygnacio Valley	455
18	San Marin	475
19	Analy	481
20	Hercules	527
21	De Anza	569
22	Pinole Valley	696

(154 finishers)

1.	Amir Barkan (Drake)	15:16	
19.	Colby Thompson	16:27	PR :21
27.	Carson Edwards	16:49	
31.	Tyler Allan	16:52	PR :19
35.	Nolin Searls	16:59	PR :35
50.	Ryan McCauley	17:21	
63.	Sam DiBetta	17:32	
112.	Cristian Ruiz	18:38	

Oh so close. 9 points away from the State Meet.

But the story has a bit more than just that tag line to it. Having looked surprisingly good all season, there were a few setbacks along the way. Carson's anemia knocked him out of our team picture for almost a month. In that interim, the team time

grouping closed up to keep the squad competitive. Our trailing pack of JV and FS runners never did close the gap to the varsity, so we were reliant on just a handful of boys for varsity. Then Ben came down with a fever the day before the race to reduce that number even more.

Team spirit prevailed, and the mental toughness came out. Where other squads and teams might have folded their tents and skulked away, this group dug in and produced a quality effort despite adversity.

The race went out, and the Drake boys were in charge from the get-go. They strung out the race early and pushed the pace hard. The Acalanes boys rallied mid race to easily take the second place. The competition for third was on.

Carson and Ryan set the early pace for us in about 25th place, with Tyler, Nolin, and Colby on places behind. Sam, with the recently promoted Cristian, sat not far behind them.

As the race entered the 2nd mile, the bright yellow retro jerseys had coalesced into a very visible cluster of Bulldogs. We looked good here as a team.



The team pack at the halfway point in the race is a solid yellow blur.

However, Bishop O'Dowd had two runners well ahead of our pack, and their trailing runners were right with our group. Piedmont was lurking in the picture as well.



Colby made his move strongly at the two mile mark to take over the team lead.

As the race continued to string out, Colby made his patented stealth move to push into our team lead, with Carson and Tyler shoulder-to-shoulder 10 seconds back. Nolin kept pace steps behind, and Ryan was 15 seconds back of that. Our team grouping, although stretching out, was still strong. O'Dowd, by this point, had moved its back pack well into our group, and was clearly a step up on us at that point.

Piedmont had made several mid-race surges and was only points behind.

The last far loop and the hill saw some twists. The season-long leader for O'Dowd was in trouble and had dropped back a dozen or more places. Colby took off to challenge the lead pack. Carson, drawing on some remarkable determination, also made a strong move over the last hill, dragging Tyler right behind him.

Nolin found himself in a tight pack of competitors and showed some unbefore seen sprint speed at the finish. Ryan recovered from a mid race slump to thunder in ahead of the last scoring runners for O'Dowd and Piedmont to contribute strongly to the team effort. Sam, in a resurgent effort, was only a second behind the last Piedmont scorer. Cristian ran out of gas but still was able to beat 43 runners.

The final result was in doubt until Coach Brewer pulled some rank and peered over the official timer's shoulder as he pushed the "Print" button. That was 20 or so minutes packed with adrenaline, anxiety, and angst. What a ride.



Carson, Tyler, and Nolin finish within 8 places of each other to form the bulk of our scoring.

Notes and Commentary:

1. Good end to a good season

There is always room for the "what ifs" at the conclusion of a season, but there is always the necessity of appreciating the season for what it actually was, as well. And it was a very good season by all accounts.

2. Strong league

The NCS championships are a good gauge of our own DAL's overall prowess as a collection of pretty good runners.

- College Park sends 2 girls and a boy as individuals to the State Meet.

- Campolindo had two individual winners in the D-III races, and a 1st team (girls) and 2nd team (boys). Northgate and Concord send individual boys to State. Las Lomas sends a girl.

- Miramonte had the individual winner in D-IV girls, and the 2nd place team. The Acalanes boys took 2nd in D-IV, and send a girl individual to State.

DAL representation at State:

Teams: Campolindo
Acalanes
Miramonte

Individuals:
Acalanes
College Park
Concord
Las Lomas
Northgate

7 different DAL teams at the State Meet - - now that's a strong competitive group.

3. Top finish regardless - -

The sharp eyes of Joel Timbrell, Alhambra running historian, were quick to point out that the 4th place finish by the boys was the highest EVER NCS finish by a boys team in the modern State Meet era.

4. The 84:31 team time recorded today by the boys' team is the #3 time on the Hayward course. The boys' notched the #2 time earlier this year at the Farmer Invitational.

5. Hidden Data - 1

Kylee improved vis-a-vis her DAL D-IV competitors. At the DAL finals, she was 1:15 behind the 3rd Miramonte girl. Today she was :18 behind her. And by the same token, Kylee also closed time against Audrey Allen, the excellent Miramonte star who won both the DAL and the D-IV Championships. The DAL gap between Kylee and Audrey was 4:13, and today it was 2:45.

6. Hidden Data - 2

At the DAL Finals, Kayden was 2:12 behind the #5 Miramonte girl. Today she shrank that gap to :50.

7. Hidden Data - 3

As long as we're picking on that #5 Miramonte girl, Skye's differential to her went from DAL 2:51 to NCS 1:27.

8. The season shapes up:

This season started as a work-in-progress for the boys, and a completely blank slate for the girls. A very young squad in terms of either age or experience or both plus a single varsity veteran was how the boys' varsity started out. The girls' team was but for one all rookies with no distance background whatsoever.

There were lots of wrinkles in the progression of the season. Even though the boys' varsity team took off right away, the internal order and finishes seemed to

change weekly. The lower divisions of JV and FS were segmented by times almost immediately, so we had a significant gap between the varsity and non-varsity runners. Not that this was a bad thing, but it created a thinner depth chart than preferable.

The girls were ground-level rookies, which meant that it took longer to get them accustomed to the daily rigor and challenge of workouts, the routines and expectations of races, and the confidence that can only come with experience and lots of workouts.

It took the course of the bulk of the season to truly unleash a solid team concept of willingness to explore the limits of physical and psychological discomfort that this sport demands, but by today's results it appears that we achieved that goal.

9. A sneak look at next year - -

We are graduating only one senior boy and one senior girl from this year's varsity teams. At first blush that would seem to indicate improvement and better championship results. Reality and experience however have a way of interfering.

It will take more of the same - - challenging workouts, focused intensity, elimination or reduction of distractions, attention to nutrition and sleep requirements, and a serious take-no-prisoners attitude towards it all. Nothing is automatic in distance running.

10. Athletes on the rise - -

It's not just that we are returning almost all of our current varsity - - it's that we also bring back all of our FS boys and most of our JV's too. These younger and newer runners hopefully will invest themselves of this year's experience and aim themselves towards the workouts and improvements.

The girls also, rookies that they are, all made solid improvements during the season. Hopefully we will have more than 12 girls, and the newer girls next year will have the example of the experience of this year's squad to follow.

10. And all those happy parents - -

We are blessed to have a great group of families to help with all the multiple needs of a team sport. The transportation, the snacks, the cheering and support, the readiness to volunteer . . . this really is an excellent collection of folks that help make the fabric of the team all the more closely woven.

11. And the tee-shirt sales - -

Wow . . . when the volunteers showed up, the line of eager customers was already snaking well along the side of the Hayward gym. Our crew, plus the girl's team, had a great time vending the garments to the jostling crowd.



Bulldog volunteers taking care of business in the souvenir booth.

And we sold out of almost everything by the end of the 6 hours of merchandise sales. The hot item this year was the pink beanie. At the last estimate, we were close to \$25K in total sales. Our commission is 5% so that means we just might earn \$1,200 or so. Nice fundraiser, and fun too.

Thanks to all the many hands who put in the time and effort to make this a successful effort and a profitable one. We'll do it again next year.

Awards Night

Wednesday December 4

6:00 p.m.

Alhambra HS Library

Recognitions

We will have our annual Awards Night to celebrate what has been an exceptionally successful season. We want all athletes and families to be present for this night of acknowledgement and accolades.

Potluck

Stay tuned for notifications of the details of the potluck.

See you all there !!



Former runner (and former assistant coach) Evan Quigley makes a surprise visit to encourage the boys at the starting line.



Happy families yuck it up before the races.

Winter Running Starts December 2

And to stay in shape for track in the spring, we are offering winter distance workouts daily after school at 3:12. We'll continue the daily runs, with a break for Christmas, up until the start of the track season. Check with Coach Brewer.

Track Starts February 10 on the track

As distance runners, we know how easy it is to get out of shape. And we also know that running is easier with teammates. That's why we want a group to meet daily to offer that.

So let's not take too much time off - - the Thanksgiving week is plenty - - and let's get down to business again.

Summer Running Starts in June

And for those of you who plan that far ahead, our 2020 cross country campaign for glory begins in early June. The exact date is TBD, but be sure to mark off your calendar.

As those of you with experience know, over 2/3 of the total season success comes from all those summer miles you pile up. So if we want more success next season, it's a good idea to get more miles in next summer to make that success even better.