

SPORTS



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Robinson leads Gunn girls to division title in cross country

by Ari Kaye / Palo Alto Weekly

Gunn senior runner Sarah Robinson capped off her league cross-country career with her best performance ever on the rolling 2.95-mile Crystal Springs layout in Belmont on Tuesday.

Robinson finished first in the El Camino Division of the girls' SCVAL Cross County Championships with a time of 17:04, helping her varsity team win the overall league crown.

Including Robinson, three Gunn girls placed in the top 10 and the team scored 41 points to win by a comfortable 16-point margin over second-place Mountain View. Palo Alto finished third with 72 points.

The Gunn and Paly boys tied for second place with 89 points apiece, with the Titans earning a tiebreaker to get that spot. First-place Los Altos placed an astonishing six runners in the top 10 and won easily with 26 points.

Paly junior runner Lucas Matison led the way in the boys' race, taking first with a 15:30 time.

It was Robinson, however, who shined brightest on the warm afternoon as she remained unbeaten in seven races this season.

Her time was a personal best on the course and established an El Camino Division meet record, breaking the 17:31 by former Gunn standout Tori Tyler in 2004. Robinson's time also is the ninth-fastest ever on the course and makes her the No. 8 all-time girls' performer.

She finished the race with no other runner in sight, as the next-fastest time came from Lauren Jacob of Los Altos, who finished in 17:49.

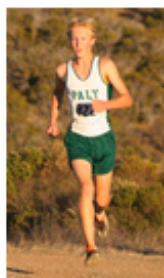
"I'm pretty happy about the time," a smiling Robinson said afterwards. "I brought myself out at a decent pace, not too fast. I started to push towards the end of the race, and that was pretty much the strategy today."

Even Robinson's coach, PattiSue Plumer, could not help but marvel at Robinson's impressive feat.

"It's remarkable; it's hard to understand how good that (time) is," Plumer said. "I'm just lucky to get to coach her."



Gunn senior Sarah Robinson won individual honors and helped the Titans win the SCVAL El Camino Division title in cross country on Tuesday at Crystal Springs in Belmont. Photo by Malcolm Slaney.



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In the boys' race, Gunn was led by Thomas Rasmussen, who finished 11th with a 16:39 time. Antonio Puglisi and Noah Krigel both finished in the top 20, as well, finishing 17th and 18th with times of 17:14 and 17:16, respectively.

For the Paly boys, Matison's first-place effort was the main propeller of the team, with a 16th-place finish from Aaron Chandler and a 20th-place finish from freshman **Kent Slaney**, who ran despite battling a painful hip flexor injury.

Plumer, who coaches both the boys and girls at Gunn, was very happy with the overall performance of both of her teams in the meet, and placed some of the success of both squads on the tenacity of her girls.