


Cross-country preview: racing to victory

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After both boys' and girls' cross-country teams placed outside of state championship qualification last year at the Central Coast Section (CCS) finals, the two teams are looking to improve this season. Everyone has their sights set on one main goal: to finally qualify for the state championship.

"This year, I'd really like to make it to state," boys' coach Kelsey Feeley said. "We were one off last year and [if we had] a healthy team going into CCS finals, I think things would have turned out a little bit differently."

Girls' coach Paul Jones believes that the main team that will make states a challenge for the Vikings this year is Monta Vista.

Kent Slaney ('17) feels that the coveted state competition is well within reach.

"Most of our varsity runners have stayed on the team," Slaney said. "With everyone a year older, it's going to be a lot better than last year."

With only a few returning seniors on both teams, their strength lies in their up-and-coming younger runners as well as the depth of their returners.

"I'm excited about [the season] if we can manage to stay healthy," Jones said. "[We have] a pretty deep group that runs quite well...we probably have twelve to fifteen runners that are better than most cross country teams around."

The girls' team is looking to improve team dynamics along with their running skills.

"The captains are trying to involve the entire team and organize a lot of team bonding events," Portia Barrientos ('16) said.

The boys already seem to have an inclusive team attitude, even with all the new runners.

"I like the camaraderie between the guys," Feeley said. "It's not too clique-y which you can find a lot of times on a big team. It seems like a lot of the boys are open and willing to meet each other and get to know new people, and I think that's a huge asset to the team."

Although the boys' league is usually competitive between many different teams, the girls have their sights set on beating crosstown rival Gunn.

"Gunn has a lot of depth," Sarah Wang ('16) said. "They're definitely our main competitors, even though they lost their fastest runner."

Players to watch for include Katie Foug ('15) and Bryn Carlson ('16) for the girls' team, and Lucas Novak ('15) and Slaney for the boys.


Both teams kick off their seasons next Thursday, September 4th, with a meet at Gunn.



Malcolm Slaney

Boys' runners Kent Slaney ('17), Lucas Novak ('15) and Kai Oda ('17) start off their SCVAL championship race at Crystal Springs. The boys went on to qualify for CCS finals last year.

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