

TELL US ABOUT YOU I spend a lot of time with horses and teach them the fundamentals of riding.” Anastasia Mitchell (11)

GOING^{the} extra mile

Transgender athlete overcomes obstacles

While competing in a sport with two gendered teams that participate at the same time, Wes Hanes (11) had to tangle with a new challenge this season that his teammates did not.

Last season, Hanes raced for the girls team. After changing his name and pronouns, he could potentially switch to racing against the boys.

“I read our school codes, and I could have switched if I wanted to, but at the beginning of the year I was still sorting out how I was feeling and how much I wanted to transition,” he said.

In the end, he stuck with racing with the girls and never asked the coaches to switch teams.

“I knew that racing in the guys’ races would be ten times harder, and I would definitely have a disadvantage,” Hanes said. “I also felt more of a connection and family and acceptance with the girls team, so I just decided to stick with it.”

Hanes’ teammates and coaches adapted and respected his name change.

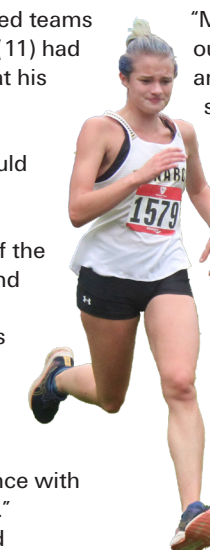


photo by roxy garrard

“My coaches are aware of my name change and our assistant coaches are aware of my pronouns and try their best to use them correctly,” he said. “Going into summer running in June I was anxious to tell my coaches my new name, but I told my friends. They started calling me Wes and eventually our coach asked if I preferred my dead name or Wes.”

Since then, it’s just been the norm for him to use his actual name.

This experience presented challenges, but cross country actually helped him.

“If it’s a really rough day or a rough week when I’m running, I can clear my thoughts,” he said. “I can think through and process my emotions a lot more clearly. And then, when you do those really hard workouts or you do really well in a race, you get that rush of adrenaline, that feeling that you can do anything. It is absolutely amazing.”

STILL bonding Runners connect with teammates



photo by maya raulf

“I love traveling to away meets. It’s a great opportunity to get closer with your teammates.”

Jordyn Phillips (10)

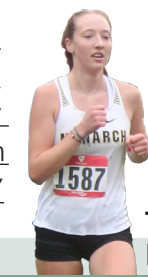


photo by roxy garrard

“We went to Arizona for Nike cross regionals, and we bonded with upperclassmen.”

Tatem McGushin (10)



photo by roxy garrard



photo by maya raulf

SEE YOU AT THE FINISH LINE

At the meet on the Sept. 10 Layla Fisher (11), Sofie Donker (10) and Amanda Rampy (12) head to the finish line together. All three girls persevered and finished the race strong.

CLOSE CALL Battling for first place, Ayden Schott (12) heads off an opposing runner. Even though it was close, Schott came out on top. “I decided that I wanted to run one last

year before I go to college, because why not? And it was worth it,” he said. **FAST AND FURIOUS** After finishing a long run, Alex Persichetti (12) pushes his limits. Even though he was exhausted he still performed well. “I’ve been doing cross country for four years,” he said. “The last year was the best, I got to cheer my teammates on at State, and I beat a lot of my personal records.” **ALMOST THERE** In the final moments of the race, Wes Hanes (11) goes above and beyond to beat the competition. Hanes was able to break away from his opponents, and beat them down the home stretch of the race.



photo by roxy garrard



photo by maya raulf

Q & A

What is your favorite memory this year?

Mark Dombek (11)

“I beat my record. I felt proud because my training paid off.”

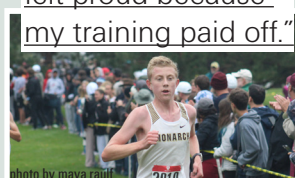


photo by maya raulf

Ella Huettl (10)

“After races, we go to dinner and have some team bonding.”

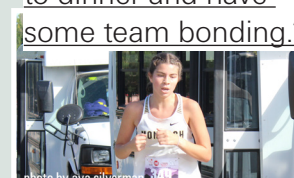


photo by aya silverman

Alex Persichetti (12)

“We went to camp and ran for five days. It was great.”

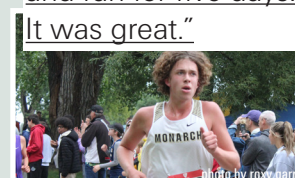


photo by roxy garrard

Avery Richardson (12)

“I’ve always tried to go sub 20 minutes, and I finally did it.”



photo by maya raulf

Ayden Schott (12)



photo by roxy garrard

For everyone who is interested in joining, don’t be discouraged. Everybody has their starting point and everybody can have loads of improvement, so don’t be afraid to join. Just take those first steps and go from there.”