

Ed Fox Fox's Trail



Area collegiate harriers in conference meets today

While the prep harriers will be headed to Scioto Downs Race Track today, many former standout runners from the area will be competing in conference championships on the collegiate level.

Ottawa Hills Golf Course in Toledo will be the site for the Mid-American Conference Championships. The women will step off at 11 a.m. with the men to follow at noon.

Bowling Green State University will be looking to win the conference title for the third straight year.

Jessica LaFene of Perkins will be one of the top runners for the Falcons. LaFene, a junior, was second overall last year in her first MAC meet since transferring from North Carolina.

Three area runners are members of the BGSU men's team including senior Craig Nieset of Fremont St. Joe, freshman Austin Chapin of Norwalk and freshman Jeremiah Wagner of Fremont Ross.

Tonya La Vigne of Norwalk will be running for the University of Akron. She is also a freshman.

Wright State University will host the Midwestern Collegiate Conference Championships at 1 p.m. today.

Cleveland State University will be one of the competing teams in the meet.

Stephanie Hall of Margaretta, a junior at CSU, was chosen as the conference cross country runner of the week following a 10th place showing at the Eastern Michigan University Classic last weekend.

She posted a time of 19:35 on the 5,000 meter course. Her best time of the season has been 19:00 at the McDonald's Bobcat Invitational hosted by Ohio University. She was 13th in that race.

Hall has been a consistent force on the course and in the classroom during her career at CSU. She has been the No. 1 runner for the Vikings in all six of their meets. And, as a freshman and sophomore, she earned Athletic Academic honors while majoring in Graphic/Fine Arts.

Melissa Van Sickle, a graduate of St. Mary's Central Catholic, is a sophomore runner on the University of Dayton women's cross country team.

She is one of the top runners for the Flyers who will compete in the Atlantic 10 Conference Championships at George Washington University in Leesburg, Va., at 10:45 a.m., today.

Becky Riggie is a graduate of Margaretta High School and is a member of the Youngstown State University team which will compete in the Mid-Continent Conference Championships which are being hosted the University of Buffalo.

New London's Keith Landis and **Derrick Marsh** are members of the YSU men's team along with Jeremiah Smith of Fremont Ross.

Tiffin's Hedges-Boyer Park, which hosted the prep regional championships last Saturday, will be the site for the Ohio Athletic Conference Championships with Heidelberg College being the host school at 11 a.m. today.

Baldwin-Wallace College will be looking to win the women's title for the sixth straight year and 10th time in 12 years. Sandusky graduate Janell Mills is a junior with the Yellow Jackets.

Heidelberg has several area runners including sophomore D.J. Hensinger (Seneca East), senior Matt Henning (Fremont Ross), sophomore Russell Petersen (Danbury) and freshman Jonathan Burroughs (St. Joe) with the men's team along with senior Sara Matlage (Norwalk), sophomore Jamie Chapman (Fremont St. Joe) and freshman Kelly Elmlinger (Seneca East) with the women's team.

Earlham College will host the North Coast Athletic Conference Championships today.

It will be the 14th annual meet for the conference with Earlham and Wittenberg sharing the men's title last year and Wooster won the women's crown. Allegheny and Denison appear to be the strongest men's teams with Kenyon, Wooster and Oberlin expected to challenge. Case Western Reserve, Denison and Kenyon look to have the edge in a tightly-packed women's field.

Malone College in Canton will host the Mid-Ohio Conference Championships.

There are four area women running with Rio Grande in the meet including **junior Leslie Bales** and **sophomore Beth Bales** (Margaretta) along with sophomore Tesia Cole (Seneca East) and sophomore April Nickoli (Western Reserve).

Malone College men are ranked fourth in the nation in the NAIA while the Malone women are ranked 12th.

Buddy Kimmet (Seneca East) is a junior with the Malone men's team and is one of the scorers for the team in most meets this season.

The University of Findlay has a trio of area women on the cross country team including sophomore Kelly Taylor (Clyde) and freshmen twins Sarah and Laura Ray (Bellevue).

After going 12-4 last week, the season record stands at 107-32 for 77 percent. Here are this week's picks with home team in CAPS:

Harvard (5-1) over Dartmouth (5-1), 27-17 -- Both are undefeated in the Ivy League at 3-0. Harvard has the edge both with offense and defense.

Penn (3-3) over Yale (1-5), 31-7 -- The Quakers grab a share of second place in the Ivy with Huron's Mark Van Meter helping the defense.

SYRACUSE (5-3) over West Virginia (6-1), 38-27 -- The Mountaineers are unable to slow down the high-powered Orange offense.

AUBURN (7-1) over Mississippi State (5-2), 27-13 -- Mississippi State just doesn't have enough offensive punch to stay with the Tigers.

FLORIDA (6-1) over Georgia (6-1), 35-20 -- With a win, the Gators will clinch a spot in the SEC championship game. They have already beaten Tennessee which must hope Florida loses again and that won't happen against Vanderbilt (3-5) and South Carolina (5-3).

FLORIDA STATE (7-0) over North Carolina St. (3-4), 42-13 -- No looking ahead for the Seminoles, who visit unbeaten North Carolina next week in this year's ACC headliner.

KENTUCKY (4-4) over Louisiana State (5-2), 34-31 -- Couch leads Wildcats to surprising win. **MICHIGAN (7-0) over Minnesota (2-6)**, 42-7 -- The Wolverines get ready for an important stretch run which includes Wisconsin, Penn State and Ohio State.

IOWA (5-2) over Purdue (6-1), 42-27 -- The Boilermakers can say good-bye to the Rose Bowl. **Penn State (6-0) over Northwestern (3-6)**, 31-14 -- The Nittany Lions can't go to sleep with Michigan coming to Happy Valley next week.

Illinois (0-7) over Indiana (1-7), 27-17 -- The Illini end a long drought.

TOLEDO (7-0) over Miami of Ohio (6-2), 31-23 -- These two might meet again in the MAC championship game.

KENT STATE (2-6) over Bowling Green (3-6), 24-22 -- The Golden Flashes are having a revival.

CINCINNATI (6-2) over Southern Mississippi (5-2), 24-21 -- The Bearcats might not win the Conference USA title but they can say who does.

MICHIGAN STATE (5-2) over Ohio State (7-1), 27-24 -- Schultz has a big day passing for the Spartans who use a balanced attack to end OSU's Rose Bowl hopes.

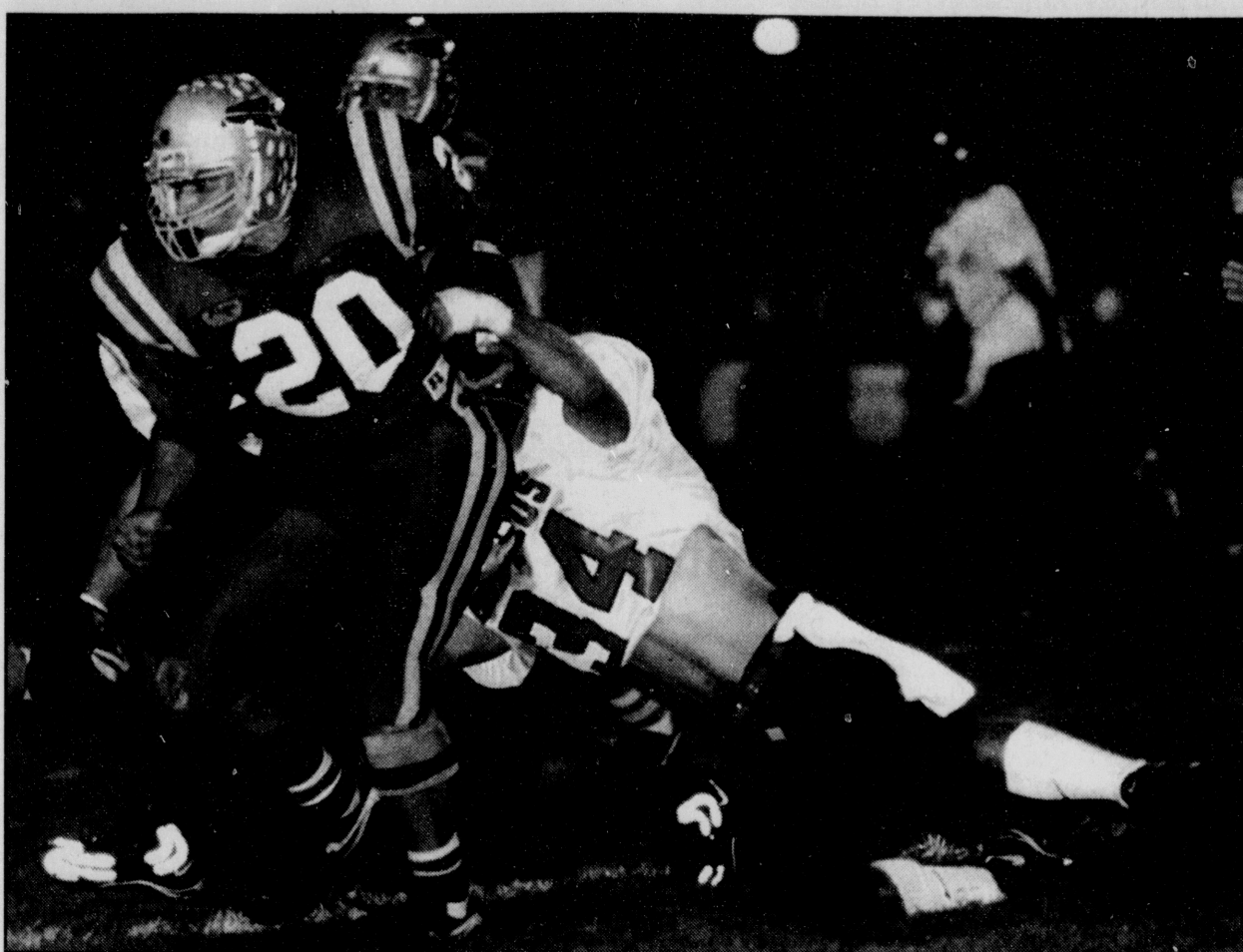
NEBRASKA (7-0) over Oklahoma (3-5), 42-13 -- Remember when this game always meant something?

TEXAS A & M (5-2) over Oklahoma State (6-1), 34-20 -- The Cowboys fall from the saddle again.

ARIZONA STATE (5-2) over Washington State (7-0), 20-14 -- Defense rules again.

UCLA (6-2) over Stanford (4-3), 49-21 -- The Bruins keep their Pac-10 title hopes alive.

WASHINGTON (6-1) over Southern Cal (4-3), 34-17 -- The Huskies become the frontrunners in the Pac-10 race.



Register photo - SARA DAVIS

Bellevue's Russ Kuhns (left) tries to break from the grasp of Steve Binnix (34) of Bucyrus during Friday's Northern Ohio League clash. Bellevue won the game, 26-16, to earn a share of the league championship with Galion, each finishing 6-1.

NOL

• Continued from Page B-1

capped an eight play 24-yard drive.

On fourth-and-seven from the 10, Fox hit Sharp for eight yards and a first down to keep the drive alive.

Bucyrus got its first score of the night when Weiler found Jay Baker wide open in the back of the endzone for a five yard touchdown pass. Chad Burge ran in for the two-point conversion and the score was 20-8 with 5:15 left.

Nate Artino recovered the onside kick for Bellevue at the Bucyrus 49. Kuhns got ten yards on the first play of the drive, but the Redmen were

forced to punt three plays later.

Bucyrus then took over at its own 18 with 3:25 to go, but Weiler wasted little time giving Bellevue the ball back.

Sean Slater intercepted the first play of the drive and gave Bellevue the ball at the Bucyrus 29.

Kuhns ran for 13 yards on first down and a facemask penalty gave the hosts first-and-goal at the eight. On second down from the six, Kuhns went off right tackle for the final regular season touchdown of his illustrious high school career.

Bucyrus used a spread, and I mean spread (with linemen lined up where receivers normally are) offense on its final series to score its last touchdown of the year.

The drive covered 65 yards in 5 plays and was capped with a three yard pass from Weiler to Steve Binnix making the final 26-16.

Field position and time of possession dominance in the second half were also keys to the Bellevue victory.

The averaging starting field position for Bellevue in the second half was the Bucyrus 48 and they controlled the ball for 15:22 (27:29 for the game).

On the other hand, the average starting field position for Bucyrus in the final 24 minutes was its own 28.

Both teams await the computer results on Sunday afternoon to see if their season will continue.

Frye riddles Willard passing records in win over Upper

■ Completes 32 of 57 attempts for 289 yards and three scores

WILLARD — Willard quarterback Charlie Frye was on fire Friday night in the season finale.

Frye tossed three touchdown passes and established two records in leading the Crimson Flashes to a 29-22 win over Upper Sandusky in a battle of winless Northern Ohio League teams.

Willard, which finished the season 2-8 overall and 1-6 in the league, used a 13-point third quarter to take command.

Frye passed for 304 yards with 32 completions in 57 attempts to smash his old record of 289 yards earlier this year against Huron. He also shattered the old mark of completions in one game by 14. Matt Harwood (1990) and Chris Ludban (1995) each had 18.

"We put in a new offense this week (shotgun) and it gave Frye more time to read the defenses. We thought the shotgun would give him more time to see the field and get the ball to his receivers. It worked," coach Terry King said.

Frye fired a 13-yard strike to Chad Carr in the opening period, then hooked up with Ryan Jacobs on a 19-yard touchdown play with 27 seconds remaining in the half to close the deficit to 16-15.

Willard scored twice within two minutes in the third period. Johnny Stephens popped in from the two at the 4:41 mark, then Frye fired his second touchdown pass of the night, this one covering 14 yards, with 2:44 left.

The Crimson Flashes rushed for only 27 yards compared to 224 for the Rams.

Galion 32, Norwalk 21

At Norwalk, the Truksters took early leads of 6-0 in the first quarter and 13-0 in the second period but

were unable to hold on as Galion stormed back after intermission to win, 32-21, and gain a share of the NOL title with Bellevue.

Josh Schlotterer scored on a five-yard run to give Norwalk, 3-7 overall and 2-5 in the league, a 6-0 lead and Caleb Chappellear hauled in a 33-yard pass from Brad Moore to push the Truksters to a 13-0 lead with 5:14 remaining in the first half.

From that point on, it was all Galion.

The Tigers, who finished 8-2 overall and 6-1 in the league, battled back with Matt Hankins scoring on a two-yard run to cut the Norwalk lead to 13-6 by intermission.

Galion pulled even at 13-13 after Matt Furr hauled in a 21-yard touchdown pass from Andy Roesch with 5:39 to go in the third quarter.

Galion scored three times within a four-minute span in the fourth quarter to put the game away.

With 7:11 to go, Clint Moneysmith came up with an interception and 40 yard return. However, he fumbled in the end zone and Furr recovered for the Galion touchdown.

Then, Josh Barnett scored twice within a 47-second span on runs of 25 and six yards.

Norwalk battled back for a late score by Adam Rosekelly on a four-yard run.

Monroeville grabs second in Firelands

Monroeville clinched second place in the Firelands Conference by itself following a 55-26 rout of South Central Friday night.

The Eagles, 9-1 overall and 6-1 in the conference, broke out to a 35-14 lead at intermission and added three more scores in the third quarter to stretch the lead to 55-14 heading into the final quarter.

Quarterback Chad Ackerman threw a trio of touchdown passes to lead the way for the Eagles.

The Eagles struck early behind the arm of Ackerman, who hit Brad Smith for an eight-yard touchdown pass and followed with a 26-yarder to Scott Bonfer.

Aaron Bender hauled in a 66-yard pass from Doug Dendinger as South Central, which finished 5-2 in the conference and 6-4 overall, started to get back in the contest and the Trojans actually took a 14-13 lead after Mike Howard scored on a one-yard run and Dendinger converted with 11:30 to go in the first half.

Monroeville broke away from that point with three scores before half-time.

Jon Roeder scored on a 71-yard run followed by a one-yard run by Paul Drossman and Benfer also scored on a one-yard run.

Three more scores in the third quarter helped the Eagles put the game away.

Ackerman hooked up for a three-yard scoring pass to Derek Yoder at the 7:57 mark and Roeder scored on a one-yard run just two minutes later. Andy Schowchow closed out

the Monroeville scoring with a 30-yard interception return.

South Central closed with two scoring runs by Chuck Langford with the first for 34 yards and the second being a 45-yarder.

New London 33, Plymouth 21

At New London, the Wildcats took a 21-7 lead through three quarters and held on for a 33-21 win.

The Wildcats, finishing 4-6 overall and 3-4 in the conference, closed with three successive wins at the end of the season.

W. Reserve 18, Mapleton 0

At Collins, the Roughriders closed out the season on a positive note.

Dustin Dow finished with 228 yards on 44 carries and finished the season with 1,308 yards on 245 carries.

"We did a good job running the ball with 303 yards rushing and we ran off 79 offensive plays and you're going to win when you do that," said Western mentor Gary Lill.

There was no scoring until the third quarter when the Roughriders (2-8 overall, 1-6 in the FC) scored on a four-yard pass from Adam Orechia to Sonny Bivins.

In the final quarter, Dow capped off a pair of sustained drives.

He scored on runs of two and eight yards.

"This is a good way to finish up and our defense played great to get the shutout," added Lill.

Celtics startle Bulls

BOSTON — Rick Pitino warned us. He said his team wasn't ready, was young and inexperienced.

He was right. For one quarter.

After an abysmal opening 12 minutes of the 1997-98 NBA season during which they fell behind by 20 points, the New Boston Celtics played Ricky Ball according to the Master's Plan.

And they beat the Chicago Bulls. The World Champion Chicago Bulls.

Michael Jordan's Chicago Bulls. Yes, THOSE Chicago Bulls.

As an Opening Night capacity crowd of 18,624 rocked the Fleet-Center with near-Boston Garden noise, the Celtics rallied from a 32-12 deficit and shocked the Bulls, 92-85, on Friday night.

The Celtics ran, pressed and trapped as predicted and outscored the Bulls 22-11 in the second quarter and 34-15 in the third for a 68-58 lead at the start of the fourth quarter.

Boston led by as many as 12 points early in the fourth and by 11, 83-72, after an Antoine Walker jump shot with 4:50 left in the game.

Then the New Celtics survived a typical Michael Jordan charge. Chicago's incomparable superstar scored 18 of his 30 points in the final quarter, and his free throw with 1:21 left cut Boston's lead to three points, 86-83.

But Travis Knight made two free throws, and Bruce Bowen followed a Toni Kukoc miss with a pair of free throws for a 90-83 advantage with 11.4 ticks left on the clock.

Jason Caffrey buried a wide open jump shot, but Chauncey Billups answered with a pair of free throws with 5.7 seconds left. Then, for good measure, Billups stole the ball with 2.9 seconds left.

"I think this is going to build our team up and show that we can play with anyone in the NBA," said Walker, who led all scorers with 31 points. He also added eight rebounds and a pair of blocked shots to his line.

Billups, the rookie who struggled all during training camp and the exhibition season and who was the subject of trade rumors as late as Thursday, had an impressive NBA debut. He scored 15 points, passed for four assists and made two steals.

Suns 111, Clippers 110

At Los Angeles, Rex Chapman scored 24 points and Steve Nash had nine of his 19 in the decisive third period as the Phoenix Suns won their season opener for the first time in five years, beating the Los Angeles Clippers.

Antonio McDyess finished with 17 points while Jason Kidd had 16 assists, 14 rebounds and six steals for Phoenix, now 13-2 in home season openers in the franchise's 30-year history.

Brent Barry paced Los Angeles with 20 points, but only six came after the first quarter as the Clippers blew an early lead.

Chapman and Nash helped Phoenix outscore Los Angeles 23-13 in the final nine minutes of the third quarter for a 91-81 lead.

The Suns haven't lost a season opener at home since 1972 when Lew Alcindor and the Milwaukee Bucks beat them 117-105 at Veterans Memorial Coliseum.

The Clippers beat Phoenix 96-95 in last year's season opener that sent the Suns off to an 0-13 start.

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