

# Outlaws open cross-country season with strong performance

By Charlie Kanzig  
Correspondent

Junior John Peckham won the boys race and freshman Ella Thorsett tied a record as the Outlaws' cross-country team opened its season at the Northwest Classic held Saturday, September 14 at Lane Community College in Eugene.

Competing in the 1A/2A/3A/4A division, Peckham bided his time behind the early leader Erick Godoy of Buhach Colony High School (Atwater, California) and took command of the race midway on the 5,000-meter course. The victory marked the first varsity win for Peckham, who has established himself over the past year as one of the top 4A distance runners in Oregon.

"It was cool to see John run such a smart race and get the win," said Head Coach Josh Nordell. "What made it even better was seeing Will Thorsett right up there with him."

Thorsett, also a junior, was injured following the first meet in 2018 and missed the entire season. He battled Jimmy Talley of Cottage Grove all the way to the wire and finished third in 16:25, giving the Outlaws a formidable 1-2 punch.

Ethan Hosang came through as the third scorer for

the Outlaws in twentieth place in 17:29, while Josh Liddell and Vicente Rebolledo followed in 18:01 and 18:09 respectively to complete the scoring.

Sam May (18:36) and Max Palanuk (18:48) did not score for the Outlaws but both finished in the top third of the field of 187 runners.

The Outlaws finished a close third among 25 complete teams with 102 points. Siuslaw won the meet with 89 and Oregon West rival Newport placed second with 96.

"It was a good start for the season," said Nordell, "but it's far too early for us to know where we'll be in the weeks to come."

The girls team also showed strength near the front of the pack as freshman Ella Thorsett flew to fifth place in her first-ever high school race in 19:05.81, which is equal to the fastest 5,000-meter time ever run by an Outlaws girl. Zoe Falk ran 19:05.9 as a junior back in 2012.

"Tremendous," said Josh Nordell.

Senior Kate Bowen crossed the line next in sixth place (19:51).

"The competition in the top 10 was incredibly deep," said Nordell, "and those two girls showed they belonged in that group."

To give some perspective, other than Thorsett, the top

six girls — including Bowen — are all multi-time state meet medal winners and some are past state champions. For example, Bowen finished seventh at last year's state cross-country meet and medaled in both the 1,500 and 3,000 in track.

Hannah Hernandez of Philomath won the race in 18:35. She is a three-time Oregon West cross-country champion and finished fifth in last year's state cross-country meet. The second-place finisher Anika Thompson (18:50) of Junction City placed second at state last year in cross-country and won the state 1,500-meter title in track.

Hannah Rannow of Siuslaw, who finished third in 18:57, placed fourth at state in cross-country last year and has won state titles in track for both the 800 and 3,000 meters. And Sarah Pullen (18:57) of Tillamook placed third at last year's state cross-country meet.

"It was like a who's who among 4A cross-country girls," said Nordell.

The Outlaw girls were a bit short-handed, running just five girls in the race.

Emma Singleton (22:22), Iris Diez (24:51), and Sadie



PHOTO BY CHARLIE KANZIG

John Peckham takes command of the field in the Outlaws race at the Northwest Classic at Lane Community College in Eugene.

Sharp (25:49) completed the scoring for the Outlaws who finished in seventh place among twenty-one teams with 196 points. Siuslaw (102) edged both Tillamook (107) and Philomath (111) for the team title.

"Just like the boys' team, the girls have a lot more work in front of them, but I like the way they have started out," said Nordell.

The Outlaws will compete Saturday, September 21 at the Seaside Thraee Course Challenge which is held at Camp Rilea, north of Seaside.



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Ella Thorsett turned in a record-tying performance in Outlaws cross-country action.

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