

[Div. 3 Cross Country: Frontier, Mohawk Trail earn spots in states \(PHOTOS\)](#)

By THOMAS JOHNSTON, Staff Writer Published: 11/11/2023 10:16:06 PM

NORTHFIELD — It was a good day for local teams, as multiple Franklin County schools secured spots in the state cross country meet on Saturday during the MIAA Div. 3 qualifier at Northfield Mountain.

Running in the 3B wave, the Frontier boys' team earned a fifth-place team finish. The top seven teams in each wave, as well as the top 10 individuals on non-qualifying teams advanced to states, meaning the Redhawks secured one of those team spots.

“It feels good,” Frontier’s Luke Howard said. “We haven’t done that since 2019. It feels good to finally get to states as a team. We knew we were going to but after we did it it finally felt real.”

Evan Hedlund was the top Redhawks finisher, earning fifth place overall with a time of 16 minutes, 47 seconds. Howard placed eighth (17:23), Amory Maxey finished in 38th (19:11), Oliver Brown came in 55th (19:36) while Charles Dennis came in 80th (20:20) to round out the Frontier scorers.

“I did alright,” Howard said. “I was hoping to do better but I’m fine with it. I just wanted to qualify. We practice here a lot so we knew how difficult this course would be.”

The 3C boys heat saw Mohawk Trail earn a sixth-place finish to advance to states.

Vincent Gauthier placed 14th (17:35) to lead the way while Peter Healy (26th, 18:36), Rex Kuoppala (52nd, 19:49), Aymeric Loucka (68th, 20:30) and Carson Richardson (91st, 21:34) scored to give the Warriors the top-seven finish.

“It was a good day,” Gauthier said. “I went out a little quick. I was trying to keep one of the Bromfield kids in check because he got away from us last time we were here. I ended up going out a little too quick in the first mile. The second [mile] was tough but I felt strong in the third mile and was able to hold on for the finish. It’s so fun competing in this. The crowd is great.”

Greenfield placed 12th as a team in the 3C heat but Jackson Caron placed 12th individually to earn a spot in states. Caron came across in a time of 17:27.

“I struggled the past week with a mono flare up,” Caron said. “I didn’t have much summer training and this week I wasn’t able to run much. Considering that I’d chalk this up as a good race.”

Caron qualified for states as an individual last year and said he enjoys competing in large meets like the one on Saturday.

“I’m not running with anyone during the small meets,” Caron said. “Against Frontier and Mohawk we push each other. It’s great coming to a place like this where you not only have great teams to compete against but get to run in an environment that pushes you to a good performance.”

Mahar finished 25th as a team in the 3C wave, with Aiden Drake the top finisher via a 120th place finish of 23:04.

“It went pretty well,” Drake said. “I liked the course. I like these big meets. They’re nice.”

The 3C girls wave saw Frontier come in with a sixth place finish and Mohawk Trail take seventh as both teams locked up spots in states.

Nicole Plasse paced the Redhawks with a 32nd place finish (22:32) to help keep Frontier’s season alive.

“It went pretty well,” Plasse said. “I was prepared for the hills with all the practice. I just wanted to make it to the finish line without passing out.”

Being nearby, the Redhawks have been able to train at Northfield to prepare for the rigorous hills, especially the first hill which can sap your energy off the jump.

“The start is so hard,” Plasse said. “We’ve practiced here so many times that it’s like a routine. You just have to get used to the adrenaline and saving your energy for the whole course. These races are so fun and challenging. We’re going to states which is great. I’m proud of everybody. We left everything out there.”

Sylvie DiBartolomeo came in 38th (22:47), Leah Gump took 53rd (23:17), Liv Christensen took 55th (23:19) and Maia Christensen placed 56th (23:21) for Frontier.

Virginia Krezmien was the top Warriors finisher, coming across the finish line in a time of 21:17 to place 13th.

“I did really well and PR’d,” Krezmien said. “This course is really hard. Working up the hills and going all out after is all you can do. Staying with packs is helpful. One of my strategies was to stick with the pack, pass that pack and repeat that. I do really well if I have someone to pace with.”

Anya Read took 28th (22:11), Natalie Lanoue came in 39th (22:49), Valerie Bzomowski took 43rd (22:57) while Katie Osterman placed 129th (27:07) for Mohawk Trail.

“We had a great day as a team,” Krezmien said. “I’m really proud of everyone. We were able to pass some of the Frontier girls which was great. I love the Frontier girls. It’s great competing with them in a team way.”

Greenfield, running in the 3C wave, did not have enough runners to qualify as a team. Rose Fortin was the top Green Wave finisher, placing 99th with a time of 25:45.

The state cross country meet is set for next Saturday at Fort Devens in Ayer.

Source: <https://www.recorder.com/MIAA-Division-3-Cross-Country-Frontier-Mohawk-Trail-earn-spots-in-states-52994186>