http://www.KSCBNews.net/news/index.cfm?nk=17908

LHS Boys Cross Country Team Wins Regionals

The Liberal Redskin Cross Country teams competed in their Regional Championship Saturday in Great Bend, with a trip to state on the line. Teams in attendance were Great Bend, Hays, Liberal, Maize South, Newton, Salina-Central, Salina-South, and Valley Center.

The morning couldn't have gotten much worse for the boys team. Obed Quintana didn't even make the trip due to a high ankle sprain. Quintana has been an important piece for the Redskins, as he had been the third or fourth runner all year. Emilio Tovilla had not run the last couple weeks as he had been recovering from a pulled muscle in his ribs. The plan for Tovilla was to go through warm-ups and see how he was feeling and then make the decision from there. The team's number two runner, senior Daniel Frazier, was suffering from the flu. Frazier started feeling sick Friday night, and was up most of the night not able to keep solids or liquids down. I wasn't going to make the decision for Daniel not to race since it is his senior year, but after talking to him and his parents, we let Daniel make the call. As if that wasn't enough for the Redskins, right as the race started Luis Medina had someone step on the back of his shoe, causing his shoe to fall off. We told them that we can only focus on the things we can control. Controlling their own destiny they did. Angel Viveros lead the Redskins running a near perfect race. Viveros had a strategy and he stuck to it; he let the leaders go out and lead, as he just set back and stayed within striking distance. As the front pack started to get tired and the pace slowed, Viveros made his move. Taking the lead and never looking back, he claimed his second straight individual Regional Championship with a time of 16:37, beating his best time of the year by twenty-seven seconds. Daniel Frazier wasn't going to let the flu ruin his Senior season. Frazier not only finished the race, he joined teammate Viveros on the All-Regional team with a 5th place finish running the course in 17:25. Sammy Obando was the next Redskin runner who stepped it up also earning All-Regional honors with his 6th place finish in 17:29. Luis Medina, as he quickly became known as "the kid with one shoe" didn't let the stickers, rocks, and thorns, slow him down as he was Liberal's 4th runner, finishing in 16th place with a time of 18.11, beating his best time ever by eighteen seconds. Emilio Tovilla was Liberals 5th runner, running through the pain of a pulled muscle in his ribs and finshing 29th in 18:45. The next two runners for the Redskins were Marco Espinoza and Erving Altamirano placing 31st and 43rd respectively. This was absolutely the gutsiest performance I've ever seen for an entire team. Every runner knew they were going to have to step it up a little for a chance to continue their season. Continue their season they did. After all the runners were tallied, the Redskins came out on top, with fifty-seven points, claiming their second strait Regional team title. The next two teams earning a spot at state were fellow WAC teams Great Bend with fifty-nine points and Hays with sixty-three points; once again showing how strong the WAC teams are this year.

The Lady Skins knew it would be tough getting out of a regional with great teams like Valley Center, Maize South, and Great Bend, but that didn't stop them from competing. Senior Destyni Lucero led the Skins with an All-Regional performance placing 8th in a time of 16:24. Mercy Perez, who had missed a few days of practice and had to get an IV in the hospital, didn't let that stop her hopes at State as she finished in 15th place, crossing the line in 16:52. Janette Borunda was the third runner for the Redskins crossing the line in 17:50, and in 27th place. Lesli Mendoza placed 39th in a time of 18:56. Vanny Diazdeleon crossed the finish line with a time 18:57 and in 40th place. Kim Francis and Kayla Tran were the next Lady Skins finishing in 42nd and 46th place in times of 19:17, and 19:46. The top three teams qualifying for State were Valley Center with 32 points, Maize South 35 points, and Great Bend 103 points. The Lady Skins finished in 5th place with a score of 129. The Skins did miss a chance to compete as a team next weekend, but they did get two girls, Destyni Lucero and Mercy Perez, qualified as individuals. After all the runners from the top three teams are taken out, the next five individuals also qualify for the state meet.

The Redskins will travel to Lawrence next Saturday for the State Championships. The 5A Boys race will start at 10:00 A.M., while the 5A girls will compete at 11:30 A.M.