

# North Shore Storm Cross Country Shines at Conference Meet

By John Sandstrom

Head coach April Wahlstrom of the North Shore Storm cross country team said she was extremely happy with her team's performance last week at the Pincushion Trail in Grand Marais for the Polar League conference cross country meet. The Storm combines runners from Two Harbors, Silver Bay and Cook County schools. Wahlstrom is assisted by Dan Hebl in Two Harbors and Keri Bilben in Silver Bay.

Wahlstrom was celebrating the fact that the girls team is now the Polar League champions and that the boys team finished in second place. "Everything kind of fell in place. Our team's runners who were leading in the race pulled the rest of the team, and those who were trailing pushed those in the lead. It was a great team performance."

Silver Bay Senior Nate Bilben placed third in the race. Coach Wahlstrom said Nate has been "absolutely one of the most consistent runners on the team." Bilben said his highlight this year was running a 'sub eighteen minute race' at Milaca. Nate credits the sport with teaching him the value of hard work. He has been contacted by several colleges about continuing his running career, but is yet undecided on his plans.

In the girl's portion of the meet, the Storm ended the meet as the conference champs! Cook County sophomore Olya Wright was conference champion.

Anna Hay, a senior at Cook County, placed eighth in the race. She started the season strong and then struggled for a few weeks. "I finally felt good in this race and ran the way I know I can." Hay currently plans to major in nursing at Bethel College. When asked what the sport has taught her, Anna said that she has learned she can push herself harder than she realized.

Two Harbors senior Autumn Smith has experienced much success in her track and cross country careers and placed third at the conference. Smith, who currently hopes to attend Brigham Young University, says "The thing I have learned from cross country is that many things are difficult, but the feeling of satisfaction I get from completing it is worth the effort."

The Storm is at Sections on Thursday, October 28th. Boys and girls varsity who placed in the top seven during the conference meet are invited to run. The meet will

be held at the Cloquet Country Club. In the junior high portion of the conference meet, the Storm boys were the winners. Silver Bay seventh grader Sierra Gaetz placed third in the girl's race.

### Girls Varsity Results

- Olya Wright (CC) 1st
- Autumn Smith (TH) 3rd
- Lamar Gordan (TH) 5th
- Anna Hay (CC) 8th
- Jocelyn Carr (TH) 9th

### Boys Varsity Results

- Nate Bilben (SB) 4th
- Ian Thorpe (TH) 9th
- Clay Thorpe (TH) 13th
- Elijah Smith (TH) 19th
- Tyler Hanson (CC) 20th

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