



By Shari Friedel

Tribune Staff

Perkins County cross country girls finished the season in Kearney on Friday, Oct. 22 with 179 points and a 14th place finish in Class D state competition.

“To be the 14th best team in Class D is certainly an achievement,” said Coach Paula Wurst of the Lady Plainsmen’s efforts in Kearney. “These girls came into the season in really good shape, and those summer miles certainly paid off in October.”

Junior Ashley Kemling, on her third trip to state, medaled in the top 15, finishing sixth with a personal record of 15:50.

She finished behind Lindsay Holy Family/Newman Grove’s Andrea Weeder (15:10); Aquinas Catholic’s Marissa Dewispelare (15:19); Crofton’s Tiffany Tramp (15:36); Cassandra Aerts of

East Butler (15:44) and Jackie Dam of Archbishop Bergan (15:46).

“Ashley’s sixth place medal was a wonderful accomplishment,” said Wurst. “She has been very focused all season, and her hard work certainly paid off. She was in 13th place at the final mark and I told her so. She looked me straight in the eyes and all I could see was strength and determination.”

Kemling surged ahead, moving up seven places in the last 600 meters, finishing under 16 minutes for the first time.

“Krystal (Gaar) also ran an outstanding race,” Wurst said. “She raced faster than she’s ever run at Kearney and came within nine seconds of a career personal record, an excellent way for her to end her cross country career for the team.”

“Jessi (Hoffert) showed pure grit and toughness,” Wurst commented. Hoffert started out strong, but developed breathing difficulties with a mile left to go. “She toughed it out and finished the race within half a minute of her best time at Kearney in spite of aching lungs and no wind.”

Becca Cornelius and Anna Fournier ran faster than their last race at Kearney and showed strength of character, said Wurst. They ran well and didn’t let their final places bother them.

Perkins County Results

(out of 117 finishers)

6. Ashley Kemling 15:50

86. Krystal Gaar 18:26

90. Courtney Lyon 18:38

102. Jessi Hoffert 19:08

116. Becca Cornelius 22:20

117. Anna Fournier 22:37

