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DHS Cross Country Enters Season with High Expectations

SEPTEMBER 07TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Dexter, Missouri - Dexter High School Cross Country team is already off to a great start to the new season. Head Coach Leonard Morse is confident their season will be filled with medals.

"I have three seniors this year who are returning, Weston Avery, Caleb Bess, and Trenten Dean," stated Morse. "Nick Phillips has taken over as team manager after developing some knee problems. They are also joined by newcomer Dalton Green, who is preparing for his senior wrestling season as well."

The junior class is well represented with experience with Dylan Long, Sean Rybolt, and Emily Ladd. "They form a significant part of the core of the squad," Morse said of his returning junior. "We have also added several new faces in the junior class this year that include Blake Bolin, Austin Chesser, Nate Drivas, Lucas Goodrich, Dawson Kastings, Jonni Hill, and Shelby Smith."

The sophomore class has two new faces in Justin Kenley and Coby Powers. Both are runners in spring track.

The freshman class includes Cole Barker, Carson Bell, Trey Johnson, Ethan Kirkley, and Margo Nea, and Barker, Bell.

The CC Bearcats' squad only has four girls: Emily, Jonni, Shelby, and Margo. "With only four we will be unable to compete for team titles at most of our meets as a team of five is required for a team score," continued Morse. "Emily and Margo should be contenders at just about every meet we run. However, they should be helped next year with this year's eighth grade girls."

"My freshman class should be competitive. They enjoyed great success last year in middle school and I think that will carry through to this year. I expect solid contributions from this group."

"We are a much more solid team this year. There is a different vibe with this team. Several of our new faces will bring a more competitive edge to the team. Kastings, Kenley, and Powers are proving to be solid runners who are very competitive. They are having a positive impact on the team and helping to get more from Dean, Long, Rybolt, and Ladd. The team works well together, and so far, has shown to be quite cohesive. The veteran runners are running well with the newbies," continued Morse.

Dexter will compete in the Class 3, District 1 against Desoto, Doniphan, Festus, Herculaneum, Kennett, North County, Notre Dame, Perryville, Potosi, Ste. Genevieve, and Imperial.

"This summer the classes in cross country were tweaked," stated Morse. "That tweaking has resulted in Herculaneum, a Class 2 powerhouse, being added to our already tough, tough district. The District also adds new squads from Perryville and Kennett this year. These three replace Affton, Bayless, and Lutheran South, which were shifted to District 2. District 1 still has the power schools of Festus, Cape Notre Dame, Potosi, and Ste. Genevieve."

"If we are to make it to state we will definitely have to earn it. Our District boasts some of the best schools in the state, at any classification."

2016 Varsity Cross Country Schedule

8/27/2016	at Jackson
9/10/2016	at Arcadia Valley
9/17/2016	at Maryville University (St. Louis, MO)
9/21/2016	at Van Buren
10/1/2016	at Notre Dame (Cape Girardeau)
10/6/2016	Saxony Lutheran Neutral Site:Jackson, MO
10/10/2016	at SCAA Quad (Bloomfield, MO)

10/13/2016 SEMO Conference (Dexter, MO)
10/15/2016 at Farmington
10/22/2016 Dexter

The Dexter meet includes many of the smaller schools around Southeast Missouri. Dexter, Doniphan, and Kennett are the only Class 3 schools in the meet. Most of the Class 3 schools are father north. So far, Advance, Bloomfield, Crystal City, Delta, Doniphan, East Carter, Kelly, Kennett, Leopold, Meadow Heights, Richland, Woodland, and Zalma have added the Dexter meet to their schedule.

"If all goes well, we will also be running in the inaugural SCAA Cross Country Meet that will be hosted by Bloomfield. Advance, Bloomfield, Dexter, and Woodland will be joined by first year program, Richland," Morse said. "That gives us five of the SCAA teams with cross country. Two years ago, we only had three. Cross country is growing throughout the region, which will only make competitions better."

Shown in the photo are Cross Country seniors - Weston Avery, Trenten Dean, Caleb Bess, and Nick Phillips.

"This year's team has come into the season with a more upbeat attitude than in the past. The team is competing well against itself. I am looking forward to a more competitive season at our high school level," Morse said of his 2016 competitors.

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