

THURSDAY CROSS COUNTRY: DEB HANKENS INVITATIONAL

Runners take careful approach to meet at Cherokee

Extreme heat creates need for extra precautions during race

BY SCOTT BYERS
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CHEROKEE—Extra precautions were taken, but the show did go on as the Deb Hankens Invitational in Cherokee on Thursday opened the cross country season for a few N'West Iowa squads.

The meet was only the second in the state of Iowa, and the only one on Thursday, that didn't get canceled or postponed due to the extreme

heat this week. Organizers moved the start time back two hours and had other special provisions in place as the temperature was still 88 degrees at 7 p.m. for the start of the races.

"I'd like to give a thank you to Cherokee High School, Cherokee Regional Medical and the Cherokee cross country program for putting together a solid meet and ensuring safety was the first priority with water stations set up throughout the course," said South O'Brien coach Jeremy Lansink.

A front that later brought rain to the area hadn't quite reached the venue when the meet took place.

"I think we all assumed it was going to be worse than it was. There are a lot of trees on that course so there is a lot of shade for the runners," said Hartley-Melvin-Sanborn coach Kristen Taylor. "A few of our kids jumped in the pool after it was over. It wasn't as bad as we thought it would be."

The Hawks had one of only three complete teams in the girls race and finished third. Hartley-Melvin-Sanborn was third and South O'Brien was fifth in the boys event.

"My boys really impressed me," Taylor said. "We had a couple of PRs. This might have been our toughest meet of the year. With the

heat, your body is working harder to cool itself down. The girls too, they were ahead of where I thought they would be. But with the boys, they saw their times and I think they shocked themselves."

The Hawks coach noted the Cherokee course has plenty of hills to navigate, adding to the difficulty.

"We hadn't done too much hill training yet. When we do we have to go off site because there aren't many hills around Hartley," she said. "Our kids attacked the hills hard and even

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Sioux Center freshman Maryn Franken rises for a swing before the Rock Valley defense can get its double block attempt set up Thursday. The host Warriors needed to go all three sets each time, but went 3-0 in match play to capture the championship during their home tournament. The Rockets went 1-2. Photo by Dan Wolfswinkel

THURSDAY VOLLEYBALL: SIOUX CENTER INVITATIONAL

Warriors get in lots of network

All three matches were played at a distance for championship.

BY SCOTT BYERS
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SIOUX CENTER—The tournament hosts saw the most action of anyone, going the maximum three sets in all three of its matches but still taking the title at the Sioux Center Invitational volleyball tournament Thursday.

Sioux Center was the only team to come out of the six-team event unscathed.

"The girls showed great growth throughout the night," said Sioux

Center coach Margo Schuiteman. "We started out very strong for the match of the season," Olden said. "In set two we made too many serving errors. Set three was much cleaner and more consistent than the one the Warriors fielded in the Class 3A state championship match last year, but got the job done. The Warriors opened with a 21-11, 21-11, 15-7 win over Rock Valley."

Sioux Center's Maryn Franken set a very balanced record with 15 assists and Romee Schuiteman added six. Margo Schuiteman had six kills. Maryn Franken, Makailyn Vander Waal and Courteney Schmidt each registered five

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THURSDAY VOLLEYBALL: SHELDON EARLY BIRD TOURNAMENT

Wolfpack overcomes injury, tough pool to win championship

Victory over Braves sets tone for event

BY SCOTT BYERS
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SHELDON—Western Christian won the championship of the Sheldon Early Bird Tournament on Thursday, but coach Tammi Veerbeek said the biggest win for the Wolfpack came in the opening round of the event.

Western Christian, last year's Class 2A state volleyball champion, has moved up to Class 3A and is ranked second in the preseason by the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union. The first match for the Wolfpack was against Class 3A fifth-ranked Cherokee.

"We have a young squad and we had to start the season with a really impactful game. Cherokee has a good team and that one was going to mean a lot as far as rankings and maybe seedings and things like that," Veerbeek said. "We didn't talk to the girls about it, but they knew."

A win there vaulted the Wolfpack to a 3-0 night.

"It was a great night for our young kids to come out and get

the win," the coach said. "It helps us gain confidence. We are the smallest school in 3A, but we can still play volleyball. We need to get more consistent, but this was a great way to start our season."

WESTERN CHRISTIAN	3-0
SHELDON	1-2
GEHLEN CATHOLIC	0-3

Big win is spark

Western Christian established itself early on with a 21-12, 21-18 win over Cherokee. The Wolfpack did so even though starting setter Brea Van Kley was injured in a scrimmage last week and missed the tournament. Maggie Van Schepen stepped into that spot and played well all night long.

"She stepped up. They have been competing for that spot and they are both very capable," Veerbeek said. "It was next man up. We came out focused and intentional. We knew this was the team to beat and our pool was very tough, but we were able to impose our will at the net, especially in the first set. We had some good swings and blocked well."

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Western Christian junior Shae Reitsma attacks during the Sheldon Early Bird Tournament on Thursday. The Class 3A second-ranked Wolfpack won three times to take the tourney crown. Photo by Roy Tucker



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