

## MOUNT UNION CROSS COUNTRY

# Trojan girls come back strong; boys must rebuild

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### AT A GLANCE

#### MOUNT UNION TROJANS

District 6, Class A

Coach: Bob Wydock, assisted by Casey Hanlon  
2011: Girls, 7-1, 4-0  
Inter-County Conference;  
Boys, 5-3, 3-1 ICC

**MOUNT UNION** — A year ago, Mount Union's boys lost just one league meet and the girls were unbeaten in the Inter-County Conference.

The girls lost only one runner, but the boys roster was decimated on graduation day.

"Our top five runners all graduated. It definitely hurts," veteran coach Bob Wydock said. "On the girls side we were fortunate, we only lost Emily Love."

Love was not among the regular scoring quintet for the Trojans, but the boys will have a daunting task trying to replace the talent that finished running for the school a year ago. Among the losses were Zach McKeehan, the league MVP and top scorer in the ICC who broke Mount Union's course record last fall.

Also gone are Ryan Wilsson, Hunter Gladfelter, Billy Smith and Casey Kramer, all of whom were multiple letter winners.

That means, not surprisingly, that the girls team is the favorite to repeat this year.

"We have a real nice team, we have a lot of veterans, some new runners who have worked very hard and look very good at practice. We're hoping to be one of the better girls teams in the ICC naturally," Wydock said. "We have our work cut out for us, but with some hard work we should see some success."

That includes the top two from last year, junior Lauren Shugarts — an ICC all-star last fall — and senior Katrina Hammon. Four more letter winners trail that duo.

"We have some other athletes from last year coming back who put forth their best efforts. We have some pretty solid depth," Wydock said. "I've got three new girls out who look very good also."

Those youngsters are freshman Katelyn Todaro; junior



Sentinel photo by MATT STRICKER

Members of the Mount Union cross country team are, from left, front, Trevor Welch, Brooke Staley, Kaitlin Todaro, Elizabeth Steward, Sara Estep, Hannah Taylor, Gabrianna Morder and Ryan McKay; back, coach Casey Hanlon, Marissa Aurand, Hunter Corbin, Lauren Shugarts, Jesse Rinker, Katrina Hammon, Devin Crouse, Miranda Crouse and coach Bob Wydock.

Brooke Staley, a track letter winner making her cross country debut; and Gabby Morder, of whom Wydock said "She is a very good athlete."

The boys, on the other hand, offer plenty of new faces.

"We do have a couple of veterans coming back," Wydock said, led by Ryan McKay, a 12th-grader and letter winner from last year.

Wydock also looks for points from Hunter Corbin, a 10th grader in his first year running.

"We have four other new runners. They're working hard and they're making progress — that's all we can ask for," Wydock said. "We're looking to try to be competitive in all the meets and trying to improve as we go on throughout the season. We'll go in there and try to get

as many wins as we can."

Mount Union hasn't had a state qualifier in two years, after McKeehan last year and Blake Morder the year before just missed the advancement field, but that could change with the creation of a third classification in the sport.

Wydock admits it's a struggle because his team sees only a small number of teams in District 6 before October's championship run.

"We are a little bit insulated from some of the district teams. We're going to just go out and try to be as competitive as we can at the district championship meet," he said. "I'm hoping that we should be very competitive in the league meet," at least among the girls.

Wydock said Bellwood-Antis and West Branch should be the teams to beat in the ICC.

## Huskies

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Trenton Yoder round out the 30-man slate.

Yoder isn't as certain about how her girls will fare in the ranks of the Mid-Penn. The Huskies lost three of their top seven runners to graduation, including Brooke King, who was their top runner and a three-time PIAA qualifier. Marissa Long and Roxanna Workinger also are gone, leaving some pretty big shoes to fill.

"State College and Chambersburg have exceptional girls teams," Yoder explained. "Our girls give 100 percent every race and that is

what matters."

For the Mifflin County girls, senior Megan Becker returns and has been running strong in practice, Yoder said. Three other seniors — Analee Gentzel, Latasha Yoder and Makayla Pearce — have been working very hard over the summer and should find their way into varsity slots.

"We have a very nice group of senior runners to lead this team," Yoder said.

Junior Anna Taptich, who consistently scored in the top five last year, is also back, as are junior Jessica Miller and sophomores Katie Hassinger and Makenna Pollock. Yoder added that sophomore Kaitlyn Yearick has also shown great im-

provement since last year.

"This will obviously be a year of change as we race different teams on different courses and learn how the Mid-Penn operates," Yoder said.

Rounding out the squad are senior Taylor Boyer, sophomores Cameron Hassinger and Amber Reed, and freshmen Amanda Hassinger, Courtney Page and Kristen Neavling.

"At the end of the season, I would like to see the boys qualify for the state meet and do really well there as well," Yoder said. "I also hope for one or more girls to qualify for the state meet."

Mifflin County hosts the Big Valley Invitational to open the season Saturday.

## Trojans

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posted a 2.41 goals against average and three shutouts a year ago in his first varsity campaign. Renno expects those numbers to improve this season and wants Kauffman to continue being a vocal leader.

"Sammy's got a great work ethic and has been concentrating on improving his footwork, taking proper angles and ball handling," Renno said.

Sophomores include Colin Peachey and Jake Knable, who are both midfielders; and Kyle Der-

stein, a defender.

Rounding out the roster are freshmen Derek Byler, Josiah Yoder and Nick Beaulieu, who all are vying for time in the midfield. Yoder and freshman Noah Anders may also see time at striker.

The Trojans host Meadowbrook Christian Friday in the opening round of the Belleville Mennonite Tournament, which also includes Halifax and Penns Valley.

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