

## County's Cross Country Skiers Back on Course

By Stephen Dravis

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DALTON, Mass. -- The long-delayed Berkshire County Nordic League season got under way on Saturday, and it appears to have been worth the wait.

"Oh my God, it was so amazing," Lenox's Grace Elliot said. "I had forgotten just how much fun league races are. Because we had been doing other races, but nothing compares to the atmosphere of the league race."



And nothing compared to the dominance of Elliot and the Lenox girls ... except for that of Quinn McDermott and the Mount Greylock boys.

McDermott beat the field by 48 seconds to take first as an individual and helped the Mounties finish with 14 team points, 24 points ahead of runner-up Wahconah.

Last winter, Wahconah, Mount Greylock and Hoosac Valley only had each other as competitors and no state meet to strive for.

On Saturday morning, they welcomed back Lenox, Amherst, Mohawk Trail and Simsbury, Conn., in the latest step on a long road to normalcy.

While it was the COVID-19 pandemic that wiped out most of the 2020-21 season, it was uncooperative weather to blame for pushing this winter's opener from its traditional Dec. 31 date and forcing the cancellation of two more planned meets before Saturday.

The weather Saturday could not have been better, with cool temperatures, no wind and clear blue skies.

"The conditions were absolutely beautiful," Elliot said. "The snow felt really fast, but it also wasn't so icy that I felt like I was slipping."

Lenox's girls announced their return to the league with authority, taking the top three places and earning 15 points to finish 23 points ahead of runner-up Mount Greylock.

The Millionaires and Mounties each picked right where they left off as they look to defend the team state crowns they won 23 months ago at Vermont's Prospect Mountain.

Mary Elliot was the first girl across the finish line, clocking a time of 17 minutes, 41 seconds to edge Grace by just one second. Teammate Aidan Burns was third and not too far behind in 18:05.

The next two racers were Mount Greylock's Anne Miller and Cornelia Swabey, and one more Mountie, Lily McDermott, cracked the top 10, placing seventh.

Host Wahconah placed three athletes -- Quinn Walton, Vienna Mahar and Olivia Langenheim -- in the top 11 as they placed third in the team standings.

In the varsity boys race, Wahconah's Fritz Sanders placed fifth to lead his team to a second-place showing.

But Mount Greylock's boys placed an impressive five skiers in the top 10. After McDermott (14:46) came Foster Savitsky and Oliver Swabey in third and fourth, respectively, followed by Teague Murphy (sixth) and Jude Bakija (10th).

Not factoring into the team scoring was Hoosac Valley's Justin Levesque, who was the runner-up in 15:34 and raced as an individual.

Lenox's boys placed third on the day. Thomas Leger led the way with a seventh-place finish.

Many of the top racers on Saturday will be back at Wahconah on Sunday for the Massachusetts U16/ Eastern High School Championships qualifier.

### **Girls Team Scores**

1. Lenox 15 points; 2. Mount Greylock 28; 3. Wahconah 43; 4. Mohawk Trail 67; 5. Amherst 98.

### **Girls Top 20**

1. Mary Elliot, L, 17:41; 2. Grace Elliot, L, 17:42; 3. Aidan Burns, L, 18:05; 4. Anne Miller, MG, 19:07; 5. Cornelia Swabey, MG, 19:20; 6. Sylvie Mahone-Moore, MT, 19:20; 7. Lily McDermott, MG, 19:28; 8. Quinn Walton, W, 20:11; 9. Genevieve Colins, L, 20:18; 10. Vienna Mahar, W, 20:19; 11. Olivia Langenheim, W, 20:22; 12. Lauren Miller, MG, 20:23; 13. Madja Rudzinskate, L, 20:30; 14. Jocelyn Sommers, W, 21:11; 15. Juliann Lawson, MG, 21:20; 16. Ellie Meunier, MT, 21:36; 17. Natalie Pompei, HV, 21:39; 18. Julia Langenheim, W, 21:47; 19. Kala Garrido, MT, 22:27; 20. Skylar Rosier, W, 22:40.

### Boys Team Scores

1. Mount Greylock 14 points; 2. Wahconah 38; 3. Lenox 54; 4. Amherst 79; 5. Mohawk Trail 90.

### Boys Top 20

1. Quinn McDermott, MG, 14:46; 2. Justin Levesque, HV, 15:34; 3. Foster Savitsky, MG, 15:35; 4. Oliver Swabey, MG, 15:39; 5. Fritz Sanders, W, 16:06; 6. Teague Murphy, MG, 16:43; 7. Thomas Leger, L, 17:10; 8. Brennan Andersen, W, 17:10; 9. Sam Woodruff, A, 17:11; 10. Jude Bakija, MG, 17:19; 11. Declan Rogers, MG, 17:37; 12. Aidan Garcia, W, 17:45; 13. Scott Duma, W, 18:01; 14. Dennis Love, L, 18:04; 15. Riley Gladu, W, 18:20; 16. Ben Ames, L, 18:42; 17. Ezra Holzapfel, MG, 19:02; 18. Fin Jolly, L, 19:10; 19. Nathan Miller, W, 19:25; 20. Vincent Gauthier, MT, 19:39.



*Photos from this meet to come.*