

Willowbrook boys and girls run at conference meet

The Willowbrook girls and boys cross-country teams competed in Saturday's West Suburban Gold Conference Meet at Proviso West High School in Hillside. Proviso East High School hosted the meet on Proviso West's course, which is measured officially at 3.06 miles.

The boys and girls meets each featured two flights to promote social distancing. Each of the day's four races featured up to five runners from each team.

Willowbrook's girls team finished fourth in the team standings of the girls meet with 116 team points. Downers Grove South won the conference meet with its total of 22 points. Hinsdale South (58 points) placed second, while Morton (99 points) claimed third. The Warriors edged out Addison Trail, which posted a fifth-place total of 120 points.

Senior Melissa Martinez led Willowbrook's girls team with her 15th-place time of 21 minutes, 44.78 seconds. Martinez earned all-conference honors by placing among the top 16 in the meet's individual standings. Junior Lily Weder (22:22.94) delivered a 19th-place finish for the Warriors. Freshman Sophia Gogol (23:08.38) placed 26th for the Warriors, while junior Madeline Barrington (23:37.23) landed in 33rd place. Sophomore Amelia Barrington (24:00.56) secured a 43rd-place showing for Willowbrook.

Freshman Lillian Caron led the Warriors in the first race of the day. She completed the race in 24:48.61, which was good for 51st place overall. Freshman Olivia Williams (24:53.17), who also ran in the first race, placed 52nd overall, while sophomore Abby Kusmierz (25:11.67) finished 55th. Sophomores Cailey Dotson (25:35.79; 57th) and Alessandra Ramirez (28:18.06; 60th) rounded out the Willowbrook lineup at the conference meet.

The Warriors' boys squad placed sixth in the team standings of the conference meet. Senior Tyler King, who earned all-conference distinction by placing among the top 16 individual finishers, completed the race in a 13th-place time of 17 minutes, 29.71 seconds.

Sophomore Kevin Diedrich

(18:32.60) ran to a 26th-place finish for the Warriors, while senior Nick Leo (18:58.08) placed 32nd. Senior Thomas Florey (19:23.60) earned 40th place, while sophomore Charlie Hayes (19:32.72) wound up 42nd.

Sophomore Sean Kling (19:48.32) turned in a 44th-place finish for the Warriors, while senior Jake Murray (19:54.73) placed 46th. Sophomore Garrett Williams (20:08.68; 50th), junior Damian Rocha (21:38.17; 59th) and senior Mike Stout (22:19.88; 63rd) completed the Warriors' lineup at the conference meet.

Willowbrook's boys and girls teams will return to Proviso West this Saturday to compete in an IHSA Class 3A regional.



The Addison Trail and Willowbrook boys cross-country teams both ran in Saturday's West Suburban Gold Conference Meet at Proviso West High School. Addison Trail finished fourth in the event's team standings, while Willowbrook placed sixth. Downers Grove South won the team title at the conference meet. Addison Trail senior Dylan Moran (pictured) ran to a third-place finish in the individual standings. He completed the 3.06-mile race in 16 minutes, 40.95 seconds.



The Willowbrook and Addison Trail girls cross-country teams competed in Saturday's West Suburban Gold Conference Meet at Proviso West High School in Hillside. Willowbrook placed fourth in the team standings with 116 points, while Addison Trail claimed fifth with 120 points. Downers Grove South won the conference meet with 22 points. Addison Trail senior Viviana Sanfilippo (above - No. 8909) ran to a second-place finish in the conference meet's individual competition. Sanfilippo completed the 3.06-mile race in 19 minutes, 17.07 seconds. Senior Melissa Martinez (below - No. 9119) led the Willowbrook lineup by finishing in a 15th-place time of 21:44.78.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Pul

Junior Alex Martinez (above left - No. 8915) of the Blazers flinched the race in a sixth-place time of 17:05.18. Senior Tyler King (above - No. 9126) posted Willowbrook's fastest time of the race. King finished in a 13th-place time of 17:29.71. The Blazers and Warriors return to Proviso West for this Saturday's 12-team IHSA Class 3A regional.



The photo above from the race shows Willowbrook junior Lily Weder (No. 9121, left) and Addison Trail junior Madelyn Ford (right - No. 9119) running. Weder earned a 17th-place finish, while Ford landed in 19th place. The Warriors and Blazers will return to Proviso West for this Saturday's IHSA Class 3A regional.

Study (Continued from page 2)

the data reflects the percentage of programs using fall contact days that have reported cases within their program, not the percentage of total individual participants that have tested positive for COVID-19.

"Based on the data collected from our survey, among many other reasons, we believe that the mitigations and health guidelines in place have proven to be successful in helping to prevent the spread of COVID-19 while student-athletes participate in basketball activities," the IBCA wrote in its survey conclusion. "It is because of this we are advocating for basketball to move to Level 3 in the IDPH Youth Sports Guidelines in time for the start of the 2020-2021 season."

Level 3 in the IDPH Return to Play guidelines allows for intra-conference or intra-EMS-region

(COVID-19 region) or intra-league play/meets only. State or league championship games/meets are allowed for low-risk sports only. Basketball is currently classified as medium risk.

The IBCA survey was released mid-last week during a point where the IDPH reported single-day virus positivity cases in the 4,000s on two occasions (4,554 on Oct. 16 and 4,015 on Oct. 15). As of late last week, 34 counties in the state have been elevated to warning level status by IDPH.

The state's rolling seven-day positivity percentage was at 5.2% for the period Oct. 10-16. That contrasts the period from Sept. 23-29 where the statewide positivity rate was down to 3.6%. The Oct. 4-10 period was at 4.2%, a full percentage point lower than the Oct. 10-16 number.

Former Broncos are hoping to get a shot with the Warriors

Thornton and Sullivan helped Montini to a third-place trophy last season; Now at Willowbrook, they are waiting to take the court

STAFF REPORT

The 2020-21 Willowbrook girls basketball team should have played several games by now. Of course, this hasn't been a typical year. The Warriors, along with every other high school girls and boys basketball team in Illinois, have been sidelined by the COVID-19 pandemic. It's uncertain if there will be any basketball played during the 2020-21 school year.

If the Warriors do take the court this season, they are going to be very strong. Senior Stephanie Dasbach—Willowbrook's leading scorer and rebounder from last season—is one of the team's standout returning players. Dasbach recently signed a letter of intent to continue her academic and basketball careers at Winona State University.

This season's other key players include senior Annemarie Knudtson, who made four 3-point shots and scored a team-leading 18 points in the Warriors' season-ending game—an overtime loss to Batavia in an IHSA Class 4A regional semifinal on Feb. 18. Senior Grace Tumilty, who missed her entire junior season due to a knee injury, is ready to play this year. This season's team also includes some highly regarded underclass players.

The Warriors' most intriguing addition this season is a duo of elite players who have transferred from Montini Catholic High School. The two former Broncos who are now at Willowbrook are senior Taris Thornton and junior Sophie Sullivan. Last month, Thornton signed a letter of intent to attend Eastern Illinois University, where she will play for the Panthers' women's basketball team.

Thornton and Sullivan helped guide the 2019-20 Montini team to a 33-5 record. The Broncos earned a trip downstate to the IHSA Class 3A state semifinals at Redbird Arena in Normal. Montini claimed the third-place trophy at the state tournament. One day after losing to Simeon—the eventual Class 3A state champion—Montini finished its season with a victory over Springfield's Lanphier High School in the third-place contest, which took place on March 7.

Less than one week after that game, the pandemic dominated the nation's headlines. At the end of classes on March 13, all K-12 schools in Illinois closed to in-person instruction. The state's school buildings remained closed for the rest of the 2019-20 school year.

In May, Jason Nichols stepped down as Montini's girls basketball coach. Nichols guided the Broncos to four state championships in his 17 seasons as the program's head coach. Nichols left Montini to become the head coach of the women's basketball team at Morton College in Cicero.

Nichols' exit from Montini triggered an exodus of the program's top players. While Sullivan and Thornton transferred to Willowbrook, junior Tatiana Thomas moved on to Bolingbrook High

School. Taylor Charles, another current junior who was a key contributor to the 2019-20 Broncos, is now at Burlington Central High School.

Sullivan and Thornton are both familiar with Willowbrook head coach Terry Harrell. As grade-schoolers, the two new Warriors played for Harrell in the West Suburban Sharks Basketball Club.

In addition to playing together at Montini, Sullivan and Thornton have been teammates in the Illinois Lady Lightning—a girls basketball program that competes in various leagues and summer Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) contests.

All of the pieces are in place for a successful Willowbrook girls basketball season. Unfortunately, the pandemic has brought so much, including high school athletics, to a halt.

"It's so frustrating," said Thornton of the COVID-19 shutdown that's prevented the start of the 2020-21 season, which should have begun in mid-November. "I hate it; it's horrible. It's definitely way better to be out there playing games. I'm just trying to work on training and getting stronger. That's all I can really do."

While the shutdown has been especially tough on seniors, it's also been costly to elite junior players, who should have been able to showcase their talents to collegiate coaches at club events during the summer of 2020. Those coaches of college programs would also be tracking juniors during what should be the current high school season.

"The most important time for recruiting is your junior year," said Sullivan, who noted that she has had some contact with colleges, but won't be making a commitment anytime soon. "There wasn't much exposure this summer. There were some AAU games in July, but college coaches weren't allowed."

Like Thornton, Sullivan is upset that the pandemic has so far prevented the Warriors from an exciting season.

"It's really frustrating," said Sullivan. "We all would work really well together. We haven't had any contact days. I haven't met the team in person. We've just done some Zoom calls. I haven't even been in the school [Willowbrook] since I've transferred. It's not looking good at the moment, but there's not much we can do about it. We'll just keep working out on our own."

Thornton and Sullivan both noted how they are looking forward to bringing the intensity of Nichols's Montini program to Willowbrook. As Broncos, Thornton and Sullivan played a brutally tough schedule that included intense post-season competition. In addition to playing in hard-fought games, they battled in energized practices for a coach who demanded excellence.

"They've been playing with each other," said Thornton of her new teammates at Willowbrook. "They would have to get used to how tough we played [at Montini]."



CHRIS FOX FILE PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

Senior Taris Thornton (No. 25 - above) and junior Sophie Sullivan (No. 1 - right) transferred from Montini Catholic High School to Willowbrook High School following the end of the 2019-20 school year. The duo helped Montini's girls basketball team claim the third-place trophy at the IHSA Class 3A state tournament last season. Thornton, a Lombard resident, and Sullivan, who lives in Villa Park, both transferred from Montini to Willowbrook after Jason Nichols resigned as the Broncos' head coach in May. Nichols spent 17 seasons at Montini, guiding the program to four state championships. The two former Broncos are eager to take the court with their new Willowbrook teammates, but high school girls and boys basketball, along with all other IHSA winter sports, have been on hold because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Warriors' girls basketball program's season was supposed to begin in mid-November. The team hasn't even held a practice yet, and it isn't clear if there will be any high school basketball during the current 2020-21 school year. In October, the Illinois Department of Public Health elevated basketball from a medium-risk sport to a high-risk sport.

Sullivan, who played for Nichols for two seasons, agreed with Thornton's assessment.

"I totally get what she's saying," said Sullivan in discussing the influence of Nichols and the Montini program.

"There was intensity at every practice. It was a different schedule and a different style of play. It was just nice to get coached by him [Nichols] for two years."



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Level: Intermediate

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Level: Advanced

SUDOKU Fun by the Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test! **Here's How It Works:** Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!



Hey, this is Villa Park calling and I'm calling about your paper in general. I have noticed that every new photograph of people in your newspaper is now required that they must wear a mask in order to be in the picture. Is it your newspaper's policy to only put out pictures in your attempt and the media's attempt to visualize a new mask acceptance? Why does every picture in your newspaper the *Villa Park Review* have individuals wearing masks? How absurd is it that every picture has to have people wearing masks? This is utterly insane.

Editors' note: There is no policy in place at the *Villa Park Review* requiring individuals to wear a mask in order to be in a picture. It is their choice whether or not to do so.

Question for the governor of Illinois: Why are people moving out?

There's been a big push in recent years to reduce carbon emissions and shift to electric cars. Nothing against electric cars if the average

person could actually afford one, but here's the irony. In order to raise additional revenue, especially during COVID, one of the first things state and municipal governments have done is raise the gasoline tax. In the last few weeks, Chicago raised their gasoline tax by 3 cents a gallon and DuPage County is raising their gas tax by 4 cents a gallon. Last year, the state increased the gas tax to 38 cents a gallon from 19 cents. Any ideas how that revenue is going to be replaced if the radical left gets their way, and either phases out gasoline powered vehicles or eliminates them altogether?

I read a report stating that Illinois has lost more than one-third of its small businesses since the beginning of the year, according to Harvard and Brown universities and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. These certainly are not conservative organizations. I keep hearing that we're all in this together, stay strong, blah, blah, blah, but if you're a small business owner, I guess you're the economic sacrifici-

cial lamb during COVID-19 while the big-box stores make money and the public sector and school districts maintain their budgets.

Democrats used signature matches to keep the Green Party off the ballot in several states. Democrats also used signature matches to keep Kanye West off the ballot in Illinois. Why shouldn't the same signature standards apply to absentee ballots in this year's election?

Does the media ever report any details about the supposed COVID-19 death tally? Do they ever mention that more than half of the supposed COVID-19 deaths in Illinois have been in long-term care facilities? Do they ever mention that the average age of the people who supposedly died of COVID-19 is about 80 years old? Do they ever mention that the vast majority of people who supposedly died of COVID-19 had some other serious medical condition? In other words, they died with COVID-19, not of COVID-19. On the whole, our nation's media is an embarrassment.

The Lombard/Villa Park Food Pantry will open again on Dec. 11. Many thanks to all the volunteers and pray that they all are well during this temporary shutdown. They give of their time every week to help feed our neighbors.

What happened to the riots? Did the rioters achieve what they wanted, or did they just get tired? Did they stop because the weather got colder?

If Joe Biden won fair and square, how come Democrats don't want anyone to match the signatures on the mail-in ballots? Wouldn't Democrats welcome an audit, or are they afraid that an audit will show that a massive amount of mail-in ballots for Biden will have signatures that do not match?

A doctor told me the best reason the keep wearing a mask and social distancing—sometimes called staying away from bunches of people—is that they don't give vaccines to corpses.

I guess ComEd schedules tree

trimming a few days before the holidays because, well, it's a few days before the holidays. Therefore, it's a work day. They have work to do. Now guess how much your birthday affects their schedule? Now guess who is going to be out fixing lines when a tree falls on them on Thanksgiving, Christmas, your birthday, my birthday, morning, noon or night? And, I bet you would be the first to call them. And, no, I don't work for ComEd or any other utility.

I get the impression that our political leaders look upon us with contempt and disdain. We are things to be manipulated, and told what to do because we are not capable. There really is a shadow government and swamp. It is so powerful that a sitting president was hounded and mercilessly pursued. We must wake up and take our nation back.

What they're telling you about the virus is true. I've had it. I beat it, but it's still wrecking my body. Well, don't let them con you into thinking that it isn't true. The virus is not nice to have. Bye.

District 88 gives an update regarding COVID-19

First-semester exams have been canceled at Willowbrook and Addison Trail; winter athletics remain on hold

District 88 provided an update related to the current COVID-19 pandemic during its newsletter of Dec. 4. "DuPage County remains in the Substantial Community Transmission level—the highest of three levels—for the seventh consecutive week," noted the update from District 88, which includes Willowbrook High School and Addison Trail High

School. "The county is in the Substantial Community Transmission level for four of the six factors on the DuPage County COVID-19 School Metrics Guidance and is in the Moderate level for the other two categories."

The update added that the district will continue to offer fully remote instruction.

"As a result of these numbers, District 88 will maintain remote learning and its adaptive pause. This means all in-person curricular and extracurricular activities (including athletics, clubs, learning centers and in-person instruction) are suspended until further notice. During its Nov. 16 meeting, the District 88 Board of Education approved the administration's use of adaptive pauses in the event of significant increases in COVID-19 case counts, local outbreaks and/or staff shortages due to exposures and quarantines."

The update stated that the district will continue to provide a robust curriculum, and is prepared to move to a hybrid/in-person learning environment when data and guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Gov. JB Pritzker, the Illinois and DuPage County health departments, the Illinois State Board of Education and the DuPage Regional Office of Education support that decision.

In its Nov. 16 meeting, the District 88 Board approved several amendments to the 2020-21 school calendar. One of the amendments canceled the final exams for the first semester. Those exams had been scheduled to take place Dec. 16-18. Those three days will now be regular school days.

As for winter athletics, the district noted that it is following the guidance and recommendations from Pritzker and various agencies.

"While we await approval from

"This means all in-person curricular and extracurricular activities (including athletics, clubs, learning centers and in-person instruction) are suspended until further notice."

—District 88 update

those organizations and the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) to begin the season, we are working with winter and high-contact sports [basketball, football and wrestling] to plan remote activities to keep student-athletes engaged," stated the district. "These include virtual workouts, mentoring and skill-building/team-building events. Our coaches and sponsors continue to look for creative ways to connect with and care for pupils."

The district plans to run five winter sports, including boys swimming and diving, cheerleading, dance, girls bowling and girls gymnastics. The district has one co-op boys swimming and diving team, consisting of students from both Willowbrook and Addison Trail. Each school has its own teams in the other four sports.

"At this time, we haven't received approval to allow boys and girls basketball to take place during the winter season," noted the district's Dec. 4 statement. "We will continue to monitor this sport and will share any provided updates."

In October, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) elevated basketball from a medium-risk sport to a high-risk sport.

County health department reports nearly 49,000 COVID-19 cases, with 792 deaths, since March

STAFF REPORT

According to the DuPage County Health Department, as of Sunday, Dec. 6, there have been 48,891 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 792 COVID-19 related deaths in the county since March.

There have been 1,478 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 11 deaths related to the coronavirus in Villa Park residents since March. Lombard has reported 2,526 cases and 34 deaths.

There are several figures and statistics related to COVID-19 on the DuPage County Health Department's website—dupagehealth.org.

The health department's update of Monday, Nov. 30, indicated 739 COVID-19 related deaths in DuPage County since March. The Dec. 6 update noting 792 deaths does not mean there were 53 deaths related to the coronavirus in the previous week. Some of the recently reported deaths took place earlier in the year. The county does not report the actual date of death in its daily updates.

As of Nov. 30, there were 204 COVID-19 related deaths during April. As of Dec. 6, there were 206 deaths in April. As of Nov. 30, there were 206 deaths related to the coronavirus in May. As of Dec. 6, the number of May deaths related to COVID-19 stood at 209.

All of the county health department's figures are provisional and subject to change.

DuPage County's first death related to the coronavirus was reported on March 19. According to the Dec. 6 update, there were 14 deaths related to COVID-19 in March, 206 in April, 209 in May, 94 in June, 34 in July, 18 in August, 23 in September, 46 in October and 145 in November. As of the Dec. 6 update, therefore, there were 789 COVID-19 related deaths in the county through Nov. 30, and three additional deaths related to the coronavirus during December.

The county health department's daily update of Dec. 5 states, "Since yesterday, there are 730 new cases of COVID-19 in DuPage County with seven deaths of persons with COVID-19 infection reported."

According to the health department's daily update of Dec. 6, "Since yesterday, there are 634 new cases of COVID-19 in DuPage County with 10 deaths of persons with COVID-19 infection reported."

Those two updates imply that there were 17 COVID-19 related deaths in the county from Dec. 4-6. Again, the county does not provide the actual date of death in its daily reports. As of Dec. 6, the county's figures indicate three COVID-19

related deaths in the county during December.

The Dec. 6 update states that 448 (about 56 percent) of the county's 792 deaths related to COVID-19 involved residents 80 and older. Another 200 deaths involved residents between the ages of 70-79, while 91 deaths involved residents in their 60s.

One of the county's 792 deaths related to the coronavirus involved a resident in the 20-29 age group. None of the 792 deaths involved a resident 19 and under.

According to the county health department, 417 (about 53 percent) of the 792 COVID-19 related deaths in the county involved males, while 375 involved females.

Another figure in the county's reports noted that, as of Dec. 1, about 5.8 percent (2,639) COVID-19 cases in the county were associated with long-term care facilities. About 68 percent of the county's COVID-19 related deaths, however (504 of 741, as of Dec. 1), were associated with long-term care facilities.

The county health department's statistics also note that as of Dec. 1, underlying medical conditions were reported in nearly 90 percent of the COVID-19 related deaths in DuPage County.