

# Eagle runners seek three-peat with addition of Connor Bartek

By Mike Lee  
Eagle Contributor

The Goldthwaite boys' cross country team has had to scramble just to fill a five-man team in recent seasons -- and the Eagles still won the last two district team championships.

This year veteran coach Ashley Spradley has eight boys, including two of the top three finishers in last year's district meet in juniors Jonathan Bartek and Brecken Reyes, respectively. Spradley also has Connor Bartek, the freshman flash who dazzled the middle school competition last year in cross country and track. Connor Bartek, Spradley said, already is the Eagles' No. 1 runner entering the season.

"I expect Connor to be the No. 1 runner in the district. I think he can go out and win district," Spradley said. "He has given his brother (Jonathan) somebody to chase after."

Cross country teams can have seven runners, and the top five count toward the team score. Last year junior Jordan Simon was a late addition to the Eagles' roster, allowing them to field a team and win district for the second consecutive year.

"Jordan did a great job last year as our No. 5 runner, but he's playing football this year," Spradley said. "But it's nice to have eight or nine runners and not have to scramble to fill a team. We're hoping to finish in the top 10 at regional this year. We've been finishing like 17th. I would love to have an individual boy advance to state."

In addition to the Bartek brothers and Reyes, the Eagles also return junior Clayton Schulze, who finished 11th at district last year. Watt Adams, another junior, is back with the team after missing last season with a foot injury.

Other team members include newcomers Ridge Stegemoller, Jessy Anzua and Miguel Martinez.

"We're looking for a three-peat in district," Spradley said. District 10-2A includes Meridian, Hico, De Leon,

Santo and Goldthwaite.

## GHS GIRLS

The Goldthwaite girls' cross country team has been knocking on the door of a district championship, but the Lady Eagles have finished second for the last four years -- three times to Hamilton and last year to Meridian.

The Lady Eagles lost reliable top-10 district finishers Madison Martinez and Ally Hopper, but they return three-time individual state qualifier Kylee Medina. Also, senior Macy Seward is back after missing last season with a knee injury, and freshman Avery Graves has been impressive in preseason practices.

"All of our cross country teams -- boys and girls from the seventh grade through the varsity -- won district last year except for our varsity girls. But winning district is still the goal. It's always the goal," Spradley said.

"We lost two good ones in Madison and Ally, but we've got Macy back and Avery will help. She was our No. 2 runner in preseason practices. Meridian will be tough again, but the goal is to win district."

Medina is the two-time defending district individual champion. At the UIL state meet, Medina has finished 17th as a freshman, sixth as a sophomore and 14th as a junior. She also finished second at the UIL state track meet last spring in the 3200 meters, breaking a 25-year-old school record with a time of 11 minutes, 46.55 seconds.

Other returning varsity runners from last year include juniors Jasmine Balencia, Emma Grebe and Kelly Ables. Seniors Jessica Horton and Callie Jernigan are also veteran runners.

The Lady Eagles have incredible depth. They had 50 runners in high school and middle school participate in preseason practices. Others who figure to run on either the varsity or JV this fall include juniors Elle Petersen and Taylor Rountree; sophomores Karleigh Bolt and Maggie Tupin; and freshmen Makayla Miles, Jenna Fincher and

Annie Grebe.

"I want the target to be on us," Spradley said. "I want other teams to not like Goldthwaite. I want other teams to want to beat Goldthwaite. I want to see every other team's best effort. I want them to compete their best, and we'll still beat 'em."

The District 10-2A meet will include De Leon, Goldthwaite, Hico, Meridian and Santo.

### GOLDTHWAITE CROSS COUNTRY

#### Girls Varsity Candidates

Seniors – Kylee Medina, Jessica Horton, Macy Seward, Callie Jernigan, Bayleigh Hicks.

Juniors – Jasmine Balencia, Kelly Ables, Emma Grebe, Elle Petersen, Taylor Rountree, Jadyn Deweese.

Sophomores – Karleigh Bolt, Maggie Tupin.

Freshmen – Avery Graves, Makayla Miles, Annie Grebe, Jenna Fincher, Britni Roberts, Andi Voelkel.

### BOYS PRESEASON ROSTER

Juniors – Jonathan Bartek, Brecken Reyes, Clayton Schulze, Wyatt Adams.

Sophomore – Jessy Anzua.

Freshmen – Connor Bartek, Ridge Stegemoller, Miguel Martinez.

### 2019 GIRLS & BOYS SCHEDULE

Aug. 28 – San Saba

Sept. 4 – Brownwood

Sept. 11 – Hico

Sept. 25 – Priddy

Oct. 2 – Goldthwaite

Oct. 9 – Stephenville

Oct. 16 – District 10-2A Meet, Goldthwaite

Oct. 28 – Region II-2A Meet, Dallas

Nov. 9 – UIL State Meet, Round Rock



The 2019 Goldthwaite boys' cross country team.



The 2019 Goldthwaite girls' cross country team.

# Goldthwaite Cross Country 2019