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Small Squad With Big Hopes For DGF Lady Rebels Harriers

Kelsey Buchholz
Sports Writer



We've heard the old adage a million times: "Good things come in small packages." While that sayings accuracy may be up for debate, it definitely holds true for the DGF Lady Rebels Cross Country team.

With just four girls on the squad, they are a close-knit group who continue to push each other.

Head Coach Mike Anderson was quick to note that there is "good leadership" on this year's team. They are each other's role

models and have displayed a "positive work ethic" coming into their 2019 season.

The Lady Rebels return three athletes to their team: sophomore Marissa John, sophomore Emma Friend, and eighth grader Alexis Rude. DGF lost Katherine Finseth to graduation this past spring but did gain a new athlete in junior Isabella Tollefson, a strong athlete from the girls' track distance program.

"Isabella has track experience in the 800 meters and mile," said Anderson, "making her a diamond in the rough."

While it will be a new type of competition for Tollefson, she has some great teammates to turn

to for support and guidance.

Fellow sophomore Marissa John is the top runner for the Lady Rebels and will serve as captain this season.

"Marissa is setting the pace for the rest of the pack and will help guide the Lady Rebels this year. She has been the top runner for the Rebels the past couple years and has been competitive in most major meets," Anderson said.

John finished in the top third at last year's section meet and is looking to improve upon that finish this season.

And that falls in line with the team goals for this season: continual improvement throughout the entire season.

"Over the past couple seasons, the Rebel girls have lost some dedicated and hard-working girls," said Anderson. "They are difficult to replace being that cross country is a challenging sport. With few runners returning to the program, a period of rebuilding will be needed to supply the depth needed to compete with the best programs in the area."

Still shy of enough participants to field a full team, the Lady Rebels need to rely on individual finishes to keep moving the team forward and garnering interest. But Coach Anderson believes that if there is "constant improvement as the season progresses and we

keep work on building depth," the Lady Rebel program will continue to move in the right direction.

There are no seniors on the squad, so the DGF harriers are getting invaluable experience at a young age against tough competition.

That includes continually racing against conference and section foe, the Perham Yellowjackets. Perham is in the midst of a cross country dynasty it seems and it is tough to knock them off, but it is beneficial to the young DGF squad to consistently see what it takes to compete at such a high level.

Now in his 21st year of

coaching, Anderson will lead the way for the young Lady Rebels cross country team. Assisting him this season are Mary Wilson and Steve Hanson.

Dilworth-Glyndon Felton opens up their season at Fargo North on August 25 and then races at Breckenridge later that week.

2019 Cross Country Rosters

Girls:	
11th	Isabella Tollefson
10th	Marissa John
10th	Emma Friend
8th	Alexis Rude

Talent, Experience Cross Paths For Rebels Cross Country Season

Kelsey Buchholz
Sports Writer



After an optimistic finish to their 2018 campaign, finishing fourth in the conference and in the section meet, the Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton boys cross country team has been hitting the road, putting on miles and shaving times, all in preparation for the 2019 season.

Mike Anderson is back at the helm for his 21st season coaching cross country. He will be assisted by Mary Wilson and Steve Hanson.

Also returning this season are a handful of key runners for the Rebels. The DGF harriers have a strong senior core with "lots of racing experience, a good work ethic, and a solid talent base," explained Coach Anderson. "We also have an up and coming sophomore to take over the leadership role next year."

Seniors Cade Dawson, Alec Gulseth, Gabe Grawe, and Josh Ness, along with sophomore Chandler Gray, have definitely set the tone for the Rebels cross country team. There is determination, fire, and commitment, and it has been evident even in the young season.

Dawson and Gulseth are serving as the captains of the Rebels' squad this season and "are the most experienced as they start their sixth season in the program," said Anderson.

Dawson has had both team and individual success during his tenure as a Rebel runner.

"Cade is the leader on the Rebel cross country team with best finishes the last two years in Section 8A," Anderson said.

By all statistical numbers, Dawson was DGF's top runner last year, earning Heart O'Lakes All-Conference status and finishing 16th in the section.

The DGF team is going into this season with the goal of bettering those numbers for both individual runners and as a team score. And they have been putting in the miles to do so. The Rebels lost Peyton Schwahr to graduation, but Chandler Gray as quickly asserted himself as a potential contributor.

"Chandler has already knocked minutes off his training times from last year," noted Anderson. "He has had a great off-season training and is pushing to be in one of the top varsity spots."

Dawson, Gray, and senior

captain Gulseth are locking in their positions as the top runners for the DGF cross country team and it is coming with experience racing as well. This works to the Rebels' benefit as they will know how to work together and push through in the final miles to better each other while each vying competitively for top spots.

Coach Anderson stated, "The Rebels' top runners are talented and experienced by running from four to six years on the varsity. Depth and inexperience in the fifth spot on varsity are obstacles that need to be overcome in order to compete for high section honors."

However, Anderson was quick to note that senior Josh Ness, sophomore Oliver Jesme, or eighth grader Joe Wilson all are looking good and are making that fifth roster spot a difficult choice.

Regardless of the team makeup it'll be a difficult road as perennial powerhouse Perham Yellowjackets seemed to have wrapped up the conference and

section titles fairly easily the past few years. And then West Central is also looking strong this season as they did not lose anyone from their 2018 squad.

Nevertheless, the DGF cross country team believes they can and should be, as Anderson said, "competitive at the end of the season as one of the top teams in both the Heart O'Lakes and Section 8A meet. The top four runners all have an excellent chance to run well enough in qualifying for a trip to the state meet at St. Olaf in November."

But ultimately it is up to them to do it. They have seen what it takes and experienced that level of competition. They have put in the miles in the off-season. They have shown incredible determination and focus to start this season. Now it is a matter of executing what they have been practicing.

Anderson said, "The junior varsity and junior high are also improving rapidly and look to have a successful season."

With a baker's dozen on

the roster from grades 7-12, Anderson has a slew of talent he gets to work with this year. And it is always an exciting season when the athletes work to impress the coach, better themselves, and improve their teammates along the way.

The DGF Rebels start their season on August 25 with a meet hosted by Fargo North before turning around later in the week to travel to Breckenridge.

2019 Cross Country Rosters

Boys:	
12th	Cade Dawson
12th	Alec Gulseth
12th	Gabe Grawe
12th	Josh Ness
10th	Chandler Gray
10th	Oliver Jesme
9th	Chase Julin
9th	Gabe Schmitz
9th	Dalton Grubb
8th	Carter Julin
8th	Joe Wilson
8th	Isaac Gifford
7th	Jacob Skolness



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The Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton boys and girls Rebels Cross Country team members are, left to right, front row-Carter Julin, Jacob Skolness, Isaac Gifford, Joe Wilson, Gabe Schmitz; middle row-Emma Friend, Marissa John, Oliver Jesme, Alexis Rude, Chase Julin, Dalton Grubb; back row-Josh Ness, Alec Gulseth, Gabe Grawe, Cade Dawson and Chandler Gray. Not pictured is Isabella Tollefson.