

Both Priddy XC teams seeking returning trip to state

**By Mike Lee
Eagle Contributor**

The Priddy girls' cross country team surprised even veteran head coach Jimmie Cain by finishing second and qualifying for the UIL Class 1A state meet last year. Now, with everyone returning and two capable freshmen joining the team, expectations this year for the Lady Pirates are much higher.

"I think we're capable of a top three finish at state," said Cain, whose team finished 10th at state last year. "I'm not trying to brag, but we have a chance. That's all I'm saying. I'm just going by what these girls have accomplished. They work so hard and there's no complaining."

The Lady Pirates are led by junior Sydney Partin, already a two-time state qualifier who finished sixth individually at last year's UIL meet. Priddy's other finishers at state last year were Lindsey Grelle at 51st, Emma Martin at 58th, MaKyna Harvey at 62nd, and Mackenzie Morgan at 67th. They all return this year, along with veteran high school runners Alyssa Hurst, Danielle Goehmann, Zoey Ward, Emily Andrade, and Rianne Hurst.

Karissa Seider could challenge for the No. 2 or 3 spot on the team as

a freshman, Cain said, and Natalie Seider is another capable freshman.

"I didn't think we were doing all that well at regional (last year) when our runners were coming in, but we ended up finishing second," Cain said. "I'm more optimistic this year. Everybody's back, plus Karissa and Natalie. There's going to be competition to make the varsity, and that makes everybody better."

Through the preseason practices, Partin had re-established her spot as the team's No. 1 runner, with Grelle and Karissa Seider vying for the No. 2 position. Martin was running in the No. 4 spot, and she was followed by Alyssa Hurst, Harvey, Goehmann, and Natalie Seider.

With 12 runners that could help any varsity team in its district, Priddy enjoys remarkable depth for a Class 1A team. Varsity teams may have seven runners at district, and the top five count toward the team score.

The Lady Pirates won the District 18-1A championship last year, and are a heavy favorite to repeat. Sidney poses the biggest district threat to Priddy.

"The girls ran four and a half miles the first day of practice, including a two-run run for time," said Cain, the Lady Pirates' fifth-

year head coach. "We're able to do some speed work and pacing work on our new track. We hope that will pay off. They're way ahead of where they were at this time last year."

"This is an amazing group of girls we have right now. They won district in all five sports (cross country, basketball, track, tennis, and golf) last year."

Priddy is scheduled to host the District 18-1A meet Oct. 13. The Region III-1A meet is scheduled for Oct. 25 at Arlington, and the UIL state is set for Nov. 6 at Round Rock.

Ward leads Priddy boys

The Priddy boys avoided the

pitfalls of COVID and enjoyed a strong 2020 season – winning district, finishing third at regional and placing sixth at the UIL state meet. The Pirates return their Nos. 1, 3, 5, and 6 runners from last year, but most replace their Nos. 2, 4, and 7 runners.

"When you lose your No. 2 runner and your No. 4 runner, that's pretty big," veteran Pirates' coach Curtis Hurst said. "We have to figure out how to replace them, but our goal is to get back to state again. If we can replace the guys we lost, we have a chance to be very successful."

The returnees begin with junior

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The Priddy boys' cross country team.

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