



For Immediate Release

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VA & MD split POTOMAC XC CUPS at BATTLE XC 4

Davis and Lowery work as teammates in thrilling finish to break course record

Bethesda, MD— Kaitlyn Davis came back to defend her Battle of the Potomac XC Crown a week after she captured the Virginia AAA State Cross Country title in a close race at Great Meadow. She knew that the Battle of the Potomac was more about team but did not imagine that she'd battle a VA teammate for the repeat win. In the closest finish in the 4 year history of the Battle of the Potomac, Davis out leaned Hannah Lowery of Stafford at the line to repeat as Girls' Champion. Lowery, an All-State AAA finisher kept up with Davis throughout the race on the double loop 5K course. She appeared to have a slight lead with 10m to go, but that's where the experience of the senior Davis showed. Davis moved to the inside of Lowery as they completed the curve to the finish. Davis managed to get her chip across the line along with her torso by the narrowest of margins. Both girls were timed in 19:09 to break the course record set by Kristen Malloy, a former MD and CT State cross country champion now at Princeton.

The effort of Davis and Lowery helped lead the charge for TEAM VA's GIRLS as they handily defeated TEAM MD 65 to 145. Kaitlyn Davis also managed to add some intrigue to the Boys Seeded race. She had a hand in convincing the Boys of Mountain View High School to come race the Smokey Glen Farm double loop course to stay fresh for their attempt to earn a berth in the Nike Cross Nationals (NXN) Finals in early December at next Saturday's NXN SOUTHEAST REGIONAL. Their goals were to use the race as a training run, and they hoped to assist Team VA in the Battle for the Potomac XC Cup.

The boys' race had a surprising early leader after one lap around the Smokey Glen Farm 5K course in Nic Escobar of Magruder High School of Montgomery County Maryland, an all-state 4A runner one week ago. Word is that Escobar came determined to go for the win. A veteran of the Battle of the Potomac XC Championship, he wanted to go out and run with the best of Maryland, DC, West Virginia and Virginia. Escobar was right behind Robby Creese, the MD 2A state champion as he and Thomas Harrison, the St Albans' junior and #1 runner lept the creek just before exiting the Smokey Glen Farms' woods. On the Smokey Glen Farm hill that hits runners after leaping the creek, Escobar surged and took the lead up the big hill. Creese dropped back and Harrison moved into the top 3. As the runners headed to the 2nd loop and the Christmas Tree Farm, there was something to greet the pack again on the 2nd go-round: a couple of Smokey Glen Farms' resident deer. Their presence did not slow the leaders as Escobar returned to the covered bridge still holding the lead. It was the 2nd trip up the hill that gave Harrison his opportunity. He powered up the hill and caught Escobar just before the top of the second less visible hill. As Harrison emerged from the ball fields and had the final 150m to the finish ahead, Escobar was starting to close. Into the finishing curve, Harrison's lead had narrowed to less than 5 meters. A final burst and Harrison crossed the line to join former St Albans grad Nick Bax as Champion of the Battle of the Potomac. Harrison also had a first: the first champion from the District of Columbia to capture a crown at the XC Border War. A junior, Harrison plans on trying to match Bax's back-to-back titles in the first two years of the event.

Team Maryland had enough scoring punch in the top 10 to score a comfortable win over Team Virginia. Another meet first was the presence in the boys' team competition of West Virginia. Last year, West VA (WV) scored for Team VA but in 2009, there were ample number of seeded boys to permit WV to score. Maryland's front running depth overpowered the presence of the tight pack of Mountain View's boys who put 4 of their top 5 in the top 10 for Team Virginia (Note: top 10 score for each state). Maryland brought back the Potomac XC Cup that Team VA had captured in 2008 by an 85 to 140 score.

The OPEN and MIDDLE SCHOOL races brought lots of smiles and high fives from boys and girls in Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia (DC). DC runners came out to experience and compete and did not go home without smiles. Every competitor received a Nike singlet and the famous Smokey Glen Farm chicken dinner as part of their race registration.

This Battle had winners on both sides and for all ages. Team VA Girls took back the POTOMAC XC CUP they had earned in 2008 and the Maryland Boys brought back the POTOMAC XC CUP they had held for the first two years of the event.

Results are posted on RUNNERS' HIGH (www.runhigh.com) and will be posted on the BATTLE OF THE POTOMAC XC website along with event photos: www.battlexc.com

The Battle of the Potomac XC Championships is produced by the Bethesda, MD - based American Running Association (ARA). "We see the Battle of the Potomac XC Championship Meet as a perfect event to entice more kids into running. All event proceeds help produce this meet and our free youth walk-run training programs", added Watt. ARA is a nonprofit organization founded in 1968 to promote healthy living and active lifestyles among all Americans. It is dedicated to supporting runners through education and specialized programs, as well as encouraging all individuals from youths to adults to run and be fit. For more information about the ARA or to learn more about the Walk and Run programs, visit www.americanrunning.org.

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