

## Boys cross country charges into state ranking

By Tommy Dixon

Focus Editor



Photo by Alissa Hirsh

Boys cross country varsity squad prepares to dominate at their Glenbrook North Invite on Sept. 20. The Vikings finished the race with a score of 15 points.

Despite losing all-state graduate Kosta Papazoglou to the University of Illinois at Chicago, the boys cross-country team has started off their season well.

The Vikings' returning varsity runners include seniors Aron Sebhat, Tim Vazquez and Carlitos Rangel, as well as juniors Micah Beller and Justin Suh. The team has also welcomed juniors Dan Noboa and Randy Mortell to the squad.

At the first meet on Sept. 3, the Vikings finished 6th as a team, behind four of the top ranked teams in the state including No.1 Palatine. Sebhat was the frontrunner for the Vikings, finishing 10th with a time of 15:36, a 31-second personal best.

Looking to build off their success at the Hinsdale Central Kathie Leggie Meet, the Vikings took a trip down to Peoria on Sept. 10 to once again match up with some of the state's finest.

"Going into the Peoria meet, we knew we wanted to break [a five-runner total of] 79 minutes," head coach Dan Horyn said. "We hadn't broken 80 minutes in my five years as a coach, so we knew it was a lofty enough goal, but achievable as well. We also wanted to beat some ranked teams, because we knew that we deserved to be ranked."

In one of the most shocking moments in Niles North cross-country history, the

Vikings vastly exceeded those goals by outrunning 10 state-ranked teams (including then No.1 Neuqua Valley) to win the Peoria Woodruff Invitational. They also clocked a team time of 76:52, the fastest in school history, and all five runners recorded personal bests by an average of 45 seconds per runner. The incredible upset and impressive times landed the Vikings in the 8th spot in the state rankings.

"The win in Peoria has changed the way we view other teams," Sebhat said, who placed 5th overall in the meet (14:53). "Teams that we used to dream about competing with are now teams that we believe are beatable."

Yet the Vikings are still running with a chip on their shoulders, in order to prove that their performance at Peoria was not a fluke. At their next invite in Deerfield on Sept. 13, the Vikings continued their excellence, with a 1-2-3 finish by Sebhat (15:05), Beller (15:13), and Rangel (15:15).

On Sept. 20, the Vikings scored a perfect 15 at their GBN invite, as all top five finishers were from Niles North. Sebhat, Vazquez, Rangel, Beller and Noboa finished 1,2,3,4,5 respectively.

"It's become a lot of fun knowing that if we run well as a team we can win any race on any given day," Sebhat said.

## Boys soccer struggles to score

By Ayana Jamal

Editor-in-Chief

**Opponent: Maine South**  
**W/L: Tie**  
**Score: 3-3**

On Sept. 6, the Vikings (1-5-1 at the time) took on the Maine South Hawks.

After giving the Hawks a quick 3-0 lead, the Vikings began to pick up their slack at the end of the first half with a goal by sophomore striker Ivan Korkes.

In the second half, senior stopper Kaan Erel headed the ball in for the goal, and senior left midfielder Alex Stavropoulos kicked in the last goal towards the end of the game.

The goal tied the score 3-3 and the game ended in a tie. "We came out the second half and let them know that we're a better team," senior captain and center midfielder Danny Rodriguez said. "We just have to show it from the start when it's 0-0 and not when we're down 3-0."

**Opponent: Glenbrook North**  
**W/L: Tie**  
**Score: 0-0**

The Vikings welcomed the Glenbrook North Spartans to Niles North on Tuesday, Sept. 13, confident in their collective abilities to battle during the game and potentially prevail with a win.

With an increasingly pressuring Viking offense, partly due to senior midfielders Alessandro Scanu De Rubeis and Elan Ness-Cohn and sophomore Korkes, the boys had eight shots on their opponent's goal in total and the soccer team controlled most of the game. Unfortunately, they were not able to score and the game ended in a 0-0 tie.

Junior goalkeeper Dan Miranda ended the up with four saves and the North defense held up a tight wall for the majority of the game.

"We have to tighten up our finishing touches," varsity coach Yoon Lee said.

**Opponent: Niles West**  
**W/L: Loss**  
**Score: 3-1**

With many of their losses coming by a margin of a single goal, the Vikings stepped onto their turf Sept. 24 for the annual Skokie Skirmish against Niles West to prove that their record (1-10-3) doesn't do them justice.

However, the boys struggled from the get go, giving the Wolves a 3-goal lead. In the second half, Stavropoulos scored the Vikings' only goal, making it his fifth for the season.

"Yesterday's loss was based on careless mistakes that led to easy goals for West and the inability to follow through with scoring opportunities," senior captain and right midfielder Zain Siddiqui said. "We're going to go back to the drawing board, work on moving the ball around and solidify plays that may help us start putting goals in the back of the net."



Photo by Steffie Drucker

Senior Sorriyah Ranger prepares to take a snap at the annual Powderpuff competition Monday Sept. 26. Her team ultimately prevailed 6-0 on a rushing touchdown by teammate Iesha Alexander.