

Healthy competition

Local rivalries unite our community

By Madi Lucido
COPY EDITOR



Michigan vs. Michigan State and North vs. South are Grosse Pointe's most familiar rivalries. Rivalry game days for Grosse Pointers result in full green and white or maize and blue outfits. Whether you're in the stands or watching Channel 7,

there is an obvious dispute between fans through outfits, flags or even fights. But, being on the field brings both tension and motivation to players. I believe that while rivalries bring unnecessary opposition, they bring more positive outcomes than negative.

Hearing news of violent aftermath post rivalry games is not uncommon, but the fight between eight MSU football players and one U of M player brought the controversy to another level. Whether this occurred because of a personal or external situation, the deep-rooted competition between the teams undoubtedly brought the situation to a more severe outcome.

The time preceding rivalry game days can also have a negative effect on the civility of these games. Driving into school to see spray painted banners with negative comments about North that South students hung up before the rivalry football game lessened excitement for the upcoming game. Like the vandalism at our school, North students frequently paint South's rock before a rivalry game. This seems to bring repercussions, such as offensive posts that often follow.

While fans seem to be the main motivators towards an unfriendly rivalry, the competition is also used to push the teams to their best. Personally, during a field hockey game against South my team has more energy and a certain spark in comparison to playing an school that we have no relation to. Both this specific energy and personal connection makes us more intrigued and motivated.

Communities can also be brought together by these annual events. Both field hockey and soccer have put on fundraisers in partnership with South to raise money for St. Jude cancer research and treatment. Even from other sides of the bleachers, the conflict is put aside. Seeing communities come together and players' drive makes a larger impact than the separations caused by rivalry games.

Running her way to states

Deskins places herself on the record board

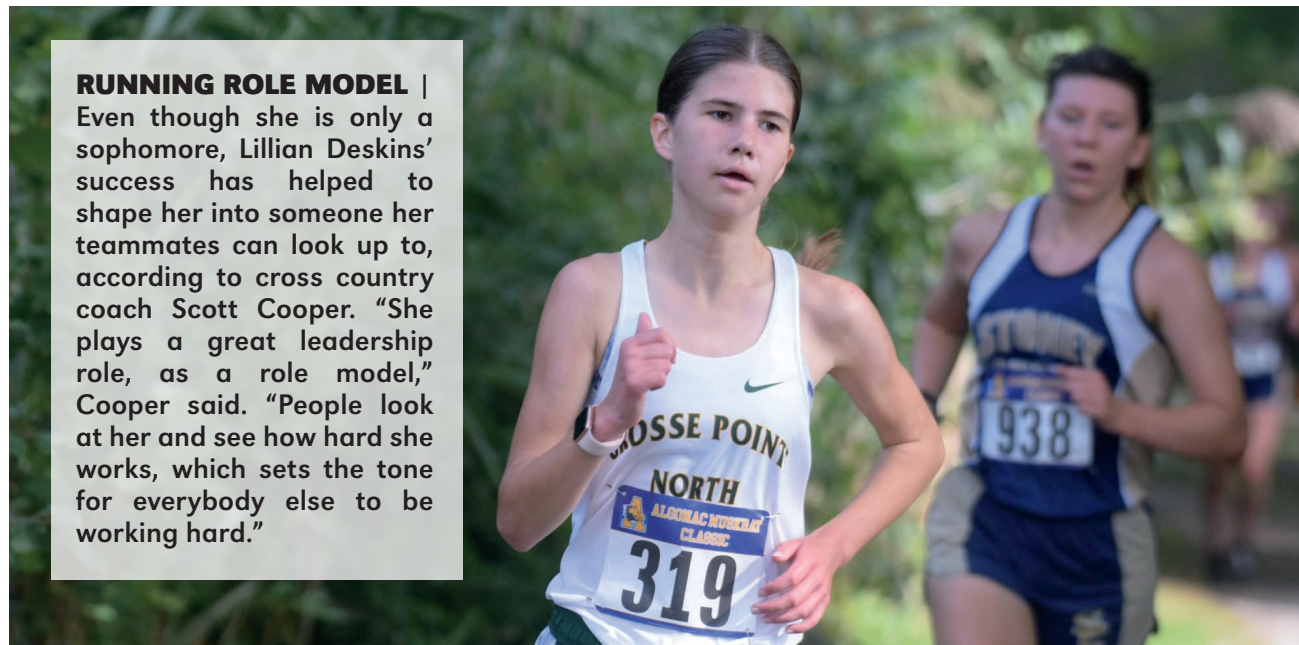
By Kaitlyn Barr & Isabella Boedeker

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RUNNING ROLE MODEL |

Even though she is only a sophomore, Lillian Deskins' success has helped to shape her into someone her teammates can look up to, according to cross country coach Scott Cooper. "She plays a great leadership role, as a role model," Cooper said. "People look at her and see how hard she works, which sets the tone for everybody else to be working hard."



While many athletes view running as a punishment, for sophomore Lillian Deskins, track and cross country are her essence— nothing compares to the feeling of tying up her laces and letting her muscles take control for miles. On Oct. 29 at the MHSAA Girls' Cross Country Region meet, Lillian Deskins managed to run the course in 18:57.3, which is a new personal record for her and has put her 8th on the school record board.

Although Lillian Deskins has been able to succeed as a top runner, she has had to overcome multiple hurdles. Last year during track season she struggled with some health issues.

"I was frustrated because I was putting the work in and the results just didn't show," Lillian Deskins said. "It made me wonder, am I even cut out for this? I just was not the runner I thought I should be."

It took more than running for Lillian Deskins to accomplish a new PR time. The mental aspect is just as vital as the physical. Strategies flowed through Lillian Deskins mind while her feet continued to do the objective.

"[During the race] I found a pack of girls that I knew were really fast runners and I just stuck with them, and I kept telling myself pick it up, literally just 10 more minutes, and you have your spot," Lillian Deskins said. "My biggest goal was to make it to states, but part of me was wondering how fast I could actually go and if I could break the record."

After a successful run at the regional meet, Deskins qualified for the state meet. Although her race did not go as well as she had hoped due to rough weather conditions, she still managed to persevere while competing against the best runners in Michigan. Her dedication has not gone unnoticed by others, as teammates including senior captain Eyrn Cosgrove are inspired by her willingness to push herself.

"Her success is all because of her own hard work," Cosgrove said. "She deserves everything she's gotten because she has put in all the effort to get there."

Teammates and coaches traveled two hours to spend the day cheering Lillian Deskins on at the state meet. While she has a large pool of supporters, she would consider her biggest supporter to be her father, Les Deskins.

Between biking behind her during night runs and exchanging information regarding running, Les Deskins plays an active role in Lillian Deskins' life. He frequently encourages her to take what she learns from sports and apply it elsewhere.

"It's important to us that Lillian takes advantage of the lessons that running provides for her overall growth as a person," Les Deskins said.

By prioritizing herself and working hard Lillian Deskins is able to dominate the clock. On top of her health struggles, Lillian Deskins has also faced mental stressors before races, according to cross country coach Scott Cooper. Cooper says he has had to calm her nerves before each race so she can run to her full potential.

"My job is to settle her down because she gets very nervous and stressed for the races so I have to work with her to calm herself down," Cooper said.

Cooper has enjoyed coaching her because of her determination and willingness to work. He has noticed improvement in both areas in the past two years.

"She's a very coachable person," Cooper said. "She's always asking how she can improve and when I give her advice she takes it."

Through cross country Lillian Deskins has managed to rediscover her love of sports and competition. Her hard work and dedication that allow her to succeed stands out to those around her.

"[Lillian] is disciplined," Les Deskins said. "[She] has established a standard of preparation and commitment that is like nothing I've seen from a youth athlete. She simply does not waver from her regimen."