



# 2022 Western Sky Community Care State Cross Country Championships

## Class 5A

### Girls

Cleveland High School was the cream of the crop in Class 5A girls cross country, winning both team and individual top honors this season. The Storm finished first at the 2022 Western Sky Community Care State Cross Country Championships with 60 points. Rio Rancho was second with 85 points and defending champ Volcano Vista was third with 91.

Cleveland senior Leah Futey led the race from start to finish, crossing the finish line in a time of 18:17.41, 30 seconds better than second-place finisher Dani Figueroa of Albuquerque High School. It was Futey's second individual state title. Futey took first as a freshman in 2019. "I normally try to go out and get a good start," explained Futey. "I was just trying to stay calm and hold my lead throughout the whole race and I was happy with the result, coming out a state champ." Futey had not lost any major race she entered this season.



### Boys

For the second year in a row, Sandia High School's Steven West was better than every other runner on the course in Class 5A. West finished first at the 2022 Western Sky Community Care State Cross Country Championships with a time of 15:04.38. West crossed the finish line four seconds ahead of Thomas Croshaw of Volcano Vista. "I knew Thomas was on me the entire time and I continued to push because I knew I could get caught at any second, probably the biggest push I've ever had in the final 400," described West.

As a team, Rio Rancho took top honors with 44 points, four better than defending state champ Volcano Vista who finished 2nd. Eldorado was third with 104 points.



## Class 4A

### Girls

Los Alamos and Albuquerque Academy battled it out for the top team spot in Class 4A. It was the Hilltoppers taking the blue trophy by six points, edging out their rival to win the 2022 Western Sky Community Care State Cross Country Championships. Los Alamos won the team title with 31 points. It's their fourth straight state victory. The Hilltoppers had three runners in the top six and five in the top 11. Academy took second as a team with 37 points. Shiprock was third with 130.

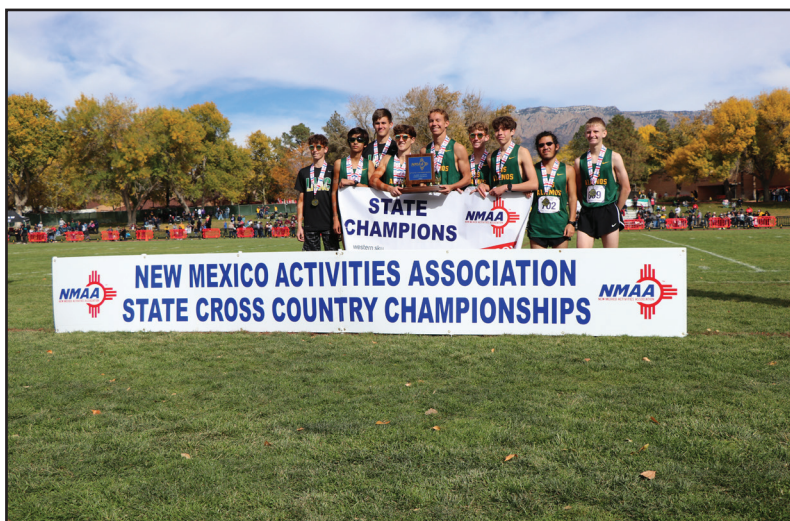


Individually, Los Alamos also had the top finisher in the race. Emma Montoya earned first place with a time of 18:19.60, almost 30 seconds faster than Academy's Anna Hastings who finished 2nd. "I've competed at the high school state meet for five years now and I feel like it's a long time coming," said Montoya.

### Boys

Hope Christian senior Rendon Kuykendall did something only ten other cross-country runners in New Mexico have ever accomplished, win three state titles. Kuykendall took home top honors at the Western Sky Community Care State Cross Country Championships for the third straight year. His time in 2022 was 15:29.20, more than 45 seconds ahead of Duane Sena of Los Alamos who finished second. "It's always an honor and I'm so grateful to the entire New Mexico cross country community because everyone is so accepting," said Kuykendall.

Los Alamos won the team title for the fourth time in five years. The Hilltoppers finished with 44 points with rival Albuquerque Academy in second with 73. Hope Christian was third with 103 points.

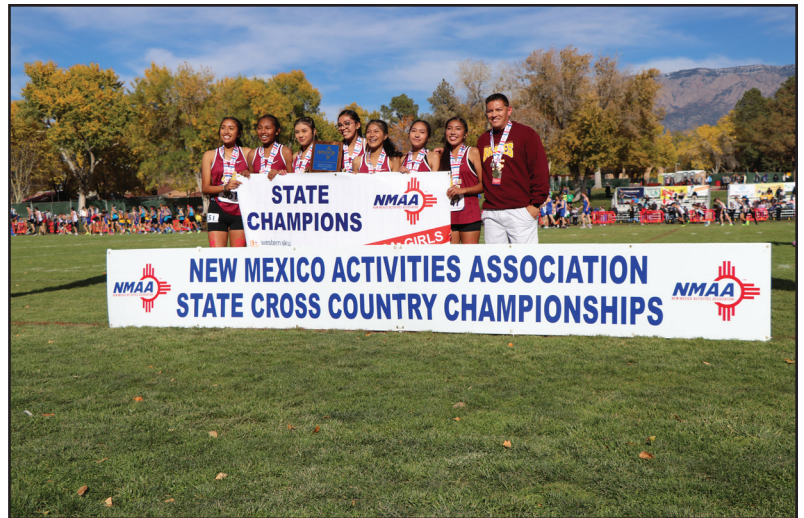




## Class 3A

### Girls

St. Michael's distance runner Raylee Hunt came into the Class 3A race as the one to catch and no one could catch her. Hunt successfully defended her title winning the 2022 Western Sky Community Care State Cross Country Championships for the second straight year. Her time of 18:52.51 was 26 seconds better than Nya Griego of Santa Fe Prep who took second. "I really wanted to get under that 19 (minute) barrier and I wanted to make sure I didn't miss it like last year," said Hunt.



In the team totals, Santa Fe Indian School finished on top for the first time since 2003. Santa Fe Indian School wrapped up their day with 40 points, 16 points better than second place Santa Fe Prep. Three-time defending champ Cottonwood Classical was third with 82.

### Boys

The Boys Class 3A race was a thrilling final 400 meters and photo finish at the 2022 Western Sky Community Care State Cross Country Championships. Maximo Brito of Cottonwood Classical, Devin Lansing of Navajo Prep, and Alex Lastyano of Zuni all entered the track grouped together stride for stride. In the final 100 meters, Brito held off his closest competitors to take top honors, crossing the finish line .05 seconds ahead of Lansing and Lastyano. "With 800 meters left, I was starting to fall behind," described Brito. "I was struggling so much, but through inspirational words from my coach on the course and my teammates, I knew I had to pass them. So, in the final 400 meters I passed them and made sure they couldn't pass me again. I pulled out an extra gear or something and barely beat them to the finish line."

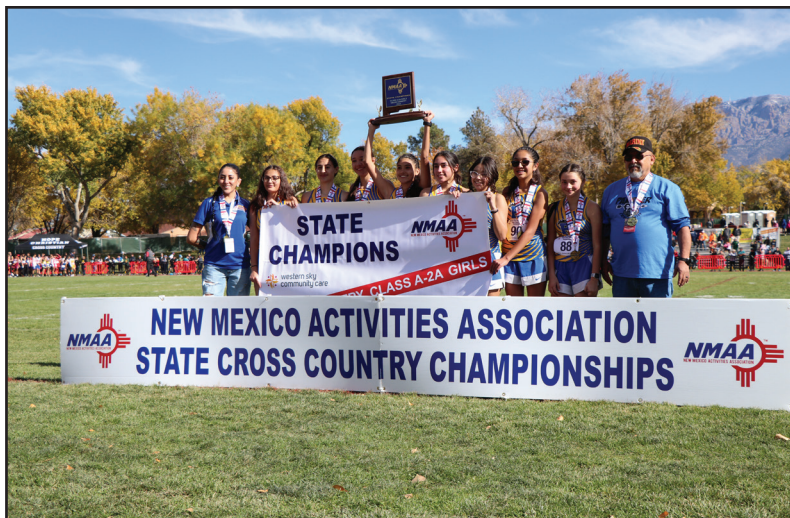


Zuni made it back-to-back state titles in 2022 with a team total of 35 points. Cottonwood Classical was second with 73 points and Navajo Prep was third with 93.

## Class A-2A

### Girls

Only eight points separated the top three teams in the field at the 2022 Western Sky Community Care Class A-2A State Cross Country Championships. For the second year in a row, Penasco High School won the state title. The Panthers topped the field with 101 points, edging out second-place ATC by just two points. Santa Rosa finished third with 109 points.



Individually, Erica Martin of Laguna Acoma crossed the finish line first in a time of 20:20.10, 16 seconds ahead of second place finisher Rochelle Lopez of Penasco. "I had a good pace, me and Emily Garcia were pacing off each other," said Martin. "We pulled away from the group that was behind us. At one point, I kind of gave up on myself, but kept going, and the last 300 meters felt amazing and then I was going for time."

### Boys

Only one point separated the top two teams in Class A-2A at the 2022 Western Sky Community Care Class A-2A State Cross Country Championships. For the second year in a row, Pecos took home top honors with 64 points. Oak Grove Classical Academy finished second with 65 points. Laguna Acoma was third with 76.

Individually, Penasco had the fastest runner for the third straight year. Jude Martinez crossed the finish line first in a time of 16:51.60, beating out Laguna Acoma's Tagoya Pedro by less than seven seconds. "I asked my friend, and last year's champ, Gilly Valdez, where to kick and he told me to kick in the last mile and I did," said the winning Martinez.

