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Ex-softball star leads Devils Peters guides Richmond to eight CC titles

By JIM WHYMER
Times Herald

The St. Clair boys cross-country team has been a force for years in the Blue Water Area.

But the Saints had some company this season with the emergence of the Richmond Blue Devils.

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The Blue Devils won eight races, qualified for the state finals and finished 11th in the Division 2 meet at the Michigan International Speedway in Brooklyn.

Running the show for the Richmond boys and girls team was Krista Peters.

Peters, who completed her third season with the Blue Devils, was recognized for her efforts as she was selected the *Times Herald* Coach of the Year.

Also considered for the award were St. Clair's Jon Davidson and Marine City's Matt Larson.

"Coach Peters is an awesome coach," said Bryan Decker, a senior and an All-Area selection. "She took over the program at the perfect time. We had the best runners people have ever seen in Richmond history.

"Coach made practices and workouts fun but we also knew when to get serious."

⊕ Zoom Photo



Krista Peters

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Peters was impressed with the work ethic and progress the Blue Devils made the past three seasons.

"Our big rivals were St. Clair, but it was a friendly rivalry," Peters said. "We tried to step on their toes a few times.

"We really didn't run against them as often as people think. A lot of the meets we were at we would end up running against their B team."

Richmond captured the Blue Water Area Conference title for a third consecutive season. The Blue Devils also claimed the Macomb County Division 2-3-4 race for a third year in a row. They were third overall (all divisions) at Macomb.

The Blue Devils won the Port Huron High, Brown City, Marysville, Center Line and Old School Classic invitationals. They were second at Algonac and Holly (Division 3).

Richmond took fourth at the Division 2 regionals and qualified for the finals as seniors Chris McCarty, Brian Peterson and Decker, and sophomore Emery Pitcel finished in the top 20.

At the state finals, the Blue Devils took 11th.

"Coach Peters did a good job of mixing up our workouts with sprints and long-distance runs," Decker said. "We also spent time in the weightroom lifting. That definitely helped us.

"We didn't get wore out and stayed healthy the whole season."

Peters is busy recruiting future runners. With the assistance of the middle school physical education teacher, Peters ran with many students last Sunday in the Jingle Bell Run in New Baltimore.

Peters is a former pitcher and outfielder at Ortonville-Brandon and the University of Detroit-Mercy. She teaches seventh- and eighth-grade math and science at Richmond Middle School.

Instead of coaching track in spring, Peters returns to the softball diamond where she is a varsity assistant under coach Howard Stuart.




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