

**Our Youth Need Us To**

# Support the Team!

*GAOC hosted the Interscholastics as part of the Georgia Navigator Cup. It was held at Sweetwater Creek State Park, outside Atlanta, Georgia this year.*

*There were some real successes this year. The story below illustrates that these successes do not happen in a vacuum. The students need our support and guidance. We need their energy and enthusiasm.*

*There is a lot more to be won than a cup in these team events.* >g



Photos by Guy Olsen

*Pictured from left to right are Erin Schirm, Dominik Landowne, Mike Sandstrom. It takes hard work and a lot of support to get to kiss the gold.*

□ **GUY OLSEN, HVO**

## HVOers Win Middle School Orienteering Championship

On the weekend of January 18-19, three HVO juniors won the Middle School competition at the 2003 U.S. Interscholastic Championships.

Ninth grader Dominik Landowne and eighth graders Michael Sandstrom and Erin Schirm were representing Green Meadow Waldorf School, an independent K-12 school located in Chestnut Ridge, New York. For their efforts, they brought home two huge, beautiful trophies: a gold colored, covered-cup to keep, and a “traveling” trophy, the coveted Brunton Cup.

Winning in a dominating fashion, Mike, Dominik and Erin also swept the top three places in the individual Male Middle School category. However, each contributed equally to the team victory: Erin had the fastest course time on Saturday; Dominik had the fastest time on Sunday and Mike had the fastest two-day total.

Almost from the moment they found out about the Interscholastics, Erin, Mike and Dominik were enthusiastic about making a run at the Middle School Championship—even though it meant traveling almost 900 miles—one way—to Georgia. Erin, in particular, took a leadership role by pushing to make this initially far-fetched vision a reality.

Having just the minimum team size of three, they did not have the cushion that 4th or 5th team members could provide in the event of a poor performance from one of them. They also faced financial

obstacles to the long trip, as well as a lack of experience in A-meet competition. They knew that they would be going up against teams from schools with formal orienteering programs and a history of success.

Their accomplishment was the result of outstanding commitment and dedication: training beyond the context of local O-meets; participating in the organization and preparation for the trip itself; and contributing their own financial resources. They sought and received support from HVO, which they returned by working HVO’s 2003 New Year’s Day-O event. Hard work, yes, but they still managed to have a lot of fun along the way!

### Support of adults also essential

Over the past several years Karl Fredrickson has been laying the groundwork with his efforts to get Green Meadow students interested in O. For the team, he helped the kids get to local events and supported their preparations for the trip. Karl’s son, John, deserves mention for serving as an O-ing role model for these kids, as well as sharing the knowledge he picked-up in Norway.

Parents of the team members – Bob and

Joan Sandstrom, Jeanne and Chris Schirm, and Christiane and Stephen Landowne — supported and encouraged their sons’ pursuit of this Championship. The Sandstroms and Schirms, in particular, provided rides and hospitality, made travel arrangements, and worked hard at HVO’s New Year’s Day-O, a fundraiser for HVO Juniors.

Bob Sandstrom, a former cross country and track runner himself, took the kids on 5 km training runs to help keep them in shape. All three boys ran cross country during the Fall.

Besides being the person who first encouraged Erin and Mike to consider the Interscholastic Champs, I provided a variety of support from working out itineraries and cost estimates, to arranging training activities, to just providing information based on 20 years of orienteering experience. Finally, Bob and I accompanied the team to Georgia—including 36 hours of train travel—and provided the necessary moral and physical support.

Many contributed a great deal to the effort, but it was Mike, Dominik and Erin who won a hard-earned and well-deserved victory down in Georgia—we can all be proud of them! ▲



*At right are Bob Sandstrom, Mike Sandstrom, Dominik Landowne, Guy Olsen, Erin Schirm. Many are not pictured. Teams are much more than those that run. To each of the teams and their many supporters, we are proud of all that you have accomplished!*