

The 2011 Milton Cross Country teams concluded their season Saturday at the GHSA State Cross Country Championships with some thrilling and school record breaking results.

Varsity Boys

After a region title last week, their first since 1999, the Eagles had high hopes for a podium finish at the state meet but settled for a solid 8th place finish among 32 qualifying schools. Milton's 225 pts placed them ahead of all their region rivals and put them close to Collins Hill, Marietta and Peachtree Ridge when all was said and done. In the first podium finish since 2008 and only the 2nd since 2000, Nate Riech led the Eagles with his all time best effort (16:16) and his 7th place finish. Only a junior, Nate's time missed tying the "new" Milton school record by just 1 second! Asserting themselves early in the race and with a goal to finish in the top-30, junior Ryan Kelly (23rd-16:42) and senior Kegan Baird (30th-16:50) led a tremendous Eagle team that ended up improving 10 spots from the 2010 team finish of 18th! Junior Alex Marshall was next in with a strong last half of the race (55th-17:18). After a big pile-up at the approx 150-200m mark, where almost 40 runners went down or were slowed considerably, Eagle runners were majorly affected and were unable to recover. Finishing 5th for Milton, senior co-captain Chris Blauvelt (118th-18:10) and was followed by junior Justin Thornsberry (136th-18:34) and senior Anthony Machan (190th). The Eagles finish their season as winners of 3 meets, including a region championship, the Coach Wood Invitational and the Bobcat Classic in Gainesville, FL.

Varsity Girls

A second consecutive region title was just the springboard for the Lady Eagles as they became the first Fulton County girls school/program to grace the podium at the state meet in the AAAAA classification with their well-earned 4th place finish (153 pts). Ranked in the top-10 all season long, Milton was able to reach their season goal with strong front running and having all their scorers finish in the top-50. Making more school history, junior Annie Kelly finished 6th place (19:17) to become the first Lady Eagle EVER to finish in the top-10 at the state meet! Annie finishes her season with a region title and no finishes outside of the top-10 in all her races! Next for Milton was junior Jacqueline Mahoney (30th-20:14) who's moves in the 2nd half of the race pushed Milton to the podium. Junior Olivia Koerner ran her strongest and most aggressive race of the season with her 34th place finish (20:26). Junior Blair Gelb overcame a mid-race slump and finished strong, passing many Parkview and Lassiter runners to finish 43rd (20:38). Rounding out the scoring for this junior-led team was Maddie Butzer, who's 20:44 was good for 48th place. Also running for this history-making team were the only senior and lacrosse state champion

Amanda Lockwood. Amanda's 68th place finish in 21:08 was her second fastest time ever run. Freshman Juanita Pardo concluded for the Lady Eagles in finishing 98th in 21:40. The Milton Lady Eagles conclude their season with team wins at the Volunteer Classic, Milton Invite, Fulton County, Coach Wood and Region to go with their history making 4th place podium finish at the state meet.