

2009 MAINE XC FESTIVAL OF CHAMPIONS
OCTOBER 3, 2009

Maine's largest high school sporting event is running strong as it approaches its 8th annual edition at the Troy Howard Middle School in Belfast. The 2009 Maine XC Festival of Champions will also sport an international flavor as Dr. JH Gillis High School from Antigonish, Nova Scotia joins the 58 schools and 1300 entered athletes. This could be the most talent rich meet yet with 7 of the top 10 ranked girl's teams and 8 of the top 10 boy's teams from the latest state coach's poll toeing the starting line. The race for individual honors should also be fierce as places #2-7 from last year's girl's race return as well as places #1-3 on the boy's side. The unique format of the meet will have three races each for girls and boys (unseeded, freshman, seeded). The results of all three races will be combined to determine the team scores.

The meet will start at 11:25 AM with the American and Canadian national anthems and the first race will be the unseeded girls at 11:30 AM. Special guest Louie Luchini, former Ellsworth HS and Stanford University standout, will hand out awards at the award ceremony.

Girls

Defending champion **Scarborough** is back but will be severely challenged by **Cheverus** of Portland. Cheverus adds **Emily Durgin** (2nd as a freshman in the 2008 New England championship meet) to a potent lineup that includes last year's FOC runner-up **Fiona Hendry**. Scarborough has hardly missed a beat from the squad that captured Class A state honors last fall. **Melissa DellaTorre** and **Abby Chick** lead the Red Storm. **Gorham** is another Western Maine Class A team having a terrific season with **Mia Rapella** and **Rachel Wilkinson** running strong. **Brewer**, **Brunswick**, and **Mt. Blue** should lead the charge for Eastern Maine Class A schools. Mt. Blue's **Melody Lam** should be in the fight for a top 5 spot individually. Class B will be ably represented by **Falmouth** from the west, while **John Bapst** should be the best of the east. **Abby Mace** of Maranacook should be a threat for the individual title while **Dacie Manion** of Old Town is running very well.

Boys

The **Scarborough** and **Cheverus** boys are hot off of a 39-all tie won by Scarborough on the 6th runner tie-breaker. Scarborough senior **Nate Hathaway** is setting course records and should contend for the boy's title. Cheverus has a dynamite top 4 led by **Taylor Dundas**. **Falmouth** has a well-balanced squad and was close to Scarborough and Cheverus in their battle last week. **Tim Follo** leads their charge. While **Gorham** has been overshadowed by their SMAA brothers, they are much improved with **Jeremy Earl** winning his last meet. **Alex Moser** was the surprise individual champion last year and is running well for **York** which is ranked #8 in the latest coach's poll. Eastern Maine has many talented teams including **Mt. Blue**, **Brunswick**, **Hampden**, **Caribou**, and **Cony**. Each team has a superstar runner that should contend for top 10 honors. **Kelton Cullenberg** of Mt. Blue, **Will Geoghegan** of Brunswick, **Darik Frye** of Hampden, **Luke Fontaine** of Cony, and **Gabe Stewart** of John Bapst are standouts. **Dr. JH Gillis** of Nova Scotia should make some noise in the boy's race. Freshman **Mike Tate** won the 1600m at the 2009 Hershey North American Championship, running 4:36, and will be the first freshman boy in the history of the FOC to run in the seeded race.

For more information go to the meet website at <http://www.sub5.com/pvcxc/xcfest/xcfest.htm> or contact Glendon Rand at runsub5@myfairpoint.net or 825-3396.