Lost The Battle But Won The War:
Deerfield Finishes 28th in 3A

For the first time since 1982, the 3A race at the IHSA State Finals included a full Deerfield team on the starting line. The Warriors had survived Regional and Sectional eliminations and were one of 28 teams remaining of 160 that started.

The race got out very fast. Four Deerfield runners ran their first mile in under five minutes but were still way back near 160th place. Dylan Cohen and Jamie Chandler were pretty much locked at the hip the entire race moving up about a dozen places in the second mile and holding their position in the third. They placed 143rd and 144th, respectively.

Dane Brown, who was not one of the four runners out in under five minutes, was in 209th place at the mile but moved up to 173rd by the end. Eric Hogenkamp finished in 180th place, and Jon Wool, who lost a shoe in the race, finished in 185th. Ryan Jones was the sixth Warrior into the chute in 188th place and had the lone PR for the day at 16:03. One second behind Jones was Ben Freedman in 192nd.

It was not the team performance Deerfield wanted. They finished in last place of the 28 teams that qualified. After training to peak at Sectionals, and coming off three great weeks of racing in a row, it just wasn’t there on this day for runners one through seven. But that happens. That’s sports. Magical runs come to an end, and though the ending isn’t always to everyone’s delight, it doesn’t erase the magic that already happened. This team did what decades of Deerfield runners tried and failed to do: Get Deerfield to 3A State. For that, these runners have legendary status and will always be remembered. They finished in 28th place of 160 3A teams despite being the third smallest school in all of 3A.

What was bigger than the race, and perhaps bigger than the successful races of the past three weeks, was the tears and raw emotion after the race. Some of it was from disappointment in the State performance, but most of it was the realization that such a special season with such a special group was now over. The seniors especially, who gave all of themselves to the team for four years, had some moving moments out in the open field at Detweiller Park. These emotions show just how meaningful this sport and this team are, and how it’s about much more than running.

This team opened a new door for the DFDC, just as prior teams had opened new doors for them. The future is bright. It might not be the same exact people wearing the uniform in future years, but they’ll be standing on the shoulders of this team.