

Close Boys 4A Race Expected At McAlpine

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About 500 high school runners will challenge the 3.1-mile course at McAlpine Greenway Park this morning in the N.C. 3A and 4A cross-country championships.

There could be some close races for team and boys individual honors in the 4A division, but unless the creek gets a lot deeper than usual, a few of developments are almost certain:

- Cessy Hudson of East Burke will run away with the 4A girls individual title.

- Skyland Roberson will win the 3A girls team trophy.

- Sun Valley will repeat as the 3A boys team champion.

East Mecklenburg will try to repeat as 4A boys champion, but is expected to get strong competition from Chapel Hill and others.

Grimsley, the defending girls 4A

titlist, will have to beat East Mecklenburg and Chapel Hill.

Each race includes 16 teams of up to seven runners each, plus 20 runners competing as individuals. Starting times are 10 a.m. for 3A boys, 10:30 for 3A girls, 11 for 4A boys and 11:30 for 4A girls.

The top Charlotte runner is Harding's Steve Rigsbee, the 4A runner-up last year. Rigsbee, though, has been bothered by an ankle sprain, and lost last week in the regionals to Patrick Phillips of Watauga by 13 seconds. Other contenders for the individual title are Glen Mays of R.J. Reynolds and Vince Howard of Page.

East Mecklenburg's strength is its depth, but illness has weakened the team this week, coach Larry McAfee said. Other Mecklenburg teams competing are the North Mecklenburg boys and girls, and the West Mecklenburg girls.

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