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Hopper named MAIS 5A Cross Country Coach of the Year

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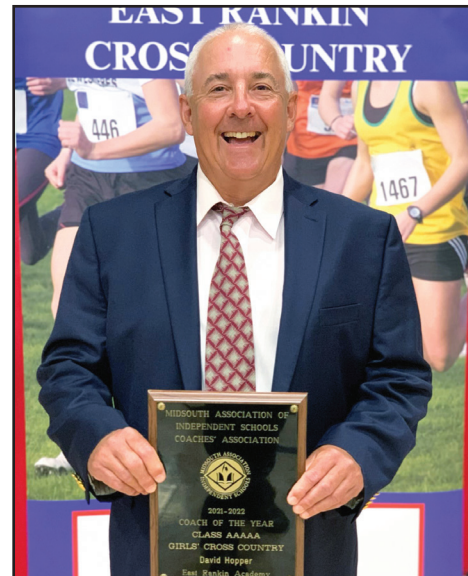
East Rankin Academy (ERA) cross country and track coach, David Hopper, was named the Midsouth Association of Independent Schools (MAIS) 5A Cross Country Coach of the Year following his girls' team's 2021 state title winning season. The cross-country state championship was a first for East Rankin Academy.

Coach Hopper, a 1975 graduate of Jackson Prep, has deep roots in Rankin County as both an athlete and coach. An integral part of Jackson Prep's state title teams in the mid-1970s, Hopper specialized in distance events and relays. Success at the prep level resulted in scholarship offers from Mississippi College, West Point and Florida. Coach

Hopper attended West Point from 1975-1977, running cross country, and then transferred to Auburn, graduating in 1979 with a degree in Speech Communications. Hopper soon returned to Central Mississippi, working in the television industry until the late 90s, when he began coaching and teaching in Rankin County schools, to include Brandon, ERA and McLaurin.

"Coach Hopper was the entire reason that I began competing in track." -Coach Steven Boozer

Returning to ERA in 2018, Coach Hopper set to work rebuilding a traditionally strong running program. With only a few varsity runners, Hopper began recruiting athletes to support the



Coach David Hopper

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existing team and develop a championship-caliber team. Since that time, he has added talent each year, some of which contributed to the 2021 state title. A proponent of old school hard work, the team trains five days a week, cycling through short and long distance runs, weights, and hill work. The passion with which Hopper supports each athlete translates into collective commitment from both boys and girls, as they develop athletically and strategically.

Coach Steven Boozer, 2003 ERA graduate, three time state champion, and scholarship athlete at the University of Alabama stated, "Coach Hopper was the entire reason that I began

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ERA 2022 Valedictorian and Salutatorian



The 2022 East Rankin Academy (ERA) Valedictorian is Will Price. Price is the son of Billy and Tracy Price of Forest. He is a member of the National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta (Mathematics Honor Society), and ERA's ACT 30 or Above Team. He also serves as captain of ERA's Quiz Bowl Team, Science Bowl Team, and History Bowl Team. Price plans to attend Mississippi State University to pursue a degree in mechanical engineering.



Photos special to Pelahatchie News

The 2022 ERA Salutatorian is Cole Moudy. Moudy is the son of Tate and Michelle Moudy of Brandon. He is a member of the National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta (Mathematics Honor Society), and ERA's ACT 30 or Above Team. He is also a member of the Science Bowl Team and Varsity Baseball Team. Moudy has signed to play baseball with Holmes Community College and will be pursuing a degree in civil engineering.

2022 Valedictorian and Salutatorian at PHS



The 2022 Pelahatchie High School (PHS) Valedictorian is Laura Renfroe. She is the daughter of Daniel and Eles Renfroe. She is the 2022 MS High School Journalist of the Year and STAR Student recipient. She was 2021-2022 Beta president and a part of the Social Media Team. Renfroe was Chief Editor of the school's newspaper, Hatchie Headlines. An all-A honor student and Miss. Scholar, she received the Essentials for College Math, Dual Credit British Lit, Contemporary Health, Economics, Social Media Team, Print Journalism awards, and First Place AATSP Poster Contest. She received the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) Honors College Discovery and USM Communication Scholarship. Renfroe will attend USM and double major in Graphic Design and Journalism.



Photos special to Pelahatchie News

The 2022 PHS Salutatorian is Kaitlyn White. White is the daughter of Jay and Katie White. She is an honor student and President of the Student Council. She is a member of the Beta Club and is a Miss. Scholar. White has received recognition for ACT Honors and Distinguished Service, and she received the College & Career Readiness Award. White has received the Mississippi Excellence in Teaching Program and Ole Miss Women's Council scholarships. She plans to major in Elementary Education at the University of Mississippi.

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