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Freihofer's race brings Davidson home

Saratoga native is in her fifth Freihofer's, second run as an elite



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Runner Hannah Davidson, a Saratoga Springs native, is in attendance during a news conference for the Freihofer's Run for Women on Friday, May 29, 2015, at Taste in Albany, N.Y. (Cindy Schultz / Times Union)

Albany

In her debut in the Freihofer's Run for Women 5k race, Hannah Davidson was a high school standout with the Saratoga Springs cross country and track teams and competed with her teammates in the race through downtown Albany.

The experience left an impression on Davidson, now 27, and the former Blue Streak and Providence College standout is looking forward to returning to the Capital Region for Saturday's 39th running of the event.

"The first time I did it was back in high school and it was the first time that I'd heard of an all-female race," Davidson said. "The whole environment around it, being a woman and the empowerment of seeing three generations of women out there running together. I love racing at home, you see people that you don't normally get to see unless you race at home."

Davidson, who now works at a boat and cottage rental and restaurant in Oneida Lake, near Syracuse, will be running in the Run for Women for the fifth time and for the second time in the elite category after a 16th-place finish in the 2015 race with a time of 16:52.

"The first time I did it as an elite, I wasn't really ready. I was home, I'd just come off a break. It wasn't great but it was a cool experience," Davidson said. "I'm excited to get back. It's less about place, more about time. I've been stuck at the 16-minute time, 5k barrier since my sophomore year at college. I'm really trying to break that."

More Information

Freihofer's Run for Women

When: 9 a.m. Saturday

Where: Downtown Albany

More information:
<http://freihoferstrun.com/>

Davidson keeps a busy race schedule throughout the summer and says she is more comfortable at longer distances though she is working on getting her 5k times down.

"Summer gets pretty busy. We'll race probably every two to three weeks during the summer," Davidson said. "The 10k and 15k are more in my wheelhouse right now. I need a fast 5k, my times do not correlate into my longer distances so we're trying to get that down quite a bit."

As she readies for the race, Davidson will spend time this week speaking at local schools and the

two-time Section II cross country champion and NCAA Division I cross country and track All-American is looking forward to her first foray into speaking to a large group of students.

"I'll be going to five different schools, there are two other athletes going to different schools. It is pretty cool," she said. "The premise of mine is mostly to encourage kids to get involved in sports or get outside, lead a healthy lifestyle in general and tell them about my experience and the opportunity it provided me. These will be pretty serious talks. I've gone and talked to kids before but this is an auditorium type thing. I'm excited to do it."

After graduating from college, running didn't seem to be in the future for the 2006 federation and 2007 New York state cross country champion, During that hiatus she realized that she wasn't done competing.

"I was over it, you go through lulls, I was sick of it and took the summer off," she said. "It made me realize what a big part running is in my life and how it stabilizes me in a way. I felt off without it, I guess I didn't think I'd realized my full potential yet and I still haven't. If you are still improving, there is still more there."

If that's the case, Davidson could have her cheering section at many Run for Women races to come.

Sean Martin, a local freelance writer, is a frequent contributor to the Times Union.

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