

Dickerson, Wyatt

Alvord renames invitational meet after former student

By [Micah McCartney](#) | Published on July 14, 2021



WYATT'S RUN – The annual Alvord High School cross country meet will be renamed to honor former student athlete Wyatt Dickerson (1370), who died in a single-vehicle wreck in March. *Messenger* archive photo
Alvord High School was impacted heavily by the death of sophomore Wyatt Dickerson – a sophomore who loved running for the Bulldogs.

Dickerson's legacy will continue to live on at the school. Alvord's annual cross country meet has been renamed the Wyatt Dickerson Invitational.

"The death of a student athlete is something that nobody wants to have to experience," said Alvord coach Marcus Grgurich. "We wanted to make sure to honor in a way we believed he would enjoy. Wyatt was a pillar of our program. He loved everything he did but running was one of his passions.

"In the days following Wyatt's death and trying to wrap my head around a way to honor him, I approached [Alvord athletic director] Scott Smiley about renaming our meet in his honor. Wyatt represented everything our program stands for. I'm hoping we'll run the Wyatt Dickerson Invitational for as long as I'm here, and even in the future."

Dickerson claimed the bronze medal at the District 13-2A meet, running a 16:45.6 5K and qualified for the state meet with a 15th-place finish in 18:27.55 at the 2A Region II meet.

At the UIL 2A final at Old Settler's Park in Round Rock in November, Dickerson ran side-by-side with teammate Austin Souther. Dickerson finished 75th in 18:35.47. Souther crossed the finish line in 18:36.6 in 76th.

"As an athlete, Wyatt was someone every coach would want in their program," Grgurich said. "He was driven, motivated and hard working. I knew I never had to worry about Wyatt on the grades list. I didn't have to check on him because he took care of business not just in athletics, but also inside the classroom.

"Wyatt's charisma was infectious – you couldn't be around him and not like him. Whether it was his goofy outfits at school or the way he wanted to get better after every race, he was just one of those kids that were contagious to be around. He definitely made me a better coach because he was never satisfied – he always wanted more."

Dickerson, 16, died in a single-vehicle accident March 18 on Old Decatur Road east of Private Road 2595 near Alvord, during the school's spring break.

As Alvord students returned to school and learned about the death of their classmate and friend, several painted a spot in the school's parking lot in his memory.

Grgurich credited Dickerson with setting the program's goal of achieving a state title.

"His goal when I got here two years ago was to win a state championship in cross country as a team," Grgurich said. "We started training and recruiting other kids to see if they wanted to team up. They all set the goal of winning a title before they graduate. We want to complete.

"Even though Wyatt's not with us anymore, that's still our goal. Wyatt came into our program with a vision, and we want to see it come true. We've got a really good team coming back next year, and a lot of it is a credit to him and his hard work."

Grgurich has already received a lot of interest from area programs wanting to compete in the inaugural Wyatt Dickerson Invitational run Sept. 22

"I've sent out a couple of invites, and there's already close to 20 teams registered," Grgurich said. "I think about half of those are actually scheduled. There'll be an uptick when we get closer to school starting with programs looking for meets. There's a good chance we'll have quite a lot of teams this year, and that's what we're hoping for."

The coach said he can envision the school's parking lot filled with tractors for the inaugural event honoring the young runner.

"It wouldn't surprise me one bit if the kids honored him in that way," Grgurich said. "If there was a wacky tradition, he had his hand in starting it. I think it'd be a great way to point to Wyatt."