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## [N-W's Rider sets the pace](#)

BY Ryan Nagelhout [Niagara Gazette](#)

NIAGARA FALLS — Falcons coach Dick Bartha has a Niagara Frontier League champion on his roster, but he knows Lockport and Grand Island are the cross country teams to beat in the NFL.

NFL champion Rebecca Rider returns for her sophomore season with the Falcons, who went 5-2 in league meets last year.

“She’s the defending NFL champion and she just missed making the state meet,” Falcons coach Dick Bartha said. “She was the next one to go.”

Just behind her is fellow sophomore Halle Sauer, while Hannah Carrier (sophomore) and Alora Brusino (senior) will also pace the N-W girls.

On the boys side, Bartha’s Falcons return junior Anthony Cappuccilli, senior Josh Klettke and junior Jack Mulcahy, a point guard on the N-W basketball team. The Falcons boys went 3-4 last season and Bartha hopes his trio can pace the Falcons boys.

### **Grand Island**

Grand Island graduates Nick Masiello, who now runs at St. Bonaventure, but coach Don Sauer’s squad is always a favorite in the NFL.

“They always have a good team,” Niagara Falls coach Israel Martinez said. “They have that culture there.”

Senior captains Megan Karpie and Maggie DeMarco lead the way on the girls side, and Karpie had a strong showing at the Long Point Invitational last weekend along with three juniors, Ellen Lutnick, Taylor Marino and Rachael Ruskowski.

Sophomore Andy Masiello led the boys with an 18:09.74 over the weekend, and Nick Pino, Alex Baker and Brandon Stevenson all ran under 20 minutes in the season-opener.

Harrison Thompson, Will Madigan and Connor Bolles will also contribute for the Vikings this season.

(See [www.niagara-gazette.com](http://www.niagara-gazette.com) for complete story)