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SALIDA, COLORADO – WEDNESDAY, JULY 21, 2021 • VOLUME 40, NUMBER 7

Runners to step out on Arkansas Hills Trail System

by **Brian McCabe**
Mail News Editor

The Arkansas Hills Trail System will be filled with runners Saturday as the National High School Trail Championships and Beas Knees Citizens Race start and end near Riverside Park in Salida.

This year will be the fifth annual running of the 5.4-mile race, an all-volunteer event organized by Salida High School cross-country coach Kenny Wilcox.

Last year's race saw runners beat three of the four course records. The race will be on the same course as last year, with the main sections of ascent on Burnpile and upper Rusty Lung and the main descents on Little Rattler and Frontside trails.

The Beas Knees race, open to anyone, will follow the same course as the trail championship.

The race was held last year, despite COVID-19, with racers leaving the starting line in groups of 10 instead of all at once.

This year runs will take off based on which race they are competing in: Beas Knees will start at 7:20 a.m., the boys' championship at 8:20 a.m. and girls' championship at 8:45 a.m.

"Salida has proven to be the type of support that has been necessary to put on this event," Wilcox said. "Without our sponsors and volunteers, we would not be able to move forward with the level of confidence that we have been able to put forth."

"As for the Beas Knees



Courtesy photo

Incoming Salida High School junior Alex Hebert comes around the corner at last year's National High School Trail Championship. The race, along with the Beas Knees Citizens Race, will take place Saturday.

race, it is important for us to continue to honor Brett Beasley and his family. No doubt Brett would be thrilled to see how his influence on our local trail system continues to contribute to its growth and be

enjoyed by many. His legacy is vibrant on the trails and through his family.

"The high school trail races have attracted some of the top talent from our state and country. During our first four years of exis-

tence, several high school racers have gone on to be selected to be on the USA trail teams, and this event has provided an opportunity for these young people to showcase what they can do."

The Beas Knees race is

a celebration of the life of Brett Beasley, who died Jan. 5, 2017, and his contributions to the local trail system.

For more information go to www.nationalhighschool-trailchampionships.com.

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