

Reece runs way into Wildcat history book



Louisburg sophomore Wyatt Reece sprints to the finish line during a meet earlier this season. Reece ran a personal best time of 17 minutes and 24 seconds, which was good enough for a 12th place finish, a medal and the seventh-fastest time in LHS cross country history.

PITTSBURG – As just a sophomore, Wyatt Reece has quietly become one of the top runners on the Louisburg High School cross country team.

There wasn't anything quiet about his performance Thursday during the Pittsburg Invitational. Reece recorded one of the top times in program history as he ran a personal best 17 minutes and 24 seconds to finish 12th overall and earn a medal.

The Pittsburg course was just short of a full 5-kilometers, but Reece's time was a loud statement that he is vying to become one of the top runners in the history of the program.

"Wyatt continues to compete well and improve his times," Louisburg coach John Reece said. "With an adjusted time due to the short course, he ran a personal best 17:59, which puts him at No. 7 all-time for our program."

“Pittsburg’s course is very flat, so it is challenging to keep pressing the pace because there are no down hills that could be used to relax a little on.”

As a team, Wyatt helped the Wildcats to a fifth-place team finish with 154 points. Pittsburg won the meet with 44 points and Paola was second with 65.

Senior Devyn Small was the next to finish for Louisburg as he took 32nd in 18:51. Teammate Austin Raetzel came in 44th in 19:21 and Eddie Murphy was 52nd in 19:31.

Zach Minor (19:56) and Jarod Rose (20:00) rounded out the Wildcat team in 60th and 61st place, respectively.

The Louisburg girls cross country team faced one of their toughest fields of the season as the Lady Cats competed against some of the top runners in the state.

Sophomore Isabelle Holtzen led Louisburg in 30th overall in 21:52. Junior Madelynn Yalowitz and sophomore Savannah Reinhart followed right behind her. Yalowitz was 31st in 21:53 and Reinhart came in 32nd with a time of 21:54.

Liz Hildreth was next for the Lady Cats in 44th in 22:45 and Kaitlyn Gaza was 46th in 22:55. Alex Miller rounded out the Louisburg lineup in 56th with a time of 24:29.

The Lady Cats were fifth in the team standings with 114 points. Frontenac won the title with 51 points and Fort Scott was second with 53.

“The girls ran well again,” coach Reece said. “It was a strong field of runners and a strong field of teams. I think we might have gone out a little fast at the start but that was OK. We learn every race so that we are better the next time.”

Lilly Mick recorded a top-10 finish to lead the Louisburg junior varsity girls in 10th with a time of 24:03. Teammate Mara Justesen came in 16th in 24:50, while Lily Cook (25:02) and Bryn O'Meara (25:11) finished 18th and 19th, respectively.

Lexie Reece (23rd), Hailey Crowder (38th), Cierra Rose (39th) and Grace Rolofson (47th) also competed for Louisburg.

Bryce Kuhlman led the Louisburg junior varsity boys in 16th in 20:29 and Gareth Baus was next on the team in 18th with a time of 20:37. Kennedy Unthank (22:27) and Michael Shaner (22:35) rounded out the Wildcat runners in 41st and 46th, respectively.

Louisburg returns to action this Thursday when it hosts the Louisburg Invitational at Lewis-Young Park. The races are set to begin at 4 p.m.