

Lady Cats medal third in season opening meet



The Louisburg High School girls cross country team finished third at the Jerry Howarter Invitational on Thursday in Garnett. Members of the team are (from left) Kaitlyn Lewer, Kaitlyn Gaza, Trinity Moore, Reilly Alexander, Isabelle Holtzen, Madelynn Yalowitz and Shaylor Whitham.

GARNETT – The rolling hills of the Garnett Golf Course make it difficult for any runner, but when it is the first meet of the season, it makes the task even harder.

Those things didn't seem to bother the Louisburg High School cross country team much. The Wildcats had two runners finish in the top 10 of the varsity race Thursday during the Jerry Howarter Invitational and the girls team had a historic finish themselves.

The Louisburg girls medaled third overall in the team standings with 86 points as Trinity Moore, Madelynn Yalowitz, Isabelle Holtzen, Shaylor Whitham, Kaitlyn Lewer, Reilly Alexander and Kaitlyn Gaza recorded the team's highest finish at this event.

"The girls team did great," Louisburg coach John Reece said. "Four of our varsity runners were competing in cross country for the first time and they did a great job. I looked back at past years and this is the first time we have medaled as a

team at Anderson County.”

Honors continued to roll in as one of those first time runners led the team with a top 10 finish. Moore, a freshman, led the Wildcat runners as she finished eighth overall in 22 minutes and 53 seconds.

“It was Trinity’s day (Thursday),” Reece said. “Next week could bring a different runner to the front of the group as they are all great runners. Trinity ran well and it was great to see that from a first time freshman.”

Louisburg also had two other runners garner medals. Yalowitz, a senior, took 14th in 23:20, while Holtzen, a junior, came in 23rd in 24:15.

Whitham (24:58) and Lewer (25:35), who are also first time runners as sophomores, took 31st and 37th, respectively. Alexander, a junior, also had a strong finish as she ran 27:22 to take 47th in her inaugural race. Gaza rounded out the varsity lineup as she crossed the finish in 53rd with a time of 28:43.

On the boys side, junior Wyatt Reece had one of the best performances on the varsity stage as he medaled sixth overall in 18:59. Wyatt, along with senior Austin Raetzel, were the lone runners to participate in the varsity meet. Raetzel was 65th in 22:46.

“Wyatt ran a great race,” coach Reece said. “From last year’s 27th place finish to this year’s sixth place finish is awesome. He has set some tough goals for himself this year and he just checked off his first one with a top ten finish at Anderson County.”

The Wildcats also competed in two junior varsity races and a beginner’s race.

Natalie George led the Louisburg JV girls as she took 19th in 28:13 and Mara Justesen was 26th in 29:21. Alex Miller (29:33) and Bryn O'Meara (29:34) finished 28th and 29th, respectively.

Lilly Mick (34th), Lily Cook (35th) and Hailey Crowder (38th) rounded out the junior varsity girls lineup.

Bryce Kuhlman led the JV boys in 25th in 23 minutes and Gareth Baus was next on the team in 42nd. Evan Murphy (44th), Jackson Staab (48th), Garrett Rolofson (50th) and Garrett Mills (51st) also ran for Louisburg.

In the beginners 2-mile race, freshman Emily Williams won the girls division in 16:07. Piper Mills (9th), Elizabeth Kratochvil (10th), Mariah Wrigley (15th), Grace Rolofson (16th) and Haley Early (18th) also ran for the Wildcats.

Keith Estle came in 12th on the boys side, while Parker Perentis and Frankie Hurst took 13th and 18th, respectively.

Louisburg returns to action Thursday when it travels to Ottawa. The first race is set to begin at 4:30 p.m.