

Smith, Reece pace Wildcat runners at Pittsburg



Louisburg senior Austin Raetzel leads a pack of runners during a meet earlier this season. The Wildcat cross country team traveled to Pittsburg last Thursday and left with two top 10 finishes on the boys side.

PITTSBURG – The Louisburg High School cross country team ventured a little further south than normal to see some new competition.

The Wildcats took part in the Pittsburg Invitational on Thursday, and despite missing a key runner, fared well – especially on the boys side.

Juniors Tim Smith and Wyatt Reece each had top 10 finishes to earn medals for the fifth straight week and both runners ran a season-best time. Smith crossed the finish line in fifth in 17 minutes and 11 seconds and Reece came in eighth in 17:18.

Senior Austin Raetzel rounded out the Wildcat team in 60th in 20:43.

“The boys ran well as individuals since we have not put a varsity team together yet,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “Wyatt and Tim are still showing improvement and are posed to make a great run at qualifying for state.”

As for the girls squad, the Lady Cats were without top runner Trinity Moore, who was out with an injury. Louisburg finished sixth in the team standings with 136 points. Fort Scott took first with 36 and Frontenac was second with 55 points.

"The girls ran well and not having a top runner causes us to add about 30-plus points to our team total," coach Reece said. "We are still training well and the future meets will be exciting."

Senior Madelynn Yalowitz led the Louisburg girls in 24th overall with a time of 21:50. Junior Isabelle Holtzen was right behind her in 28th in 22:06 and sophomore Kaitlyn Lewer took 33rd in 22:20.

Junior Reilly Alexander finished in 24:03 to take 48th and sophomore Shaylor Whitham was right behind her in 49th in 24:04. Freshmen Emily Williams (24:28) and Natalie George (25:05) came in 52nd and 60th, respectively.

In the junior varsity races, sophomore Alex Miller finished fifth overall in 23:51 to earn a medal, while senior Mara Justesen was 12th in 25:00. Bryn O'Meara (21st), Lilly Mick (23rd), Elizabeth Kratochvil (27th), Kaitlyn Gaza (32nd), Lily Cook (44th), Tomi Frederes (46th), Piper Mills (49th), Hailey Crowder (51st), Mariah Wrigley (57th), Weeraya Khongpatimakorn (59th) and Grace Rolofson (61st) also competed for the Lady Cats.

Gareth Baus had a strong race for the junior varsity boys as he took 14th in 20:26. Evan Murphy (38th), Jackson Staab (44th), Keith Estle (47th), Garrett Rolofson (48th), Garrett Mills (49th) and Parker Perentis (67th) also ran for Louisburg.

Louisburg returns to action this Thursday when it competes in the Louisburg Invitational at Lewis-Young Park. The first race is set to begin at 3 p.m., which was moved up an hour due to weather concerns.

“We hope to tear it up at our home meet this week,” coach Reece said.