

Three Wildcats run their way to state meet



Louisburg junior Wyatt Reece finishes the last part of the course with some encouragement from his coach John Reece on Saturday at the Class 4A regional meet in Burlington. Reece, along with teammates Tim Smith and Trinity Moore, qualified for the Class 4A state meet with top 10 finishes.

BURLINGTON – Wyatt Reece, Tim Smith and Trinity Moore weaved through the winding course Saturday at the Class 4A regional meet.

With every turn on the John Redmond reservoir path, the three Louisburg runners came that much closer to their goal. All they wanted was an opportunity to run one more race.

They got that chance.

Reece, Smith and Moore all qualified for the Class 4A state cross country meet after they finished in the top 10 individually in Saturday's race at Burlington. It is also the second straight season the Wildcats will have a runner represent them at state as Reece went a season ago.

"I am just thrilled right now," Louisburg coach John Reece said. "I was told that we got 200 percent better since we have three going to state this year, so that is definitely a plus. Wyatt and Tim 'raced' today. That is what we talked about is

that they have to 'race' to get in and they both went out there and ran a great one. They both ran close to personal records and it paid off for them.

"Trinity ran well and this is huge for her. She was hurt for two weeks, then came back and ran 11th at league and finished in the top 10 here, which is just outstanding."

Wyatt ensured his second trip to state as he was able to stay near the front for much of the race and eventually crossed the finish line in fifth-place in 17 minutes and 7 seconds, which was close to a personal record.

"It is always a really big deal to go to state and that is always the goal," Wyatt said. "It is a big accomplishment and I am lucky to be able to do it two years in a row. It is really nice to have Tim there to run with me because we train together during the season, so it was nice to have someone there to keep training with."



Junior Tim Smith distances himself from an Iola runner Saturday in Burlington. Smith finished seventh at the regional meet.

Smith also ran close to the front as he was able to finish in seventh with a time of 17:16. He started out the first mile in 13th place, before eventually working his way up into the top 10.

“It feels really good because we have been working all summer for it,” Smith said. “Just the fact that we planned for this, and we actually did it, means a lot. I am so excited to go state. It is all that I have wanted and hope that we can do well out there.”

As for Moore, she competed in a tough girls field that featured one of the top runners in the nation in Girard’s

Callie Logue. That didn't stop Moore from recording one of her best times of the season as she came in eighth in 20:44.

"It is really fun because I was able to work hard enough to be able to do this and I was just happy to run with everyone else," Moore said. "It was fun to be able to run as a team and I am glad that I get to go to state.

"I think I ran a pretty good race today. I think I ran a little too fast at the beginning, but I found myself and I was able to pass a lot of girls so I think I did really well."

Louisburg was hoping to get one of the top three spots in the team standings and qualify the whole team for state, but came up short as it finished fifth with 122 points. Girard won the meet with 61 points, while Fort Scott (62) and Frontenac (74) took second and third, respectively.



Freshman Trinity Moore leads a pack of runners around a curve Saturday in Burlington. Moore finished eighth overall in the girls race.

Logue won the individual crown with a time of 17:51, nearly two minutes ahead of the second-place finisher.

“The girls field was incredible,” coach Reece said. “I knew it would be close to try and get in as a team, but there were so many girls that broke up all the ones in the back. The 12th place finish was the final qualifier and it just showed you how tough of a race it was.”

Junior Isabelle Holtzen ran a personal best time of 22:03 to come in 27th overall, while sophomore Kaitlyn Lewer (22:09) and senior Madelynn Yalowitz (22:16) finished 33rd and 34th,

respectively.

Freshman Emily Williams was 48th in 23:22 and sophomore Alex Miller was right behind her in 49th in 23:29. Junior Reilly Alexander rounded out the Louisburg girls team in 55th in 23:51.

Girard won the boys team title with 57 points, while Fort Scott (71) and Iola (76) took second and third to also qualify for state. Fort Scott's Devin Brooks took first individually in 16:31.

As for what the three Wildcats can expect for Saturday's Class 4A state meet in Wamego, Wyatt will be able to guide both Smith and Moore on what to prepare for.

"Wamego's course has been labeled as one of the toughest in the state," Wyatt said. "I love going out there and running because you are at state, and that is a big deal, but it takes a lot of work to get there and you have to work hard when you get there."