

Lady Cats, Moore and Smith take gold at Prairie View



The Louisburg High School girls cross country team won the Ramsey Invitational on Thursday at Prairie View High School. Members of the team are (from left) Carlee Gassman, Kaitlyn Lewer, Reilly Alexander, Isabelle Holtzen, Payton Shaffer, Emily Williams and Trinity Moore.

LA CYGNE – It was a gold medal performance type of day for the Louisburg High School cross country team.

Not only did the Wildcats sweep the individual crowns Thursday at the Ramsey Invitational at Prairie View High School, but the Lady Cats also won the team title for the first time this season and captured the Prairie View crown for the third consecutive year.

Sophomore Trinity Moore won the girls race with a personal best time, while senior Tim Smith took first place on the boys' side by more than 20 seconds. Between the boys and girls teams, the Wildcats medaled seven runners in all.

"To watch Trinity and Tim both work through the race, make moves on the leader and then put distance on them and keep running their race was just outstanding," Louisburg coach John Reece said. "It is something we talk about in practice, about pulling away and taking the energy away from people and it was just all positive."

“The girls team worked really well together, especially early in the race. Even though they got a little separated, they kept working and we put seven runners in the top 20. When you do that, you win races.”

The Louisburg girls team of Moore, Carlee Gassman, Kaitlyn Lewer, Isabelle Holtzen, Reilly Alexander, Payton Shaffer and Emily Williams ran away with the title with 44 points. Anderson County was second with 53.

As for Moore, she trailed Jayhawk-Linn’s Kate Dawson through half of the race before she made her move and pulled away in a time of 20 minutes and 36 seconds to win her first competition of the season.

“It is amazing,” Moore said. “I had to work really hard because there was a lot of competition in this race. I just kept my form and I had a drive to go past (Dawson). I just had the mentality to keep going and I really wanted to win.”

Gassman, a sophomore, had her best finish of the season as she medaled fourth in 22:56. Lewer, a junior, finished 11th overall in 23:50.



Louisburg junior Kaitlyn Lower stays ahead of a pack of runners Thursday during the Ramsey Invitational at Prairie View High School.

Holtzen (23:59) and Alexander (24:27), both seniors, also earned medals with their 13th and 15th place finish, respectively.

“I think Trinity ran her race in the first mile and she was patient and the girls came back to her,” Reece said. “When Trinity made her move and closed the gap, she fed off of (Dawson). It was Trinity’s race to have.

“Carlee’s race was outstanding. She probably went out a little fast as she wants to run right with Trinity, but she is

learning as well and she has big races in her as we get through the end of the season. It is going to happen.”

Shaffer (24:42) and Williams (25:04) rounded out the Louisburg girls in 16th and 19th place.

Smith had his best day of the season for the Louisburg boys as he literally ran away with the boys’ race in 17:42 and won by 23 seconds – his first victory of the season. He passed Anderson County’s Owen Lutz and Central Heights’ Tyler Stevenson close to the midway point of the race and pulled away.

“Honestly, it was a really fun race for me,” Smith said. “A lot of people went out fast in the first mile and I just kind of stuck with them and trailed just a little bit. In about the second mile, I was able to pass the guy who was in first and he drifted. Overall, it was an awesome race for me and I am really proud of the girls too.”

Smith wasn’t the only positive for the Wildcats as senior Wyatt Reece earned a medal and finished fourth in 18:17. Those two results, along with sophomore Evan Murphy and freshmen Cade Holtzen and Carson Houchen, helped the Louisburg boys team to a third place finish with 86 points.



Louisburg's (from left) Tim Smith, Cade Holtzen, Evan Murphy, Wyatt Reece and Carson Houchen pose with their third place team medals.

Murphy finished 22nd overall in 20:37 and Holtzen was 25th in 20:41. Houchen rounded out the Wildcat lineup in 34th in 21:13.

"Tim ran great, especially on a hot, humid day," coach Reece said. "He ran just like Trinity. Wyatt started off strong, but he cramped up a little bit after the first mile, but it was able to loosen up and he was able to get back in the race. He ran a good race too. We look at last year's times, and they both ran faster and Wyatt was almost 20 seconds faster. Our sophomore and freshmen boys ran good races and for them to take third as team is just fantastic. They are super excited."

The Wildcat junior varsity also left Prairie View with a few medals. Abby Crooks took fourth overall in the girls race in 26:59. Teammates Shaylor Whitham (27:08) and Kennady Wilkerson (27:16) medaled in fifth and sixth, respectively.

Louisburg will try and use that momentum for another good finish this Thursday when they travel to the Pittsburg Invitational.