

Cooper wins two events at Paola to pace Wildcat boys



Louisburg junior Brandon Cooper leans at the finish line to finish first in the 100-meter dash Thursday at the Paola Invitational. Cooper won the 100 dash, helped the 4×100 relay to a first place finish and took second in the 200.

PAOLA – There weren't many runners who could keep up with Louisburg junior Brandon Cooper last Thursday in Paola.

Cooper turned out to be one of the fastest on the track as he had two gold medal performances and nearly had a third during the Paola Invitational. Louisburg also added three runner-up and third place finishes on the track and in the field.

Those performances helped the Wildcats to a fifth place team finish with 69.5 points and Lamar, Mo., won the meet with 124.5. De Soto was second with 112.5 points.

Cooper won the 100-meter dash with a personal-best time of 11.06 seconds as he edged out De Soto's Exavier Jackson, who ran an 11.09. He wasn't done as Cooper set another personal best in the 200 dash with a time of 22.98 seconds in the prelims and took second in the finals with a time of 23.55.

"Brandon ran very smart races during the Paola meet," Louisburg coach Andy Wright said. "It was our first meet that had prelims, and he knew how to conserve his energy for the

finals. Brandon had a great start in the finals of the 100 to win, and he had his personal best times in the 100 and 200."

Cooper continued to score points for the Wildcats as he helped the 4×100-meter relay team of Charlie Koontz, Ben Wiedenmann and Justin Collins to a first place finish in 44.04 seconds. Wiedenmann also scored points in the 200 dash as he took eighth overall.

"The 4×100 relay took off almost a whole second from their previous time," Wright said. "We had to make some adjustments due to an athlete being out for an injury, and I couldn't be prouder of how the group responded."

Louisburg junior Chris Williams earned a medal in the 400-meter dash as he took second in 51.69 seconds, despite leading for a majority of the race.

In the distance events, senior Wyatt Reece ran a pair of strong races in the 1,600 and 3,200-meter runs. Reece took third in both events as he ran a 4:46 and 10:33, respectively.

"Wyatt ran a solid race," Wright said. "He was not satisfied with his times, but it was his first time running the 1600 and 3200 this season and I felt he gave it his very best. I only look for him to become even more competitive as the season advances."



Freshman Luke Faulkner clears a height in the pole vault Thursday in Paola. Faulkner cleared a personal best 11-6 to take seventh.

In the field events, the Wildcats placed three in the pole vault, including two in the top three. Senior Frankie Hurst cleared 12 feet to take second overall, while sophomore Trent Martin tied for third after he cleared 12 feet, as well.

Freshman Luke Faulkner set a new personal best with a mark of 11-6 and finished seventh.

"I was very happy with the outcome of the vaulters," Wright said. "All 3 of our boys made adjustments from our last meet and continue to improve. The highlight was Luke setting a PR with an 11-6 vault. I think the sky is the limit with this group, and I am excited about the potential success this group of vaulters could have."

Sophomore Michael Waldron and junior Austin Moore also scored points for Louisburg in the javelin. Waldron recorded a toss of 144 feet to take fifth overall. Moore finished eighth with a mark of 136-4.

Louisburg returns to action this Thursday when it travels to Garnett for the Anderson County Invitational. The meet is set to begin at 3:30 p.m.

Other results are:

100 dash: Justin Collins, 9th, 11.73; Charlie Koontz, 13th, 11.93

400 dash: Michael Waldron, 16th, 58.10

800 run: Cade Holtzen, 20th, 2:37

1,600 run: Dylan Knipp, 20th, 5:36; Holtzen, 23rd, 5:45

3,200 run: Knipp, 19th, 12:40

Long jump: Koontz, 14th, 17-9.5; Collins, 16th, 17-4

Triple jump: Kyle Allen, 13th, 33-4.5

Shot put: Brayden White, 15th, 38-6; Matt Holloway, 20th, 36-7; Kiefer Tucker, 21st, 35-3.5

Discus: Tucker, 9th, 113-2.25; Jonathan DePriest, 19th, 92-8; Hunter Day, 24th, 81-10.75

Javelin: Holloway, 14th, 124-4