

Moore, Lady Cats eye return to state cross country



Louisburg junior Trinity Moore put together the best season for a female runner in Wildcat history as a sophomore as she finished fifth at the state meet and won a Frontier League title.

In the two decade-long history of the program, the Louisburg High School cross country team didn't have a better season than it did in 2017.

The Wildcats finished with three state medalists at the Class 4A meet in Wamego and qualified the entire girls team for state for the first time in school history. It was a season to remember for Louisburg cross country.

A year later, the Wildcats are without two of their state medalists – Wyatt Reece and Tim Smith – who graduated and also saw some other members of that state qualifying girls team depart as well.

Still, optimism is high for Louisburg, especially on the girls side. The Wildcats return junior Trinity Moore, who finished fifth in the state last season, and is a two-time state medalist.

Louisburg also returns four members from that state qualifying team in Moore, junior Carlee Gassman, junior Emily Williams

and senior Kaitlyn Lewer. The Wildcats added several freshman runners to the program who figure to work their way up as the season goes along.

“Practice has been going great,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “We are ready to get started and see how we compare to other schools.

“I think the girls will be even stronger this year. They want to do well for each other, and at the same time, want to beat each other in practice and I’m sure in meets as well. We will have a youthful varsity team against this year. There are several in the running for the top seven spots, and after our first meet we will see who the best performers are.”



Senior Kaitlyn Lewer is one of four returning runners from last season’s state qualifying team.

Moore had a strong finish to her 2017 season as she ended as a Frontier League champion, took third in the regional meet and fifth at state in 19 minutes and 47 seconds, which broke her own school record.

As fun as that season was for Moore, she has even bigger expectations this year.

“I really want to improve my time and break 19 minutes,” Moore said. “If I work hard and push myself in practice and meets, I know I can accomplish this. I also hope to make it to state again this year with my team. If we work and race our best every week, I think we will be able to make it to state and exceed what we did last year.

“We have very strong runners this year and I know we can make a huge impact just like we did last season. The talent on the girls team is outstanding. We have great returners, with great experience and some fast freshmen that will help the team a lot. I think we will be able to get stronger and faster as a team and hopefully make it to state again.”

As a whole, the Wildcats have 26 runners out this season, most of which are on the girls side.

The boys lost their two top runners in Wyatt Reece and Smith, but return junior Evan Murphy, and sophomores Cade Holtzen and Carson Houchen, who logged a lot of varsity miles last season and progressed as the year went along.

“The boys side will be a little different than last year,” coach Reece said. “We will still look to improve as individuals, but as far as a team, it will be a lot like last year and we might not field a full team until later in the season.

“Overall, boys and girls, this is an awesome group of kids who will do great things throughout the year.”

Louisburg will get its season started Thursday when it travels to the Anderson County Invitational at the Garnett Golf Course. The first race is scheduled to begin at 3:30, with the varsity not slated to begin until close to 6 p.m.