

Lady Cats win team title on their home course



Louisburg senior Carlee Gassman leads a pack of runners up a hill toward the finish line last Thursday during the Louisburg Invitational at Lewis-Young Park. The Lady Cats took first place and Louisburg medaled six overall.

Running around the course at Lewis-Young Park for the final time, realization began to set in for the six Louisburg seniors.

Time on the cross country season is quickly running out. Trinity Moore, Carlee Gassman, Emily Williams, Natalie George, Anthony Davis and Evan Murphy not only ran their final regular season race of their Wildcat career, but also the last on their home course.

As emotional as it was for some, they seemed to make the most of it – especially Moore and Gassman. The two Louisburg seniors led the Lady Cats to a first place team finish at the Louisburg Invitational on Thursday, and between the boys and girls, Louisburg earned six medals overall.

“It was so exciting to see the

team take first," Gassman said. "I'm really proud of all the girls who ran their hearts out. Each and every one of us contributes to the team's success.

It was a great way to end my last home meet."

The Lady Cats pulled together to win the team title as they finished in a tie with Fort Scott with 68 points.

The tie-breaker, which is the top sixth runner on each team, went the way of

Louisburg as freshman Bree Gassman edged out the Fort Scott runner.

"It meant a lot to have our team take first place," Moore said. "We were tied and our sixth runner helped to

break the tie for us to win. It showed me, and the team, that we can take on

challenges that come our way, even in difficult race conditions. Our hard work

paid off and it is starting to show more and more every week."

Louisburg had to dodge the rain to make sure its home invitational was able to get in and the Wildcats wouldn't go

two weeks with competing in a meet, as their last meet in Pittsburg was rained out.

That meant having to run on a soft, muddy course at Lewis-Young, but Louisburg was still able to produce good results.

Moore led the Lady Cats in third place overall with a time of 20 minutes and 55 seconds. Piper freshman Grace

Hanson won the girls side in 20 minutes and Spring Hill sophomore Alyssa Anderson was second.

“I felt like I ran okay during the race,” Moore said. “I had some tightness in my leg, but I powered through as much as I could. It wasn’t my best race, and I know I could have done better, but I’m happy with my performance with all the challenges and conditions. With never running in conditions like this before, it took some getting used to as every step was different with the terrain and wetness of the course. It wasn’t too difficult, but it had its challenges.”

As for Carlee Gassman, she finished seventh overall in 22:14 to earn a medal in her final home meet.

Sophomore Reese Johnson also garnered a medal for the Lady Cats as she took 11th in 22:49.

“I felt like I gave it my all and left everything out on the course,” Carlee said. “I wouldn’t have ran so well if it wasn’t for Reese. She gives me a lot of motivation.”

Sophomore Ruth Minster had her best varsity race of the season as she was fourth on the team in 24:22 and was 22nd overall. Freshman Nova Ptacek also had a strong showing in 25th with a time of 24:50.

Bree Gassman (24:56) and junior Kennady Wilkerson (28th) were 27th and 28th, respectively.



Senior Anthony Davis (left) medaled in his final regular season meet as he finished 10th overall.

On the boys side, Louisburg garnered three medals, including one from Davis in his final home meet. Davis

took 10th overall in 19:01 and helped the Wildcat boys to a third-place team finish with 70 points.

Spring Hill won the boys team title with 32 points and Piper was second with 58. Piper senior Owen Roellchen won the boys race in 17:30.

Louisburg sophomore Caden Bradshaw finished right behind Davis in 11th to medal with a time of 19:06. Fellow sophomore Ryan Rogers also garnered a medal in 15th in 19:14.

Junior Carson Houchen finished

just outside of medal contention in 17th with a time of 19:28 and

junior Cade Holtzen was 20th in 20:04. Senior Evan Murphy (20:31)

and sophomore Sawyer Richardson (21:12) took 26th and 29th, respectively.

The competition will begin to heat

up for the Wildcats as they begin their postseason schedule this Thursday when

they travel to Tonganoxie for the Frontier League Invitational at the

Leavenworth County Fairgrounds.

The Frontier League features

state-ranked teams in Baldwin and Eudora, along with several strong individual

runners from other programs.

“I am very excited for league,”

Moore said. “We have a very difficult league with very talented and amazing runners.

We have not run this course before, so it will be very exciting and interesting

as it will provide many of its own challenges. I know that I can do great

myself, and that our team can perform very well if we give our best effort. It

should be a great race and I can’t wait to run.”