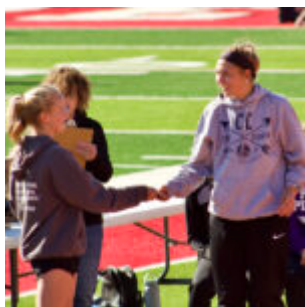


Moore earns fourth state medal, breaks own school record



Louisburg senior Trinity Moore accepts her third place state medal Saturday following the Class 4A girls race at Wamego Country Club.

WAMEGO – Trinity Moore has left a lasting impression on the Louisburg cross country program over the last four years, but she saved the best moment for her final act.

Moore broke her own school record with a time of 19 minutes and 39 seconds to finish third overall at the Kansas Class 4A State Cross Country Championships on Saturday at the Wamego Country Club.

The Louisburg senior recorded the program's best ever state finish as she eclipsed her fourth-place state medal from a season ago.

"It meant so much to me to finish with such a great race for my high school career," Moore said. "Going into the race, I didn't know how well I would finish. This race had the best competition that I have ran against all year and I think that is what really pushed me."

“When I saw my time crossing the finish line, I was ecstatic. I felt great the entire race and was able to control everything I did. Finishing third was icing on the cake. I was surprised but so incredibly happy to be able to place in such a great spot, but I also knew that this was what I had worked for all year.”

This made the fourth state medal for Moore in her high school career and she improved on her state finish every year. Last season, she took fourth overall and bested her state time from a year ago by more than 30 seconds.

“Trinity has been a pleasure to work with,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “She is a driven person who expects the best and will settle for nothing less. I feel that she saved her best race for last. She answered surges and when she made her move, she separated herself from the group and pressed to the finish line. Her third place finish was incredible. She did accomplish a lot during her four years and the best is still ahead of her in college.”



Trinity Moore prepares for one of the several turns on the Wamego Country Club course Saturday during the Class 4A state meet.

Moore

led the Lady Cats to a fifth-place team finish at the state meet with 165

points and were just four points behind Fort Scott for fourth-place. Buhler won

the state championship with 60 points and Baldwin was the runner-up with 74.

Chapman's

Taylor Briggs won the individual state crown with a time of 19 minutes and

Piper's Grace Hanson was second at 19:31.

"The

girls had a good race," coach Reece said. "Fifth place as a

team was beyond my expectations for the meet. They all seemed to handle the race well and a few even ran their best times ever.”

Sophomore Reese Johnson finished second on the Louisburg team in 21:57 and was 40th overall in the 102-runner field. Freshman Claire Brown took 50th in 22:22 and senior Carlee Gassman battled an injured ankle and was 61st in 23:01.



Sophomore Reese Johnson races toward the finish line during the state meet Saturday in Wamego.

Another

sophomore, Ruth Minster, was 74th in 23:32, while freshman Bree Gassman (25:05) and junior Kennady Wilkerson (25:09) finished 98th

and 99th, respectively.

As

for Moore, she able to able to get out fast from the start and work with the front group most of the way, which allowed her to get comfortable and run her race.

“The

race at state was very fast and competitive,” Moore said. “I knew I had a great start since I was closer to the front than in year’s past, and I was able to keep it and work hard to pass those in front of me. With running this course so many times, I knew what to expect, so there were no new challenges except for powering through what I have done before, with the hills and turns this course presents.

“It

was the best race I have ever ran and it was the best I have ever felt in a race since my body is always comfortable running there and I was able to push through all it has to offer.”

As

celebratory as the finish was, it was also the final time Moore and Gassman will wear the Lady Cat uniform. However, both runners were a part of three state qualifying teams and Moore has plenty of medals to show for her time as a Wildcat.

“I definitely felt the realization that my high school cross country career was over when I crossed the finish line at state, but I don’t think I have really let it sink in,” Moore said. “It still seems like I have more time even though it has ended. I think at our banquet is when it will really hit me since I will be with my teammates, family and coaches. They are the people who have helped make this all possible for me and have been my support system over the years.”

“Looking back over the past four years, I would never have imagined that I could have accomplished more. When I started cross country, it was a way to stay in shape for soccer, but it turned into one of the things I love most. I pushed myself to the limits and I know there are things I could have done differently over the course of my career, but finishing where I did was the best I could have ever imagined for myself.”

As for the program itself, Reece saw improvements from several underclassmen as he envisions both of his teams taking another step forward.

“The season was super positive and the runners did an amazing job,” Reece said.

“The boys team started strong as a group and finished stronger. They have a couple great seasons ahead of them. The girls team shuffled a little, but in the end came together as a solid nine, which makes it hard to

set for regional
and state, but it is a good problem to have.

“The
seniors will always be missed as they are the leaders of
the team, but we
have some strong young runners that will step in and step up
to the challenge.
Next year could be better, who knows. With the middle school
starting cross
country this year, it will also help the program to continue
to gain
strength in the future.”