

Edwards runs way to her third consecutive title



Louisburg freshman Lola Edwards leads a group of runners during the Perry-Lecompton Invitational last Thursday at Perry Lake.

PERRY – She may only be a freshman, but Louisburg’s Lola Edwards is running like a seasoned veteran.

Edwards, who had won two consecutive meets prior to Thursday’s Perry-Lecompton Invitational, put together another strong showing. The Wildcat freshman captured her third straight first place finish as she won with a time of 23 minutes and 18 seconds on the Perry Lake course.

In fact, Edwards wasn’t the only Louisburg freshman to record a top five finish. Maddy Rhamy finished toward the top of the pack in fourth overall in 25:10.

“The race was done in three groups, so Lola ran by herself in front in that third group and won the meet,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “She has an internal drive that is unbelievable. She has the ability to get into her rhythm of the race and go. Maddy ran an awesome race and was second to Lola. She was in the flow and was smiling the whole race.”

The Lady Cats had another top three team finish as they recorded 80 points to finish third overall. They did so without one of their top runners – Reese Johnson – who was unable to compete.

Tonganoxie won the meet with 45 points and Paola was second with 74.

Sophomore Claire Brown ran strong for the Lady Cats as she also medaled in 20th with a time of 26:40. Sophomore Bree Gassman (27:11) and freshman Erin Apple (27:17) also earned medals in 27th and 30th, respectively. Sophomore Nova Ptacek rounded out the Louisburg lineup in 26th in 27:55.

On the boys' side, senior Carson Houchen continues to run well for the Wildcats as he finished ninth in 20:45. It was his fourth consecutive meet in which he has medaled.

"Carson is on a mission," Reece said. "He is leading the boys team and not holding back. After our little hiccup at the beginning of the season, he has cranked it up and the whole team is running strong. If I did my job correctly, the whole team will be rolling come regionals."

Senior Cade Holtzen also earned a medal for Louisburg as he finished 24th in 21:36.

Junior Ryan Rogers was 34th in 22:22 and fellow junior Hayden Ross was 40th in 22:30. Freshman Noah Cotter (22:32) and sophomore Leo Martin (23:17) took 43rd and 55th, respectively.

It was the first time any of the other runners had competed at the Perry Invitational, which was a replacement on the schedule. Louisburg was originally scheduled to compete in Pittsburg, but had to be changed due to COVID-19.

Reece said his runners fared well on the new course, but it did have its fair share of challenges.

"Perry was an interesting course," he said. "There were lots of turns and for almost a mile the runners were not in sight as they were running in the woods on a horse trail. The course

also measured long by almost a quarter of a mile, so times were not even looked at. Both teams competed well as that is always our goal and it is not always about time.”

Louisburg is back in action this Thursday, this time on their home-friendly course at Lewis-Young Park for the Louisburg Invitational. Races are set to begin at 4 p.m.