

Wildcat cross country ready for another historic season



The Louisburg girls cross country team is hoping to improve off of last season third place finish at the Class 4A state meet.

There was no better season for Louisburg cross country than in 2020.

The girls team earned their first state plaque after they finished third at the Class 4A state meet in Wamego. As for the boys, they qualified as a team for state for the first in program history.

It was a magical time for the Wildcats, but even after that memorable run, they are ready to take that next step.

Nearly all of the girls off of the third place state team return to try and better their position in 2021, while the boys return a majority of their group and have added a couple key pieces.

It has all the makings of another historic season for Louisburg.

The Lady Cats return three state medalists in senior Reese Johnson and sophomores Lola Edwards and Maddy Rhamy, along with juniors Bree Gassman and Nova Ptacek and sophomore Erin Apple.

Louisburg has already set high goals for itself and it wants

to improve off its third place finish.

“The girls are hungry for a better finish at state,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “They are a self-motivated group and there are at least 10 girls that will be battling for a varsity spot all year long. This makes for good intrasquad competition and real teamwork during training. As one of the girls stated after a workout, it’s ring season. So our expectations for them are already in their goals.”



Lola Edwards took 10th at the 4A state meet as she was one of three Lady Cats to earn medals last year.

Rhamy and Edwards are coming off impressive freshman seasons that saw them finish in the top 10 at the state meet. Rhamy finished eighth and Edwards was 10th as they competed against the best 4A had to offer.

Reece is expecting them, and others, to take another step

forward this season.

“Lola and Maddy have put in the summer work and are coming into the season ready to go,” Reece said. “They will be much more race savvy this year as sophomores and will be there at the end.”

Johnson is also a returning two-time state medalist after she took 15th at last year’s state meet and will look to lead a group of improved runners.

“This season I just have this feeling that we’re gonna do great things,” Johnson said. “I sense a state title for our team and I know we’re all working for that ring. We’re gonna be better than we ever have been this season and everyone is working so hard.”

The Lady Cats will also have some new runners that could make an impact as well. Sophomore Emma Vohs, who earned a state medal in the 400-meter dash last spring, has cracked the top seven for the opening meet today in Garnett and could be a factor for Louisburg.

According to Reece, junior Nerea Ocerin and sophomore Ashley Branine will also compete for varsity time throughout the season.

As for the boys, the Wildcats lost two of their top runners from a year ago in Carson Houchen and Cade Holtzen, but found two replacements for them to include with a good group of returning runners.

Senior Jaden Vohs, who was a state medalist in the 800 and 1,600-meter runs last spring at state track, is out for cross country for the first time. He is joined by freshman Jerynce Brings Plenty, who set school record times at the middle school level.



Senior Ryan Rogers is one of several returners to lead the Louisburg boys team.

The returning group of seniors includes Ryan Rogers and Hayden Ross, along with junior Leo Martin and sophomores Max LaJoie and Noah Cotter, will open the season on the varsity level.

Juniors Trent Allen, Griffin Drew and Landon Henry, along with senior Sawyer Richardson and sophomore Vitus Aagaard will compete for varsity time this year.

"The boys team is going to be a solid group again," Reece said. "Much like the girls team there will be multiple runners trying to earn a spot on the top 7. Jaden Vohs and Jerynce Brings Plenty will be leading the group with returners from last year.

"They do have a return trip to state in their goals as well. With multiple returners and a tight pack of runners, it is

going to be a fun competitive season amongst teammates to earn a top 7 spot.”

Louisburg will begin its season today when it travels to the Anderson County Invitational. JV races are set to begin at 5 p.m with the varsity to follow.