

Lady Cats qualify for state as a team for sixth consecutive season



The Louisburg girls cross country team qualified for state Saturday at the Class 4A regional meet in Baldwin City. Members of the team are (from left) Bree Gassman, Maddy Rhamy, Madison Huggins, Emma Vohs, Lola Edwards, Nova Ptacek and Erin Apple.

BALDWIN CITY – The Louisburg girls cross country team has been no stranger to the state meet in the past half-decade.

It won't be this year, either.

For the sixth consecutive season, the Lady Cats qualified for the state meet after they finished third at the Class 4A regional meet Saturday at Baldwin Golf Course.

The team of Emma Vohs, Maddy Rhamy, Lola Edwards, Nova Ptacek, Bree Gassman, Erin Apple and Madison Huggins will make their way back to Wamego for the Class 4A meet after a strong performance at regionals.

"It never gets old seeing the joy in the team's eyes when they hear they qualified for state," Louisburg coach John Reece said. "The girls work hard to accomplish this goal each year, and because of their dedication to their sport, they achieve great things even if they might not make it, but they did."

“The program has built itself and I’m just glad to be a part of it. Yes, we put together a training plan to accomplish great things at the end of the season, but the runners do the work to get there. It takes self discipline, motivation and guts to be there at the end of the season.”



Louisburg junior Emma Vohs (right) finished fifth overall Saturday at the Class 4A regional at Baldwin Golf Course.

Like most of the season, Vohs paced the Lady Cats on Saturday and left regionals with some hardware of her own. The Louisburg junior finished fifth overall in 21 minutes to earn an individual medal.

Vohs was just five seconds out of the runner-up spot. Eudora’s Hannah Keltner was the individual champion in 19:59.

“We have worked especially hard this season to make it to state once again, and I couldn’t be more proud of our team for coming out and doing what we needed to do,” Vohs said. “My goals for the state meet is to medal within the top 10 and get our girls up there too so we can take home a state plaque.”



Louisburg junior Lola Edwards leads a pack of runners uphill Saturday in Baldwin City.

Edwards and Rhamy recorded a pair of top 20 finishes on the day. Edwards was 16th overall in 22:43 and Rhamy was right behind her in 17th in 22:46.

Ptacek and Gassman, who are making their fourth trip to the state meet as seniors, also ran well. Ptacek was 27th in 23:59 and Gassman was 33rd in 25:05.

Huggins finished 35th overall in 25:22 and Apple was 40th with a time of 25:55.

It was a familiar course for many of the Louisburg runners, which helped them find success once again.



Louisburg junior Maddy Rhamy finished 17th overall in the Class 4A regional meet.

"Baldwin is a great course, and because of that it is one less item that they have to focus on," Reece said. "There are so many uncontrollable aspects, and knowing the course well helps calm the nerves just a bit."

It is veteran group that is heading back to the state meet. In fact, Edwards, Rhamy, Ptacek, Gassman and Apple were all a part of the team that finished third two years ago.

Last season, Vohs and Rhamy earned state medals and the Lady Cats are hoping for another strong showing.

"Emma has run well this year and I look for her and the rest of the girls to race well at Wamego," Reece said. "They train great together and have a strong bond that will take far. The nine girls that attended regionals, even though 2 were alternates, have ran well all season and are amazing to be around. They are positive, determined and goofy all at the same time."



Louisburg junior Noah Cotter led the Wildcat boys in 14th and missed qualifying for state by one spot.

On the boys side, junior Noah Cotter nearly earned himself a spot at the state meet, but finished one spot away from making it as an individual.

Cotter took 14th overall in 18:38, while the Wildcat team took sixth with 132 points.

“We talked with Noah about his chances and what he needed to do in the attempt to qualify,” Reece said. “He did just what we talked about and put himself in the top 10, but could not quite hold on at the end. He put himself out there and came up just short. He was very happy with his effort and looks to persevere next year.”

Senior Leo Martin was second on the Wildcat team as he took 27th in 20 minutes, while senior Ethan Ptacek finished 30th in 20:08. Senior Landan Henry was 34th in 20:27.

Sophomores Ben Proctor (21:17) and Steele Smith (22:00) rounded out the Louisburg team in 41st and 47th, respectively.