

Wildcat girls take third at Wellsville Invite, medal six overall



The Louisburg girls cross country team of (from left) Annie Hornberger, Felicity Allen, Karissa Williamson, Reese Smith, Maddox McGhee, Hailey Shelton and Talen McMurray took third last week at the Wellsville Invitational.

WELLSVILLE – The Louisburg cross country teams continued to make strides last Thursday at the Wellsville Invitational, with the Wildcat girls turning in one of their strongest performances of the season.

Louisburg placed third overall in the girls team standings with 81 points, finishing just eight points behind meet champion Paola in a tightly contested race. Four Wildcat runners earned medals, led by standout freshman Maddox McGhee,

who crossed the line in 10th place with a time of 22:21.

Another freshman, Karissa Williamson, wasn't far behind, securing a 15th-place finish in 22:56. Sophomore teammates Hailey Shelton (19th, 23:22) and Reese Smith (22nd, 23:45) rounded out the medal-winning performances for the Wildcats.

"Maddox has been a force to be reckoned with so far," Louisburg coach John Reece said. "Both her and Karissa are crushing it. Even though we were a touch off on our race execution at Wellsville, she turned an awesome second and third mile to move well up in the standings and lead the team. All the girls worked hard and were rewarded with season bests or matched their best times so far."

Annie Hornberger (35th, 24:37) and Talen McMurray (36th, 24:44) provided strong support in the team scoring, while Felicity Allen finished 40th in 25:05 to cap off the varsity effort.

"The girls' team finish was a testament to their execution of the coach's crazy plan to run a tempo type race as we had just raced on Saturday at Wamego," Reece said. "A short turn around after Wamego is not ideal so we utilize the day to learn how we race instead of just racing again and hope for the best."

On the boys side, the Wildcats had two individual medalists. Junior Titus Ellison led the team with a 23rd-place finish in 19:35, and junior Spencer Mattison was close behind in 25th with a time of 19:43. Junior Levi Cotter narrowly missed out on a medal, placing 26th in 19:47.

Freshman August Meyer finished 40th in 21:18, while junior Truman Ellison (48th, 22:15) and freshman Matthew Lien (56th, 23:23) also contributed solid performances for the boys' squad.

"Some of the boys were working a tempo like the girls team and also showed positive results and medaled in the process,"

Reece said. "Spencer was coming off of some illness and put in a great performance to get back in the groove. We put together all six runners to field a varsity team and we are proud of how the freshman boys, August and Matthew, stepped up and answered the call to the next level."

Louisburg is back in action Thursday as it travels to the Prairie View Invitational. Races begin at 3:30 p.m.