

Louisburg wraps up memorable cross country season at state meet



Louisburg freshman Maddox McGhee led the Wildcat cross country teams at the state meet as she took 34th overall. (Photo courtesy Brent Maycock, KSHSAA Covered)

WAMEGO – The Louisburg cross country program capped off one of its most memorable seasons on Nov. 1 as 10 runners – including the entire girls team – competed at the Class 4A state meet at

the Wamego Country Club course.

It marked a fitting end to a historic fall for the Wildcats, whose girls captured the school's first-ever regional championship the week before at Neodesha.

Louisburg finished ninth in the state team standings with 202 points, led by junior Maddox McGhee, who placed 34th in 21:21. Hailey Shelton followed close behind in 39th (21:33), with Karissa Williamson taking 48th (21:58). Annie Hornberger (75th, 22:30), Talen McMurray (78th, 23:24), Reese Smith (79th, 23:27) and Felicity Allen (86th, 24:07) rounded out the Louisburg lineup.

"All of the runners did an amazing job," Louisburg head coach John Reece said. "With only one of the 10 qualifiers having been to State before, I was thrilled with how they handled themselves and how they raced."

Reece said the girls' historic run – from winning regionals to competing against the state's best – exceeded every expectation.

"The girls ran great races individually and as a team," he said. "Winning regionals and then going to state was a perfect end to an amazing season. They went far beyond my expectations at the beginning of the year. They really came together as a team and left the state meet wanting even more next year."



Louisburg junior Truman Ellison led the Wildcat boys in Wamego on Nov. 1 at the Class 4A state meet. (Photo courtesy Brent Maycock, KSHSAA Covered)

On the boys' side, Truman Ellison led the Wildcats with a 48th-place finish in 18:23. Titus Ellison was 60th (18:43) and Spencer Mattison was 63rd (18:46).

"The three boys did awesome at State," Reece said. "I was proud of their determination and grit during Regionals, and they were rewarded by individually qualifying for state. They represented their school and team well, and I know they'll be looking to qualify the whole team next year."

Even more encouraging for the Wildcats – every runner who competed at State will return next season.

"This year's teams far exceeded my expectations," Reece said. "Their hard work and mental toughness were immeasurable, and what makes it even better is that we had no seniors on the

squad. The future looks very good. Like athletes, coaches go through highs and lows throughout their careers, and this season was a definite high. I see even better things in our future.”