

Wildcats medal five at home meet, Lady Cats finish second



Louisburg freshman Reese Johnson (right) gets off to a good start Thursday during the Louisburg Invitational, while teammate Carlee Gassman was right behind her at Lewis-Young Park.

The Louisburg High School cross country team put its best foot forward Thursday during its home meet – literally.

Several Wildcats ran personal best times as they racked up five medals in the Louisburg Invitational and the runners had a chance to shine on their home course at Lewis-Young Park.

As a team, the Louisburg girls took full advantage of running on a familiar course as the Lady Cats finished second in the team standings with 55 points. Junior Trinity Moore, freshman Reese Johnson, junior Carlee Gassman, freshman Delaney Wright, senior Shaylor Whitham and senior Kaitlyn Lewer earned team medals for the fourth time this season.

Individually, Moore, Johnson and Gassman earned medals for the Lady Cats, while juniors Anthony Davis and Evan Murphy snagged medals on the boys side.

Moore had the best run of her career, time-wise, as she broke her own school record with a time of 19 minutes and 46 seconds to finish second overall. Paola's Darian Hudgeons was first in

19:42 and it was Paola that won the team title with 46 points, while Fort Scott was third, just one point behind Louisburg.

Johnson, a freshman, improved on her season best time to run a 20:25 to take fifth and Gassman also set a new personal-best time of 21:02 to take seventh. Wright (22:23) and Whitham (22:45) also had personal best times as they finished 22nd and 23rd, respectively, while Lewer (23:36) was 30th.



Freshman Delaney Wright leads a pack of runners around a turn Thursday at Lewis-Young Park.

"The girls performance was solid," Louisburg coach John Reece said. "I thought Trinity ran a great race and I think she did everything she could to finish first. Reese improved again on her time and I think Carlee ran fantastic.

"Our four and five runners have to continue to work hard and

they are going to be the ones we lean on for a chance to be a state qualifier. They are getting better and better. Shaylor is bringing it this year as a senior and it is awesome.”

Davis and Murphy led the Louisburg boys as both earned medals. Davis finished 11th in 18 minutes and 49 seconds and Murphy was 14th in 19:05.

Sophomore Cade Holtzen was nearly the third Wildcat boy to medal, but was edged out at the finish line by Spring Hill’s Chase Rooney in less than a half of a second and took 16th in 19:06.04.



Junior Anthony Davis was one of two Wildcat boys to earn a medal during the Louisburg Invitational.

Sophomore Carson Houchen finished 20th overall in 19:49 and

freshman Ben McKain was 23rd in 20:11. Seniors Jackson Staab (21:32) and Gareth Baus (21:53) rounded out the Wildcat team in 30th and 32nd, respectively.

“It was definitely nice to see the boys have some success with Evan and Anthony both getting their medals and Cade almost got one, just missing out in the end,” Reece said. “Those guys weren’t even close last year for medals so it was nice to see them get up there.”

Spring Hill’s Braxton Dixon won the meet with a time of 17:32 and the Broncos also won the team title with 22 points. Paola was second with 57, Fort Scott was third with 82 and Louisburg was fourth at 84.

In the junior varsity races, the Louisburg girls picked up four medals on the day. Kennady Wilkerson finished fourth to lead the Lady Cats, while Alexis French, Malee Rutherford and Ruth Minster also medaled seventh, ninth and 10th, respectively.

The regular season is now over for Louisburg as it focuses on the league meet this Thursday in Baldwin and then will travel to Ottawa for the regional meet on Oct. 20.



Louisburg sophomore Carson Houchen recorded a top 20 finish Thursday.

The Wildcats will battle Baldwin and Paola for a league crown, while Louisburg will also square off with the two league opponents, along with Fort Scott, at regionals. The Lady Cats will compete with those three programs, among others, as they try to qualify for state as a team for the second straight season

“Baldwin is a great course because you can run fast there,” Reese said. “It is a challenging course because there are rollers, but it is going to give us another chance to run against Paola and run against Baldwin and see how we stack up.

“Looking at our regional with Paola, Fort Scott and us all being there, our home meet gave us a good feel for what we are going to do. League will give us another good feel because Baldwin will be there, so it is looking positive since we were

able to beat Fort Scott again this season by a few points. We have to keep getting better.”