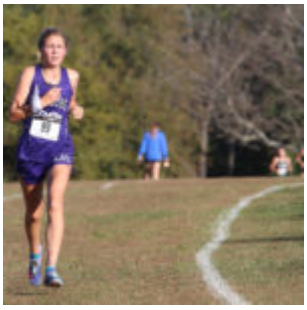
Moore wins league title, Reece takes runner-up



Louisburg sophomore Trinity Moore gets out to a big lead during the Frontier League Championships on Thursday at the Baldwin City Golf Course. Moore won the league title with a time of 20 minutes and 12 seconds.

BALDWIN CITY – Trinity Moore and Wyatt Reece ran their way into the Louisburg High School cross country record books Thursday in what was one of the most competitive races on the season for the Wildcats.

During the Frontier League Championships, Moore and Reece competed against some of the state's top runners from schools like Baldwin, De Soto and Eudora. However, both runners showed why they are considered one of the top in the state in their own right.

Moore became the first cross country runner in Louisburg history to win a Frontier League title as she captured the girls' race with a personal best time of 20 minutes and 12 seconds at the Baldwin City Golf Course and distanced herself from the rest of the pack.

"Winning league was totally unexpected, but it is sure awesome," Moore said. "Going into league, I was thinking if I ran a good race that I could finish in the top five. We have some amazing teams in our league with some great runners."

Reece made some noise of his own in the boys race. He finished second overall with a time of 17:11 and recorded the highest league finish for a boy in Louisburg history.

“I wasn’t worried about my place at all, I just wanted to run well,” Reece said. “The race itself I was happy with. I felt it should’ve been faster, but the course was soft. Our competition at league is some of the best in the state and I love competing with them.”

For their performance, both runners earned first-team all-league honors as they, and the rest of the Wildcats, prepare for their regional race this Saturday in Burlington.



Louisburg senior Wyatt Reece leads a pack of runners early in the race Thursday at Baldwin City.

Louisburg senior Tim Smith also brought home hardware from the

boys race as he took 10th overall in 18:19 and earned second team all-league honors.

Moore, a sophomore, got off to a good start in the girls race as she stayed near the front of the pack, but with 2,000 meters left in the race, she overtook the leader and won the race by 27 seconds.

“That was outstanding by Trinity,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “The runners started out fairly fast and she put herself in a position to be able to close and she was feeling her oats. She made a move and ran away with the race. It was impressive for her to make a move that early and hold it and put the rest of the field away.

“The Frontier League is one of the toughest league in the state as far as competition goes. The times that some of the Baldwin girls posted have been really good and to see Trinity go out there and do what she did was just outstanding. She is going to be a force to be reckoned with out at state.”

As for the girls team, Louisburg finished fourth in the team standings with 112 points. Baldwin won the league crown with 42 points and De Soto was second with 44.

Sophomore Carlee Gassman just missed out on earning honorable mention all-league honors as she took 22nd overall in 22:43. The top 21 finishers in each race receive all-league status.

Senior Reilly Alexander (23:30) and junior Payton Shaffer (23:41) took 32nd and 33rd overall, respectively. Junior Kaitlyn Lewer (23:50) crossed the line shortly after to finish 35th and senior Isabelle Holtzen (24:11) was 39th.



Junior Payton Shaffer sprints toward the finish line Thursday during the Frontier League Championships.

Senior Abby Crooks (50th), sophomore Emily Williams (53rd), junior Shaylor Whitham (54th), freshman Kennady Wilkerson (55th), sophomore Avery Graham (65th), freshman Alexis French (68th), junior Anna Niebrugge (70th), sophomore Elizabeth Kratochvil (71st), junior Jordon Leach (74th) and junior Katie Nikulina (77th) also competed for Louisburg.

In the boys race, Reece, stayed near the front from the start and his goal was to run with De Soto's Sam Hubert, Andre VanMeerhaege, along with Baldwin runners Parker Wilson and Jacob Bailey. He did more than that as he surpassed all but Hubert, who won in a time of 16:56 – 15 seconds ahead of the Louisburg senior.

“Wyatt did outstanding and for him to come out and get second was just awesome,” coach Reece said. “The young man from De Soto is a heck of a runner, but Wyatt ran a race to give himself an opportunity to be there and it paid off. It wasn’t a PR for him, but the race he ran was excellent.

“Wyatt is finding his stride at the right time. His mental competitiveness has just totally changed. He knew that he had to go out and run with the De Soto and Baldwin kids and it just so happened that he had it today and beat a lot of them.”

As a team, the Wildcats finished sixth with 136 points. De Soto won the league boys title with 52 points and Ottawa was second with 58.

Sophomore Evan Murphy was third on the Wildcat team as he ran a 20:06 to take 38th overall. Freshman Cade Holtzen was 44th in 20:33 and freshman Carson Houchen was 52nd in 20:53.

Sophomore Colin Cook (54th), freshman Luke Faulkner (55th), junior Jackson Staab (60th), sophomore Garrett Rolofson (67th), sophomore Rian Mallory (69th), sophomore Keith Estle (70th) and senior Parker Perentis (71st) also competed for the Wildcats.

Louisburg will travel to Burlington this Saturday as it will compete in the Class 4A regional race. The top three teams advance to the state meet, along with the top five other individuals that aren’t a member of a state qualifying team. The girls race will begin at 10 a.m., with the boys to follow at 10:40.

Reece, Smith and Moore all punched their tickets to state on the same course a year ago and they are hoping history repeats itself.

“I am healthy now, feeling strong and looking forward to running at regionals,” Moore said. “We will face some very

talented runners at Burlington, but I am very excited for the opportunity to run and compete with the best. Hopefully all the hard work will pay off."

Reece, Moore win individual crowns at home meet



Louisburg sophomore Trinity Moore leads a pack of runners Thursday during the Louisburg Invitational at Lewis-Young Park. Moore won the girls side with a personal best time of 20 minutes and 30 seconds.

In the last quarter-mile of their final Louisburg Invitational, seniors Wyatt Reece and Tim Smith ran side-by-side, leading the rest of the pack.

No one was going to catch them. They were going to finish in first and second place, but the only question was, who would cross the line first?

So, they had a nice, quick chat on how it was going to be decided. They were going to leave it to chance.

"We were going to do Rock, Paper, Scissors to see who was going to win," Reece said. "But then Tim took a hard step,

then I did and then it was a true race.”

It was a bang-bang finish as both runners recorded a time of 17 minutes and 27 seconds, but Reece edged Smith at the line as Reece captured the Louisburg Invitational crown Thursday at Lewis-Young Park and Smith took runner-up.

“Winning the home meet wasn’t the overall goal, but I knew the opportunity was going to be there, so I am happy with the win,” Reece said. “The time wasn’t bad, but it could’ve been faster.”



Senior Wyatt Reece turns a corner during the varsity boys race Thursday at Lewis-Young Park,.

Although the girls’ race didn’t have as much drama as the boys, it still provided the Louisburg team with another positive result. Sophomore Trinity Moore won the girls side

with a personal best time of 20:30 to win her second race of the season.

Louisburg sophomore Carlee Gassman also had a strong race as she took third overall in 21:30. Those finishes helped the Lady Cats to third-place in the team standings with 54 points.

Fort Scott won the meet with 30 points and Spring Hill was second with 50.

Senior Reilly Alexander just missed the top 15 as she took 16th in 23:32. Junior Kaitlyn Lewer and senior Isabelle Holtzen were side-by-side at the finish with a time of 23:41, but Lewer just nudged Holtzen as they took 18th and 19th, respectively.

Junior Payton Shaffer was 21st in 24:03 and sophomore Emily Williams rounded out the girls team in 25th in 24:37.

On the boys' side, the Wildcats were fifth in the team standings with 99 points. Ottawa won the meet with 34 points and Spring Hill took second with 77.

After Reece's and Smith's top two finishes, freshman Cade Holtzen was next on the Wildcat team in 30th with a time of 20:39. Sophomore Evan Murphy took 32nd in 20:49, freshman Carson Houchen ran a 21:45 to take 34th and freshman Luke Faulkner was 36th in 22:27.

In the junior varsity races, Abby Crooks led the Louisburg girls in fifth place in 24:29, while Kennady Wilkerson (7th) and Shaylor Whitham (9th) also had top 10 finishes. Jackson Staab and Gareth Baus finished ninth and 10th, respectively, to lead the junior varsity boys.

Louisburg will now begin its postseason races starting this

Thursday when they travel to Baldwin City for the Frontier League Invitational. The following week, the Wildcats will travel to Burlington for the Class 4A regional meet as they hope to earn several state berths.

“I’m pumped for the postseason,” Reece said. “We don’t train for our home meet, we train for state. When we get there, we will be ready.”

Success follows Louisburg cross country at Pittsburg



Louisburg senior Reilly Alexander was one of seven runners that helped the Wildcat girls cross country team to a third place finish at the Pittsburg Invitational last Thursday.

PITTSBURG – Coming off its best meet of the season where it won a team and two individual titles, the Louisburg High School cross country team took the momentum from that performance and ran with it – literally.

The Wildcats competed in the Pittsburg Invitational on Thursday and left there with more medals. The Louisburg girls team finished third overall with 98 points and had two runners earn individual medals, while the boys also garnered two

medals.

Trinity Moore, Carlee Gassman, Reilly Alexander, Kaitlyn Lewer, Isabelle Holtzen, Peyton Shaffer and Emily Williams helped the Lady Cats to that third place finish. Fort Scott won the team title with 61 points and Carl Junction (Mo.) was second with 62.

Moore matched her personal best with a time of 20 minutes and 36 seconds to finish third, while Gassman surpassed her top time in 21:24 to take 11th. Gassman also moved up to second on the LHS all-time list for a 5-kilometer race.

Alexander also made her way onto that list as she was third on the team with a time of 23:14 to take 31st overall. That time was good for seventh on the school's all-time list.

Lewer (23:40) was next on the Lady Cats in 38th and Holtzen (23:46) was 42nd. Shaffer (23:48) and Williams (24:13) took 43rd and 47th, respectively.

"The course is flat and fast and our times and hard work showed it," Louisburg coach John Reece said. "The girls ran an awesome race on Thursday. Finishing third was a huge step in the right direction to attempt to qualify the team for state."

The Wildcats also had a lot of success on the boys side as seniors Wyatt Reece and Tim Smith garnered another top five finish for themselves.

Wyatt ran his best race of the season as he took second overall with a personal best time of 16:49, while Smith finished right behind him in third in 16:58.

As a team, the Wildcats finished fifth overall with 160 points. Carl Junction was first with 51 and Chanute was second with 112.

“The boys were much improved with many personal records,” coach Reece said. “The team finished fifth, which is outstanding. Wyatt and Tim both broke the 17 minute barrier and ran great races. Their showing at the meet against several schools that will be at our regional is a positive and our junior varsity runners that move up will help out tremendously.”

Sophomore Evan Murphy finished third on the Wildcat team in 19:41, which was good for 47th overall. Freshmen Cade Holtzen (19:42) and Carson Houchen (21:13) took 48th and 85th, respectively.

Louisburg also added a pair of junior varsity medals earlier in the day. Shaylor Whitham took 12th in the girls race in 24:35 and Luke Faulkner was also 12th for the boys as he finished with a time of 20:33.

KSHSAA releases regional, sub-state assignments

The Kansas State High School Activities Association released sub-state and regional pairings today for volleyball and cross country.

The Louisburg High School volleyball team will compete at Paola High School on Oct. 21 along with Ottawa, Paola and Spring Hill.

Atchison HS – *Matt Renk, Manager(s) (1 Court)*
Atchison HS; Basehor-Linwood HS; Kansas City-Piper HS; Tonganoxie HS;

Chanute HS – *Eric Flaton, Manager(s) (1 Court)*
Andover Central HS; Augusta HS; Chanute HS; Rose Hill HS;

El Dorado HS – *Brian Engelken, Manager(s) (1 Court)*
Abilene HS; El Dorado HS; Towanda-Circle HS; Wamego HS;

Fort Scott HS – *Larry Fink, Manager(s) (1 Court)*
Altamont-Labette County HS; Coffeyville-Field Kindley HS; Fort Scott HS; Independence HS;

Paola HS – *Darin Gagnebin, Manager(s) (1 Court)*
Louisburg HS; Ottawa HS; Paola HS; Spring Hill HS;

Shawnee Mission-Bishop Miege HS – *Mike Hubka, Manager(s) (1 Court)*
Bonner Springs HS; Eudora HS; Kansas City-Sumner Academy; Shawnee Mission-Bishop Miege HS;

Ulysses HS – *Jason Kenny, Manager(s) (1 Court)*
Buhler HS; Hays HS; McPherson HS; Ulysses HS;

Winfield HS – *Billy Tipps, Manager(s) (1 Court)*
Arkansas City HS; Mulvane HS; Wellington HS; Winfield HS;

The Louisburg High School cross country team will travel south to Burlington for its regional meet on Oct. 21.

CLASS 4A

(Saturday, October 21, 2017)

4 Regionals…3 Teams Qualifying Per Regional,
Top Ten Runners With Possibility of Additional Individual Qualifiers

BURLINGTON HS (Burlington-John Redmond Res. Dam) ***Dave Watkins, Manager***

GIRLS – 10:00a.m.

BOYS – 10:40 a.m.

Baxter Springs HS, Burlington HS, Chanute HS, Columbus HS, Fort Scott HS, Frontenac HS, Galena HS, Garnett-Anderson County HS, Girard HS, Iola HS, LaCygne-Prairie View HS, Louisburg HS, Osawatomie HS, Ottawa HS, Paola HS, Parsons HS

EL DORADO HS (El Dorado Lake State Park) ***Brian Engelken, Manager***

GIRLS – 10:00 a.m.

BOYS – 10:40 a.m.

Altamont-Labette County HS, Andale HS, Andover Central HS, Arkansas City HS, Augusta HS, Clearwater HS, Coffeyville-Field Kindley HS, El Dorado HS, Independence HS, Mulvane HS, Rose Hill HS, Towanda-Circle HS, Wellington HS, Wichita-Collegiate HS, Wichita-Trinity Academy, Winfield HS

LANSING HS (Wyandotte County Park) ***Gary Mattingly*** **&** ***Brian Malm, Managers***

GIRLS – 10:45 a.m.

BOYS – 12:15 p.m.

Atchison HS, Baldwin HS, Basehor-Linwood HS, Bonner Springs HS, Eudora HS, Holton HS, Kansas City-Bishop Ward HS, Kansas City-Piper HS, Kansas City-Sumner Academy, Marysville HS, Meriden-Jefferson West HS, Sante Fe Trail HS, Shawnee Mission-Bishop Miege HS, Spring Hill HS, Tonganoxie HS, Topeka-Hayden HS

MCPHERSON HS (McPherson-Rolling Acres Golf Course) ***Shane Backhus, Manager***

GIRLS – 10:30 a.m.

BOYS – 11:10 a.m.

Abilene HS, Buhler HS, Chapman HS, Clay Center Community HS, Concordia HS, Hays HS, Holcomb HS, Hugoton HS, Larned HS, Lindsborg-Smoky Valley HS, McPherson HS, Nickerson HS, Pratt HS, St. George-Rock Creek HS, Ulysses HS, Wamego HS

Lady Cats, Moore and Smith take gold at Prairie View



The Louisburg High School girls cross country team won the Ramsey Invitational on Thursday at Prairie View High School.

Members of the team are (from left) Carlee Gassman, Kaitlyn Lewer, Reilly Alexander, Isabelle Holtzen, Payton Shaffer, Emily Williams and Trinity Moore.

LA CYGNE – It was a gold medal performance type of day for the Louisburg High School cross country team.

Not only did the Wildcats sweep the individual crowns Thursday at the Ramsey Invitational at Prairie View High School, but the Lady Cats also won the team title for the first time this season and captured the Prairie View crown for the third consecutive year.

Sophomore Trinity Moore won the girls race with a personal best time, while senior Tim Smith took first place on the boys' side by more than 20 seconds. Between the boys and girls teams, the Wildcats medaled seven runners in all.

"To watch Trinity and Tim both work through the race, make moves on the leader and then put distance on them and keep running their race was just outstanding," Louisburg coach John Reece said. "It is something we talk about in practice, about pulling away and taking the energy away from people and it was just all positive.

"The girls team worked really well together, especially early in the race. Even though they got a little separated, they kept working and we put seven runners in the top 20. When you do that, you win races."

The Louisburg girls team of Moore, Carlee Gassman, Kaitlyn Lewer, Isabelle Holtzen, Reilly Alexander, Payton Shaffer and Emily Williams ran away with the title with 44 points. Anderson County was second with 53.

As for Moore, she trailed Jayhawk-Linn's Kate Dawson through half of the race before she made her move and pulled away in a

time of 20 minutes and 36 seconds to win her first competition of the season.

“It is amazing,” Moore said. “I had to work really hard because there was a lot of competition in this race. I just kept my form and I had a drive to go past (Dawson). I just had the mentality to keep going and I really wanted to win.”

Gassman, a sophomore, had her best finish of the season as she medaled fourth in 22:56. Lewer, a junior, finished 11th overall in 23:50.



Louisburg junior Kaitlyn Lewer stays ahead of a pack of runners Thursday during the Ramsey Invitational at Prairie View High School.

Holtzen (23:59) and Alexander (24:27), both seniors, also earned medals with their 13th and 15th place finish, respectively.

“I think Trinity ran her race in the first mile and she was patient and the girls came back to her,” Reece said. “When Trinity made her move and closed the gap, she fed off of (Dawson). It was Trinity’s race to have.

“Carlee’s race was outstanding. She probably went out a little fast as she wants to run right with Trinity, but she is learning as well and she has big races in her as we get through the end of the season. It is going to happen.”

Shaffer (24:42) and Williams (25:04) rounded out the Louisburg girls in 16th and 19th place.

Smith had his best day of the season for the Louisburg boys as he literally ran away with the boys’ race in 17:42 and won by 23 seconds – his first victory of the season. He passed Anderson County’s Owen Lutz and Central Heights’ Tyler Stevenson close to the midway point of the race and pulled away.

“Honestly, it was a really fun race for me,” Smith said. “A lot of people went out fast in the first mile and I just kind of stuck with them and trailed just a little bit. In about the second mile, I was able to pass the guy who was in first and he drifted. Overall, it was an awesome race for me and I am really proud of the girls too.”

Smith wasn’t the only positive for the Wildcats as senior Wyatt Reece earned a medal and finished fourth in 18:17. Those two results, along with sophomore Evan Murphy and freshmen Cade Holtzen and Carson Houchen, helped the Louisburg boys team to a third place finish with 86 points.



Louisburg's (from left) Tim Smith, Cade Holtzen, Evan Murphy, Wyatt Reece and Carson Houchen pose with their third place team medals.

Murphy finished 22nd overall in 20:37 and Holtzen was 25th in 20:41. Houchen rounded out the Wildcat lineup in 34th in 21:13.

"Tim ran great, especially on a hot, humid day," coach Reece said. "He ran just like Trinity. Wyatt started off strong, but he cramped up a little bit after the first mile, but it was able to loosen up and he was able to get back in the race. He ran a good race too. We look at last year's times, and they both ran faster and Wyatt was almost 20 seconds faster. Our sophomore and freshmen boys ran good races and for them to take third as team is just fantastic. They are super excited."

The Wildcat junior varsity also left Prairie View with a few medals. Abby Crooks took fourth overall in the girls race in 26:59. Teammates Shaylor Whitham (27:08) and Kennady Wilkerson (27:16) medaled in fifth and sixth, respectively.

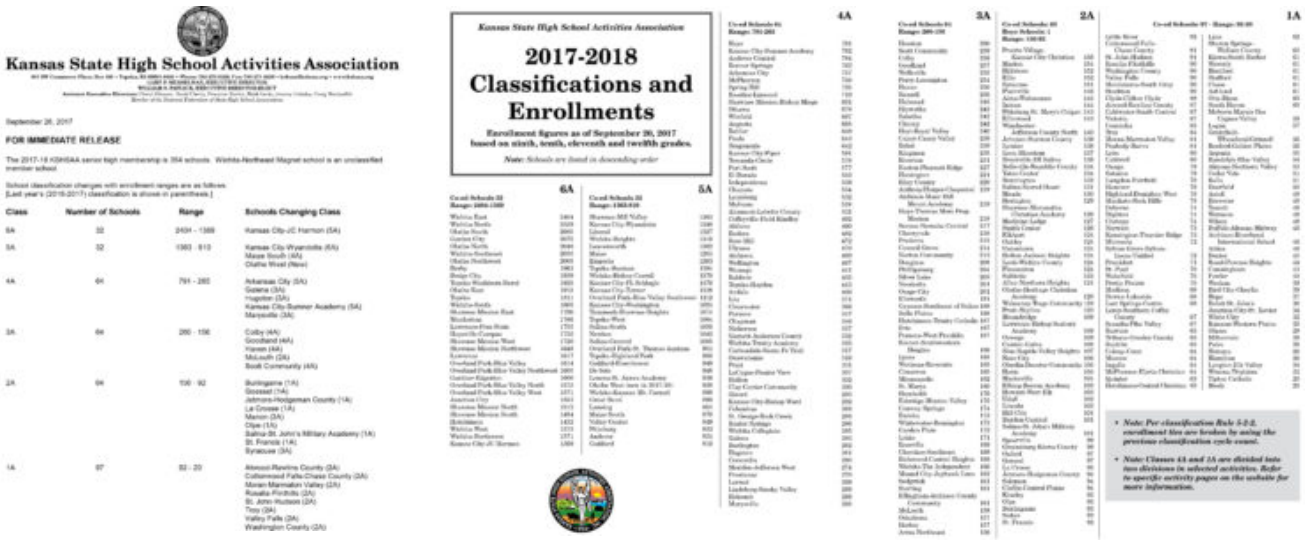
Louisburg will try and use that momentum for another good finish this Thursday when they travel to the Pittsburg Invitational.

KSHSAA releases 2017-18 classifications

The Kansas High School Activities Association released the classifications for the 2017-18 season on Tuesday morning, and for Louisburg High School, much remains the same.

The Wildcats are currently a Class 4A-Division I program with 532 students, but after this season the classification system will change. Class 4A will get rid of the divisions and 4A will have just 36 schools. Louisburg is still expected to be in 4A for the foreseeable future.

However, several schools across the state made classification changes.



Kansas State High School Activities Association

2017-2018 Classifications and Enrollments

Enrollment figures as of September 20, 2017 based on ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades.

Arkansas City and Sumner Academy dropped from Class 5A to 4A for the upcoming season, while Galena, Hugoton and Marysville all moved up to 4A. Maize South jumped from 4A to 5A.

Colby , Goodland, Scott City and Haven all dropped from 4A to 3A schools, while McLouth moved up from 2A to 3A.



Hays is currently the largest 4A school with 791 students, followed by Sumner Academy (782), Andover Central (764), Bonner Springs (762) and Arkansas City (757).

Sub-state and regional assignments for the fall season will be released in the coming days.

Wildcats bring home four medals from Wellsville



Louisburg's Trinity Moore (right) and Carlee Gassman get off to a good start Thursday at the Wellsville Invitational. Both runners earned medals for Louisburg as Moore took sixth and Gassman 14th.

WELLSVILLE – For the last two meets, the Louisburg High School cross country team has had to navigate through courses that featured steep hills, which gave the Wildcat runners a good early season test.

The Wildcats competed on a more flat terrain Thursday when they traveled to the Wellsville Invitational, and while that course featured difficulties of its own, Louisburg still came away with plenty of positives to build upon.

Four runners medaled for the Wildcats, including three top-10 finishes that paced Louisburg to its best finish of the young season.

The Louisburg girls team was one spot short of earning team medals. The Lady Cats took fourth overall with 101 points. Fort Scott won the meet with 55, Spring Hill was second with 83 and Eudora was third with 85 points.

Sophomore Trinity Moore medaled in her third consecutive meet to start the season as she took sixth in 21 minutes and 57 seconds. Sophomore teammate Carlee Gassman also picked up her second varsity medal of the year as she crossed the finish line in 14th in 22:48.

“We ran well at Wellsville,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “The girls just missed team medals as they finished fourth. Trinity continues to have a good season and Carlee ran her best time for the year, which moved her into the No. 6 spot for our all-time top seven runners. The girls continue to push each other through performances at meets and during workouts.”

Isabelle Holtzen was third on the Louisburg girls team as she ran a 24:12 to take 29th overall, while teammates Reilly Alexander (24:47) and Kaitlyn Lewer (25:24), took 37th and 39th, respectively.

Emily Williams (25:38) finished 44th and Shaylor Whitham (26:39) took 50th to round out the Louisburg girls team.

Seniors Tim Smith and Wyatt Reece continue to push each other on the boys side. Smith ran his way to a fourth place finish in 17:40 and Reece, who worked his way throughout the race to get up to the front of the pack, came in sixth with a time of 18:13.

“Tim ran a great race to finish fourth,” coach Reece said. “He was running by himself for most of the meet and was able to keep pressing to maintain his spot. Wyatt made up a ton of ground during the race to finish sixth. This was our first meet to field a full varsity boys team and they did great.”



Louisburg freshman Cade Holtzen (left) and Evan Murphy stay with a pack of runners Thursday at the Wellsville Invitational.

Freshman Cade Holtzen was third on the Wildcat team with a time of 20:44 to finish 51st overall and sophomore Evan Murphy was right behind him in 52nd with a time of 20:50. Freshman Carson Houchen rounded out the Louisburg boys team in 74th in 22:13.

As a team, Louisburg finished ninth out of 13 teams with 184 points. Eudora won the meet with 71 points.

The Wildcats will try and continue their improvement this Thursday when they travel to the Prairie View Invitational.

“We continue to race well, and with a slight change in our training schedule for the season compared to last year, we

hope to see some big gains over the next few weeks as we gear up for league, regional, and state meets," coach Reece said.

Smith, Reece and Moore garner medals at Wamego



Louisburg senior Wyatt Reece fist bumps a Eudora runner during the Wamego Invitational on Saturday at the Wamego Golf Course. Reece, along with teammates Tim Smith and Trinity Moore, earned medals.

WAMEGO – The Louisburg High School cross country team found itself on the same course Saturday where the Wildcats hope to end their season in late October.

Louisburg competed in the Wamego Invitational on Saturday at the Wamego Golf Course – the site of the Class 4A state meet. The Wildcat runners gave it a test run and they liked what they saw.

Seniors Tim Smith and Wyatt Reece, along with sophomore Trinity Moore, returned to Wamego for the first time since qualifying for the state meet a year ago. Moore left with a state medal, but all three left with a medal this time around.

Smith led the Wildcat runners as he finished 10th overall with a time of 17 minutes and 24 seconds, while Reece came in 13th in 17:36 as both bested their times from the state meet.

“Wyatt and Tim took on the beast and slayed it,” Louisburg coach John Reece. “They worked together, and with other Frontier League runners, throughout the race and put themselves in the top 15 and ran their best times for the course.”

Coach Reece also brought Moore and the rest of the Lady Cat varsity team to the meet to give them even more experience running on a difficult course that features several hills and turns.

Moore earned a medal after she finished 26th overall in 21:59 in what was a competitive girls race. Carlee Gassman (24:14) was second on the team and 78th overall, while seniors Reilly Alexander (24:48) and Isabelle Holtzen (24:48) finished 100th and 101st, respectively.

Kaitlyn Lewer (110th), Emily Williams (114th) and Payton Shaffer (129th) rounded out the Lady Cat team.

“It is always a plus to run a course more than once, especially the state course,” coach Reece said. “The girls team ran very well. Trinity worked her way into a medal and the other six worked hard on a difficult course. It was a great opportunity and a definite learning experience.”

The Wildcats split up earlier in week, and since much of the varsity team competed at Wamego, the rest of the team competed at a Frontier League triangular with Ottawa and Spring Hill.

Louisburg brought home several medals from the Ottawa course, including eight on the girls side and three for the boys.

Shaylor Whitham led the Lady Cats as she finished eighth in 27:21. Natalie George (11th), Abby Crooks (12th), Avery Graham (14th), Alex Miller (15th), Anna Niebrugge (16th) and Elizabeth Kratochvil (17th) also earned medals on the Eisenhower Road Course.



Louisburg runners (from left) Cade Holtzen, Carson Houchen and Evan Murphy were all smiles after earning a medal Thursday at Ottawa.

Freshman Cade Holtzen led Louisburg on the boys side as he took 13th in 21:29. Evan Murphy (17th) and Carson Houchen (19th) each earned their first varsity medal as well.

Luke Faulkner (21st), Dawson Barnes (24th), Gareth Baus (25th), Jackson Staab (26th), Parker Perentis (27th), Keith Estle (29th), Rian Mallory (30th) also competed for Louisburg.

The Wildcats return to action Thursday when it travels to the Wellsville Invitational. Races are set to begin at 4 p.m.

Wildcats race way to four medals in opener



Louisburg High School seniors Tim Smith (left) and Wyatt Reece get off to a good start Thursday during the Jerry Howarter Invitational in Garnett. Smith and Reece medaled fourth and sixth, respectively.

GARNETT – The Louisburg High School cross country team has been practicing hard leading up to the Jerry Howarter Invitational on Thursday in Garnett.

The Wildcats have spent the last several weeks trying to get in a shape for what is a grueling season and they found out just how in shape they were when they took to the difficult Garnett course.

Despite the large, steep hills, four Wildcats left with their first varsity medals and a nice momentum boost heading into the season.

Seniors Tim Smith and Wyatt Reece took fourth and sixth,

respectively, in the boys race to grab medals. Sophomore Trinity Moore finished 17th overall and fellow sophomore Carlee Gassman took 30th to earn medals in the girls race.

“Wyatt and Tim finished almost exactly where I thought they would,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “I was thinking a bit faster, but after looking at last year’s times, I was very happy as Wyatt improved by almost a minute.

“Trinity ran a good race and it was a very fast girls race. Carlee medaling in her first race was fantastic.”

On the boys side, Smith ran a time of 17 minutes and 54 seconds to lead the Wildcat runners and Wyatt was right behind him with an 18:08. Baldwin’s Jacob Bailey won the meet in 17:22, and his teammate Parker Wilson, was second at 17:24. Eudora won the team title with 42 points and Baldwin was second with 53.

Louisburg had two others run varsity alongside Smith and Reece. Sophomore Evan Murphy was 56th in 21:19 and freshman Cade Holtzen took 58th in 21:21.

Moore led Louisburg in what was a competitive varsity girls race. She finished with a time of 22:54 and Gassman, a transfer from Iowa, ran a 24:04.



Carlee Gassman was one of two Louisburg girls to earns medals Thursday in Garnett.

Santa Fe Trail's Hannah Honeyman won the varsity competition in 20:16 and Baldwin's Ambrynn Stewart was second in 20:30. Baldwin won the team crown with 35 points and Eudora was second with 70 out of nine teams.

The Wildcat girls, which finished fifth with 149 points, had a good first time out according to coach Reece.

Senior Isabelle Holtzen just missed a medal by one spot as she took 31st in 24:16. Payton Shaffer came in 41st in her varsity debut in 24:55.

Kaitlyn Lewer (25:34) and Reilly Alexander (25:36) took 50th and 51st, respectively. Shaylor Whitham (27:45) rounded out the Louisburg roster in 60th.

“The rolling hills are a challenge for the first meet and all the runners did a great job,” coach Reece said. “The cooler temperatures definitely helped.

“I was happy with their performance. We had first race nerves pretty bad but those soon went away once the gun went off. My veteran runners matched times from last year or improved which was awesome and my new runners competed well.”

Louisburg also brought home several medals in the sub-varsity races.

Freshman Carson Houchen finished toward the top of the junior varsity boys race. Houchen, who is in his first year of cross country, took fourth overall in 21:19.

Sophomore Emily Williams ran a 25:49 to finish 11th and medal in the junior varsity girls competition. Abby Crooks medaled third in the beginner 2-mile girls race in 16:07 and Colin Cook (14:08) took ninth in the beginner boys race.

“We brought home several medals and the young runners ran great,” coach Reece said. “The overall boys performance shows me that there is a young varsity team ready to start competing, and with experience, they will improve. The girls who did not run varsity have put pressure on the ones that did as there are now nine girls to look at when fielding my seven varsity runners.

“We had great parent support and the team thanks them for sticking around with the delay caused by the timing system. Nothing like getting medals awarded by the light of cell phones.”

A majority of the Wildcats will face another tough course this Thursday at the Ottawa Invitational, while a few varsity will venture to Wamego on Saturday for the Wamego Invitational.

State qualifiers look to pace Louisburg cross country



Louisburg High School sophomore Trinity Moore hopes to garner her second consecutive state medal after she finished 19th overall at the 2016 Kansas State Cross Country Championships in Wamego. Moore is one of three state qualifiers to return for the Wildcats.

The Louisburg High School cross country team set the bar high last season as the Wildcats qualified three runners for the state meet and one of them earned the program's first medal since 2006.

Despite all those accomplishments, the Wildcats are looking for even more this season as they return all three state qualifiers in seniors Wyatt Reece, Tim Smith and sophomore Trinity Moore.

Throw in a group of returning runners, especially on the girls' side, and the Wildcats are expecting big things out of

their program.

“This season could be very special for both groups,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “We have added some great new runners from the freshman class, first timers from sophomores to seniors and some new students to the district. The end of the season could be interesting.”



Senior Wyatt Reece has qualified for the state meet the last two seasons and hopes to do the same this season.

Moore leads a girls team that plans on being competitive, not only with the opposition, but with each other. Moore medaled at state as a freshman last season and became the first female runner in Louisburg history to earn a state cross country medal.

It was a special season for her and one that she hopes to recreate with a few more friends this time around.

“I am really excited to get the season started,” Moore said. “We have a great group of girls that are working hard. Medaling at state was huge, but I know I still have to give my best effort and work hard every race. Now that I have been to the state meet, I hope to get back and this time with the team.”

The Wildcat girls have a large number of runners who are trying fill those seven varsity spots. Along with Moore, the Wildcats return several with varsity experience, including seniors Isabelle Holtzen, Reilly Alexander, juniors Kaitlyn Lewer, Shaylor Whitham and Alex Miller and sophomore Emily Williams.

Throw in transfer Carlee Gassman and newcomers Payton Shaffer, Avery Graham and Kennady Wilkerson and the Wildcats have high expectations for the girls team, including what the runners have displayed in practice.

“I am anticipating difficulty in having a constant top 7 girls team this year,” coach Reece said. “We have more than 10 runners at the moment that could be considered for the varsity team. With this many girls, the season should be competitive among the teammates.

“Trinity will improve over last year through experience alone and you only get what you put into it. What she puts into the season will be returned through performance at meets. A strong group of teammates will make the whole group improve as they push each other.”

The boys side isn’t quite as crowded, but it is top heavy as both Wyatt Reece and Smith try to make a return trip to Wamego and the state meet in late October.



Senior Tim Smith earned a spot in the state cross country meet last season in just his first year with the program.

Wyatt is a two-time state qualifier and has improved each season, including a 48th place finish a year ago and Smith took 68th in what was a tough boys field. Wyatt took another step toward getting his first state medal over the summer when he attended a cross country camp in Colorado Springs, in an effort to get in even better shape.

However, who will run alongside of Reece and Smith is a bit of a mystery as the Wildcats feature several young runners.

“Wyatt and Tim will be our top two runners as we start the season,” coach Reece said. “We have at least 3-4 others who will move up so that we can field a varsity team at most meets and toe the line at regionals with a varsity team this year.”

Louisburg will get it all started Thursday when it travels to Garnett for the Jerry Howarter Invitational. Freshman races will begin at 3:30 p.m., with junior varsity and varsity to follow.