



Mud Mountain attracts most runners in five years, brings runners back to area roots

by Brian Munoz
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EDWARDSVILLE - The annual Mud Mountain 5K race was exciting as usual Saturday with more than 400 registered and some top-notch competition.

Weather conditions were nearly perfect, with temps lower than recent days on the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville cross country course.

For Edwardsville High School head cross country coach **George Patrylak**, race director, Mud Mountain is always a homecoming for alumni who come back and race with present team members.

“This was the highest number of runners we have had in the last five years,” he said. “The course we used today is the same course that’s used by the Edwardsville High

School team, the Metro-East Lutheran team, and by the SIUE Women's team. This is the official, collegiate, 5K course. One of the things that is unique about the event is that they are able to run on an actual cross-country course and get off the roads.

“This is one of the most challenging courses in the state, so it is a true cross-country course. We do a lot of hills during the year since this is our home course. A lot of people train, mostly high school and collegiate athletes but a lot of more casual runners like to take on this course because it is a little bit of a challenge.”

The top male finishers were:

Steve Schroeder, Glen Carbon - 15:48.56

Ben Scamihorn - 16:20.60

Luke Padesky, Edwardsville - 16:23.05

Brydon Groves-Scott - 16:36.46

Wes Schoenthal - 16:39.66

Joseph Shannon, Edwardsville - 16:43.41

Matt Dimbeck, St. Louis - 16:44.16

Kevin Koester - 16:47.53

Eric Johannigmeier - 16:50.58

Benjamin Richter, Troy - 16:56.79

The top female finishers were:

Liz Parks - 19:56.02

Allie Sweatt, Edwardsville - 20:11.01

Abigail Richter - 20:19.95

Elise Marker, St. Louis - 20:25.24

Abby Korak - 20:43.47

Emiley England - 20:47.50

Melissa Spencer - 20:59.31

Elizabeth Lynn, Edwardsville - 21:04.79

Roxanne Patrylak - 21:10.66

Julianna Determan - 21:20.94

Male champion: Steve Schroeder, 22, Annapolis, Md., had this to say following the race:

“This was a little out of my comfort zone today. I ran miles all through the track season earlier to prepare. My two younger sisters are graduating this coming year, one from SIUE and one from EHS. I just graduated from the naval academy and am currently in the Navy. I was selected to be a pilot and I report to Pensacola, Florida, in September. The course wasn’t too bad, “Mud Mountain” was a little intimidating but you have to just push through it.”

Female champion: Liz Parks, 26, of Edwardsville, made these post-race comments:

“I haven’t run this course in about five years, since college, and this course was new since I’ve run it before. But being on the home course per say, you just fall back into the groove of it. I’ve mostly have been doing 5K’s and halves, so coming down to 3.1, I was a little nervous about but everything turned out okay. I’m on the alumni team with my friends from high school and I told myself, ‘You know what? This is where it all started for me, this is my place, I want to be with my people.’ It was a great run, we’re so blessed with the weather and to have all of these amazing people cheering us on. It was just very Edwardsville.”

Parks added: “It was a very warm race, not as near as bad as what last weekend would have been, but it was good, it went by quickly. The hardest part of the course was the second mile because it was new for me, I hadn’t ran that second mile before and it had a few more hills to it and you were in the sun a little more. Also, that straightaway can knock some people out because it’s so long.

“The last time I ran this course was probably 2011. I teach at Albert Cassens elementary definitely saw some of my third graders out here which made me push even harder as well.”

Others had this to say about the race:

Participant, Laura Schoenecker, of Glen Carbon,

“This is the second time that I’ve run this race. My daughter just graduated high school and was a runner so I’ve volunteered during this race multiple times and I’ve ran it one other time. It’s a lot of fun, I really like running it because I’ve watched my daughter run it many, many, times and to actually run it myself, it gives me an appreciation for how challenging it is. It’s awesome of course. The hardest part about the course is probably the second mile, coming along Poag road, there are a couple of very challenging hills.”

Participant, Evan Schmidt, 19, of Dupon:

“The course wasn’t muddy but it sure was fun. The hills are killer; you feel it when you come up on them. It was a good run overall and it wasn’t too hot during the race, the shade really helped. The hardest part of the race was definitely the last hill when you’re trying to kick at the end. You try to get a good kick but you’re going uphill so you feel like you’re running in place. Next year I’ll be here.”

First Edwardsville alumni to finish race, UAH biology education major and collegiate athlete (runner) Brydon Groves-Scott, 20, of Edwardsville:

“It was awesome coming to the race, I haven’t seen a ton of the alumni in forever, it was great to come out and see everyone here and the experience of it all. This is the first time back since being an alumni and so it’s just weird being the old guys and seeing the younger kids here. I got back to that old hill in the back and forgot it was there. We always say that it is the ‘surprise hill’ here, and so it was crazy getting back there. It’s a tough course so I like it. This is a great race, they bring the alumni out here and get the community together, it’s just a great place to be; the atmosphere is great.”





[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)