

# **Tigers dominate boys competition in Jersey Invite, Flowers again claims first**

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer  
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**ELSAH** – For the first time all season, beautiful weather greeted runners and spectators at the Jersey Invitational area cross-country meet at Principia College.

No matter what, **Edwardsville** dominated the boys competition on the day, the Tiger boys finishing second through sixth for 20 points to easily outdistance Belleville East, who had 70 points. Auburn was third at 87, the host Panthers fourth at 88, Civic Memorial fifth at 109 and Belleville Althoff sixth at 180 to round out the scoring teams. **The Panthers' Ben Flowers** came away with the individual title, pulling away from a challenge from Edwardsville's Franky Romano to cover the three-mile course in 15:19 to Romano's 15:44. Roland Prenzler (16:00), Jack Pifer (16:09), Dan Powell (16:18) and Zach Walters (16:40) finished in places three through six to complete the Tiger scoring.

“On the boys side, we're trying to solidify our 20 runners who we're going to bring, so we took advantage of the conditions today to try to help us make those decisions.”

Romano's second-place finish to Flowers pleased Patrylak. “One of the things our boys has been lacking was a fast enough first mile,” Patrylak said. “I think Franky took it to a new level; I don't know what his split was, but he definitely looked like he got out after it. I think Ben's strength at the end was the difference, but there's not many people in the state or in Southern Illinois that are going to be able to beat that.”

“I came here (to Principia's course) three or four times a week during the summer to run the hills,” Flowers said. “I knew where the hills were; I knew where to make my move, so the experience here really helped. It was a perfect day; a little windier than I would like, but I can't complain.”

Romano said he was satisfied with his performance in the Jersey Meet.

“If anyone's going to beat me, Ben Flowers is the one who can do it,” Romano said. “Our team did very good; we had a lot in front and it was really good weather. The last couple of races were rough (with the heat and humidity) but this one, we had nice weather.

“The course was a little different from last year; there were a couple of tight turns, but I think it was a pretty fast course.”

“Except for our first week of meets, at the Granite City (Invitational in early September) - that was probably the best weather,” said Panther coach Harold Landon, “but this was awesome today, with no humidity, in the 70s and sunshine and a great day for a race. The last month, it's been too hot or raining on us.



“We're running a big race in Peoria on Saturday and we were hoping Ben wouldn't have to run that hard today, but (Romano) pushed the pace a little bit and Ben caught up with him about the mile-and-a-half mark. We had a lot of personal bests today, but I think that had a lot to do with the weather – some great conditions to run.”

Civic Memorial coach Jake Peal was thrilled with how his team performed and saw his boys finish fifth, Cohl Callies (in 12<sup>th</sup> at 17:01) and Sam Hurst (14<sup>th</sup> in 17:03) his top two runners on the day. “It's a really important meet for us because this is where we'll run our (Mississippi Valley Conference) meet in a couple of weeks, so it's a good to come out and see the course (Landon) had for the conference meet. I'm really thrilled with how we ran today – great weather, the course looks faster than the old one.

“Cohl and Sam really ran tough, they got out well and put themselves in the mix early and kept moving up throughout the second half of the race.”



## **JERSEY INVITATIONAL CROSS-COUNTRY MEET**

**AT PRINCIPIA COLLEGE, ELSAH**

## **FINAL RESULTS**

## **BOYS**

Edwardsville, 20; Belleville East, 70; Auburn, 87; Jersey, 88; Civic Memorial, 109; Belleville Althoff, 180

### **INDIVIDUAL TOP TEN**

Ben Flowers, Jersey (15:19); Franky Romano, Edwardsville (15:44); Roland Prenzler, Edwardsville (16:00); Jack Pifer, Edwardsville (16:09); Dan Powell, Edwardsville (16:18); Zach Walters, Edwardsville (16:40); Jackson Howell, Belleville East (16:48); Zachariah Panek, Belleville East (16:48); Max Hartman, Edwardsville (16:48); Holden Potter, Edwardsville (17:00).

### **OTHER AREA RUNNERS**

**CIVIC MEMORIAL:** Cohl Callies, 11<sup>th</sup> (17:01); Sam Hurst, 13<sup>th</sup> (17:03); Parker Borth, 41<sup>st</sup> (18:28); Drake Stephenson, 49<sup>th</sup> (18:52); Mark Eldridge, 53<sup>rd</sup> (18:58)

**JERSEY:** Christian Cazier, 14<sup>th</sup> (17:09); Andrew Bryden, 23<sup>rd</sup> (17:39); Asher Stidd, 45<sup>th</sup> (18:50); Grant Morgan, 46<sup>th</sup> (18:50); Angelo Logan, 51<sup>st</sup> (18:56)

**EDWARDSVILLE:** Sam McCormick, 15<sup>th</sup> (17:09); Todd Baxter, 16<sup>th</sup> (17:09)