

Granite City captures Alton Boys Invitational Meet, Redbirds' Cummings, Havis place in top three

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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ALTON – Unusually hot mid-September weather didn't stop Wednesday afternoon's Alton Invitational cross-country meet at Gordon Moore Park.

The mid-90s heat with humidity near 50 percent did help meet officials decide to run just two races, one each for boys and girls.

Granite City took the boys team championship; the Warrior boys, led by Andrew O'Keefe's individual title, scored 57 points to outdistance Collinsville, who finished second with 75 points. Civic Memorial took third at 109 points, with Centralia (118) and Belleville East (125) rounding out the top five. Jersey finished sixth at 126 points, with host Alton eighth at 140 and Marquette Catholic finishing 11th at 202 points.

“It was definitely tough conditions” on the day, said Redbird coach Vernon Curvey. “It's a tough course and the weather was extremely hot.”





The Redbird boys had two runners finish second and third on the day, Kelvin Cummings finishing second behind O'Keefe (16:34.09) and Cassius Havis taking third; Cummings ran the three-mile course in 16:58.11 and Havis covered the distance in 17:08.29).

"Individually on the boys side, second and third – that's where I expected them to be," Curvey said. "They're setting themselves up well for the postseason."

Havis came in at the right time for the Redbirds, Curvey felt. "Cassius came in at the right time," Curvey said. "He had a good group to run with last year and he's getting around with Kelvin this year – next year, he'll be on his own because he's a sophomore. They've both got a shot at state this year, so we'll have to wait and see."

"The rest of the boys team is young – we've got a lot of really young kids; there's not a senior on the boys squad either. We've got some work to do on the boys team."

Panther coach Harold Landon felt his harriers also had a good day despite the conditions. "The conditions, I mean, here we are in the middle of September and this is the first hot race we've ran in and we haven't really haven't had any all year long," Landon said. "We've had some hot days to run in, but this was a grueling race and I was very proud of the kids."

“The boys did well – the girls finished in the top five and I'm hoping the boys finished in the top five as well. We've got a very young team – our top five runners are juniors and sophomores. This is adding to a lot of experience; running in conditions like this, knowing what to do and how to prepare yourself.”

In addition to O'Keefe's winning time, Granite City's scorers on the day were Jeremiah Perry (seventh in 18:22.61), Tony Harlod (ninth in 18:30.46), Tyler Tindall (18th in 18:58.82) and Jack Blomme (22nd in 19:24.74); other scoring runners for the Redbirds included Zakree Wilson (42nd in 20:31.67), Daniel Rojo (54th in 21:18.77) and Alexander Beers (56th in 21:30.83).

The Panthers were led on the boys side by Christian Cazier's 11th-place finish in 18:32.40, with Drew Bertman finishing 20th in 19:15.02, Asher Stidd 27th in 19:34.02, Joao Nail 35th in 19:59.00 and Grant Morgan 37th in 20:08.35. The Explorers were led by Cole DeClue, who took 40th in 20:18.04 and the Eagles by Cohl Callies' 15th-place finish in 18:39.07.







ALTON INVITATIONAL CROSS-COUNTRY MEET

RESULTS

BOYS

Granite City, 57; Collinsville, 75; Civic Memorial, 109; Centralia, 118; Belleville East, 125, Jersey, 126; McCluer North, 139; Alton, 140; Staunton, 290; Marquette Catholic, 302

INDIVIDUAL RESULTS – TOP 15

Andrew O'Keefe, Granite City (16:34.09); Kelvin Cummings, Alton (16:58.11); Cassius Havis, Alton (17:08.29); Benny Hernandez, Collinsville (17:41.62); Crede Correll, Centralia (17:54.46); Zachariah Panek, Belleville East (18:09.86); Jeremiah Perry, Granite City (18:22.61); Sylvan Mosley-Mull, McCluer North (18:30.31); Tony Harlod,

Granite City (18:39.46); Cetris Ivy, McCluer North (18:30.78); Christian Cazier, Jersey (18:32.40); Jared Brothers, Centralia (18:34.42); Austin Roberts, Collinsville (18:35.01); Cory Fleeman, Centralia (18:36.24); Cohl Callies, Civic Memorial (18:39.07)

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