



Landon, Korak are overall winners in 23rd annual Mud Mountain 5K race

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – Cory Landon, from Carlinville, who runs for Wichita State University, defeated Keith Meyer by five seconds to win the 23rd annual Mud Mountain 5K (3.1 miles) race Saturday morning at the SIU-Edwardsville cross-country course. The event is an annual fundraiser for the cross-country and track teams at Edwardsville High School. Along with the teams at both Lincoln and Liberty Middle Schools.

Landon finished first overall with a time of 16:00, while Meyer was runner up with a time of 16:05. Roland Prenzler, a rising senior for the Tigers' cross-country team, finished third with a time of 16:08, Joey Black was fourth with a time of 16:14, and Franky Romano was fifth, coming in with a time of 16:17.

Abby Korak, a rising junior at Edwardsville High, won the women's race with a time of 18:46, winning over Hannah Inyart of Lebanon, who finished at 19:03. Abby Schrobligin finished third with a time of 19:09, Lydia Roller of Staunton came in fourth with a time of 19:15 and Quincy McSweeney of Lebanon was fifth with a time of 19:48.





Conditions were ideal for the race, with a start time temperature in the mid-60s and a sunny sky. That, and a large turnout, pleased Tigers cross-country coach George Patrylak.

“As far as conditions, this might be the nicest day we’ve had for Mud Mountain,” Patrylak said. “I think race temperatures were in the 60s when we started, really, really fast times up front. I know I’ve talked to a couple of the girls and ladies, and even other teams, and we had some future all-staters from various schools that ran faster today than they did at any meet during the season last year. So that shows what kind of shape people are in, how fast the race was, and just how lucky we were with the conditions.”

And the race itself was competitive, and Patrylak was pleased with the race itself and how his runners fared as well.

“Whenever you get some of those freshly out-of-college runners, Meyer basically owned this course when he was at SIUE,” Patrylak said, “so upfront, it was great to see that kind of a battle. Personally, I’m biased, of course, I’m looking at my guys too; I was happy with how some of my high schoolers hung in with those guys. Upfront, this is probably one of our faster years through (the top) five. And on the girls’ side, I know that we were missing some of those elite ladies runners, some of the ladies from Team Run Well. But the high schoolers, on the girl’s side, I thought, had quite the showing, too. I haven’t been able to see all the results yet, but just the people I’ve talked to have been really happy with their times.”

Although the overall participation in the race fell just short of the organizers’ goal of 300, Patrylak was very happy with the turnout.

“Yeah, we were a little bit lower than our goal; our goal always is to break that 300 mark,” Patrylak said, “but we’re right around 270 with registrations. But like I said, we just need to a better job, myself especially, promoting it next year, but it’s just tough. There are so many different 5Ks, people think they’re easy money makers, and they’re a lot more effort than I think people realize. We were battling probably three or four local

races today, and then, a big impact on us is a meet Friday night at Detweiler (Park in Peoria), the (IHSA state meet) course. And unfortunately, a lot of local schools, their kids go up and run that instead of Mud Mountain now.”

The age group winners on the men’s side were Zachary Cohn of Edwardsville, who won the 11-and-under group with a time of 23:28, Owen Gruben of Glen Carbon, who won the 12-13 category with a time of 20:44, Bennet Boatman won the 14-15 group in 18:01, Romano taking top honors in the 16-18 group, Black taking the 19-24 category, Luke Padesky of St. Louis won the 25-29 group with a time of 16:44, Dane Shaw of Austin, Tex., who won the 30-34 group in 17:18, Justin Wieduwilt of Collinsville winning the 35-39 group at 17:34, Tom Collier of St. Louis winning the 40-44 group with a time of 20:30, Grant Lanham, also of St. Louis, taking the 45-49 category, coming in at 21:39, Ryan Yoch of O’Fallon won the 50-54 group at 20:36, Mark Vogt of St. Charles, Mo., who won the 55-59 group with a time of 24:49, and Jeff Hoyt of Collinsville won the 60-and-over category, coming in at 24:08. In a special Clydesdale category, the winner was Chris Dykstra of Glen Carbon, who ran the course in 27:06.

In the women’s races, the 11-and-under winner was Jillian Welsh, with a time of 24:56, the 12-13 winner was Edwardsville’s Sydney Chong, with a time of 22:56, Roller took the 14-15 age group, Melissa Spencer won the 16-18 group with a time of 19:52, McSweeney was the 19-24 winner, Megan DeLong of Troy took the 25-29 group with a time of 21:33, Jacqueline Somner won the 30-34 group at 22:13, Diane Nagel of O’Fallon was the 35-39 winner at 24:06, Kery Baumgartner of Carrollton was the 40-44 winner with a time of 24:54, Rita Prenzler of Edwardsville took the 45-49 group at 28:04, the 50-54 winner was Diane Razo of Jacksonville, Ill., who won in 27:30, and Becky Elfrink, of Fenton, Mo., won the 60-and-over category with a time of 34:42.

Patrylak thinks that the race is great preparation for his harriers as the 2018 season is getting ready to start.

“To me, there’s always two things with Mud Mountain,” Patrylak said. “One, it’s going to show you where you’re at, and based on how you do today, it’s going to be one of two things: You’re going to realize what you’re doing is working, and help you buy in, or you’re going to quickly realize that ‘man, maybe coach is right, that I haven’t been doing what I should,’ and it can be a rude awakening. I think we’re going to have more people satisfied than disappointed. But I look at it from this standpoint for my guys: Everybody on my team, if they’re healthy, will have three more opportunities to race here, whether they’re running in the Tiger Finale, or regionals at the end of the year. This is their starting point for the season.”

And Patrylak made sure to recognize the runners’ parents and volunteers, who helped to make the event a special one.

“Well, again, I’m blessed with working with some of the best parents, I think, in the district,” Patrylak said. “I mean the athletes, the type of people they are, speaks volumes to the program. I’m blessed, but we did have a lot of parents out here yesterday, throughout the day, helping set up the course, first wave of parents got out here before six o’clock this morning. So, just all the hard work that they’re doing, and it gives me a chance to run around crazy a little bit during the race. But the volunteers are a big help.

“And then the other big part of it, I mean, yeah, you’re going to see our sponsorship banners,” Patrylak also said. “Again, the amount of support we get from the community, we wound up, again, with sponsorships breaking the \$12,000 mark, I think, for the third time in race history. Even though the excitement is the running, really, the proceeds and events like this are from the community sponsorships. And we’re so grateful for the support that the Edwardsville businesses give to our programs. Because I’ve seen districts, that support’s not there, and that’s one of the best things about being a coach and teacher at Edwardsville.”











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