



Julianna Determan runs for alumni team at Mud Mountain, grateful with others to give back

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – One of the best features of the annual Mud Mountain race at the SIU-Edwardsville cross-country course is that it gives old teammates a chance to race together again and reminisce about races and competitions of days gone by. And also a chance to give back to Edwardsville’s cross-country program.

And such was the case for former Tiger runner Julianna Determan, who was part of the Elite Eight alumni team who ran in Saturday’s race.

“I really enjoy just being able to come back every summer, and run with my high school teammates,” Determan said in an interview following the race, “and we all get to push each other every day. It’s just really amazing to like come all together at this one race, and race together like we were back in high school. It’s just really fun to be able to support Edwardsville High School and this whole program too.”

Determan raced on a team alongside Melissa Spencer, Savannah Brannan, Colleen Corkery and Victoria Vegher.

“We had to split into two teams; there were too many for one,” Determan said. “But it was like really amazing, because in past years, we hadn’t been able to get a whole four. So it was really to see us all together to be able to support our team.”

That the old teammates were able to get together and race shows the important bond that they have together, and for the program at Edwardsville.

“It’s very funny, because we’re always like coming together and telling stories of like being in high school,” Determan said, “and it was like one of my favorite things about high school is just being able to hang around with these girls every day. It’s really great that we’re still able to be friends and run.”

And of course, it brings back many great memories of races and days gone by.

“It definitely brings back like some of those major races, like regionals and sectionals that we hosted here,” Determan said, “because like if we ran Mud Mountain, and then regionals or sectionals this year, it’d be like probably having we compared to at the end, and we’d like to think about the goofy stuff we did. A bunch of team memories that are just like you can’t really forget them. It’s really nice to be with them.”

Today, Determan is a rising sophomore at Missouri Southern State University in Joplin, where she runs for the Lions, an NCAA Division II school in the Missouri Intercollegiate Athletic Association. She’s looking ahead to the upcoming season.

“I’m really excited about this upcoming season,” Determan said. “My freshman track season, I thought they went well. I ran the 5K and 10K in track, and it’s really exciting to be back on the course again.”

And Determan is very grateful for her fellow alumni who return to the Mud Mountain race each summer to give back to the program and the community.

“I’m really thankful for the group of alumni that come together,” Determan said, “and I think that coach (Dustin) Davis said that we were the biggest donator for Mud Mountain for sponsorship. So it’s just like really shows how much we all care about the program, and I’m really happy to be part of that.”