

EHS boys harriers record big day in Tiger Fall Classic sweep

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – Edwardsville's boys' cross-country team recorded four of the first five places and one sixth-place runner in Wednesday's Tiger Classic Cross Country Meet at the SIUE Mud Mountain Course.

The meet helped Edwardsville get ready for this weekend's First to the Finish Invitational meet in Peoria about as well as any team could Wednesday afternoon.

On the boys side, Edwardsville took four of the first five places and had a sixth-place runner for a total of 16 points, hollowed by Centralia (79), O'Fallon (81), Collinsville (99), Mount Vernon (104), Belleville West (171), Granite City (190), Roxana (209) and



Greenville (2

75); East Alton-Wood River also took part in the boys event. Edwardsville also won the JV boys and girls races with 33 points for the boys and 17 points for the girls on the day.

Roland Prenzler (17:02.93), Jack Pifer (17:13.72), Zach Walters (17:27.30) and Gruben (17:51.40) took the top four places for EHS on the boys side, with only Centralia's Cory Fleeman preventing an Edwardsville sweep; Erber (18:15.49) finished sixth to round out the scoring; Alexander Valdez (13th in 18:45.82) and Stover (15th in 19:02.49) completed the Tiger team for the day.

“This meet is always a toss-up on what teams are going to do,” said Tiger coach George Patrylak. “Historically, some teams rest their varsities for the big races over the weekend; I think with the weather in the 90s (temperatures were in the low 90s with some humidity in the air at race time Wednesday), a couple of teams were a little bit more cautious in how they approached today; I think our scores weren’t 100 percent indicative of the times we ran, but with both the guys and the ladies races today was more about strategy.”

On the boys side, Patrylak said “I’m not hiding anything – I’ve made it clear that our season is going to depend on (the Tigers’) five, six and seven (runners; teams may enter up to seven runners, with the top five scoring, in a meet based on where in the field they finish). Today, we moved a couple of people around and gave one of our seniors, Max Hartmann, the day off – he was sick over the weekend – and the fact that I wanted to give him a bit of a break so he’ll be ready to go because (the First to the Finish meet) will be great competition on Saturday; it gave us the opportunity to move up Wyatt Erber and Drew Stover up to our varsity team.”

As far as the Oilers went, coach Russ Colona said “we’re still in training mode; we take the first part of the season and work at it – today was basically a workout for us. We had a small group; for all these guys, this is their first venture out here to the land of the mountains here in Edwardsville. We’re doing some work and we have a 10-day period coming up where we’re going to work, work, work – no racing, just get some work done. We’ll race in October.

Among other area boys varsity runners, Diego Hernandez of Collinsville (18:50.04), Randy Gardner of Granite City (20:46.32), Cree Stumpf of Roxana (20:46.32) and Ryne White of EAWR (21:35.97) had the top performances for their teams; among area girls varsity runners, Janelynn Wirth of Roxana (24:18.61), Emily Johnson of Granite City (23:24.56) and McKenna Laing of Collinsville (24:07.28) had the day’s top performances.







