

# Tigers Compete In Illinois XC Cross Country Championships

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
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EDWARDSVILLE - The boys and girls cross country teams at Edwardsville High School will have one last chance to compete after all.

Both Tigers' teams qualified for the 2020 Illinois XC Championships, which serves as the unofficial state meet, and was slated for Saturday at Three Sisters Park in

Chillicothe, in the Peoria area. The meet is being sponsored by ShaZam Racing of Peoria and is not sanctioned by the Illinois High School Association. Thus, head coach George Patrylak won't be able to coach the team during the two races.

The meet is still filled with the best teams and talent in the state, and will provide the Tigers with great competition. Edwardsville will run in the Class 3A race, and will have many of its runners competing.

On the boys' side, junior Ryan Watts will lead Edwardsville, having won both the Granite City regional and Normal Community sectional in dominating fashion and it helped the Tigers come in third as a team. Watts set a course record in the regional, running the Wilson Park course in 14:41.14 to win the title, and in the sectional, won a thriller over Quincy's Fiker Rosen, coming in at 15:21.18, defeating Rosen by 15 seconds. The two runners are expected to compete again in the meet.

Along with Watts, junior Geo Patrylak will help pace Edwardsville. Patrylak came in ninth in the sectional, coming in at 15:54.56, and he'll get help from junior Jacob Grandone, who has emerged as a very good runner for the Tigers. Senior Drew Stover, juniors Wyatt Erber, Ryan Luitjohan and Jack Draper will also look to make big contributions.



In the girls race, sophomore Riley Knoyle will be the key runner for Edwardsville, coming off a fifth place finish in the sectional with a time of 18:01.37, which helped the Tigers finish fifth as a team. Freshman Maya Lueking had a very good season, coming in at 19:21.39 in the sectional. Senior Kaitlyn Loyet and freshmen Olivia Coll and Dylan Peel also contributed very well to the Edwardsville cause, and all three will look to give the Tigers a boost in the race. Freshman Whitney Dyckman and junior Makenna Lueking also are key contributors to the team.

The format for the race will be similar to the regionals and sectional meet, which will be run in four heats. The number one runners and top individuals will run in the opening heat, with the number two and three runners in the second heat, the number four and five runners going in the third heat, and the number six and seven runners racing in the final heat. All results will be combined after the final heat to determine the placings of both the individuals and teams.

The Class 1A race was ran last Sunday, Nov. 1, while the Class 2A event was scheduled for Saturday.