



Sophomore Cross Country Runner Daniel Cokel Is Altonized Community Federal Credit Union November Male Athlete Of The Month At Southwestern High School

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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PIASA - Sophomore cross country runner Daniel Cokel was one of the most improved runners on the Piasa Southwestern High School boys cross country team during the 2020 season. Cokel's hard work during the off-season and in practice led to big improvements on his times during the recent season.

For his hard work and accomplishments on the courses this year, Cokel has been named the Piasa Birds' Riverbender.com male Athlete of the Month for November, 2020.

Cokel, whose head cross country coach is Gary Bowker, credited his off-season work for helping him receive this month's award.

"I think that my off-season practicing has led me to this award, because during the off-season, I would go and practice running," Cokel said, "and my times from my freshman season to my sophomore season have improved significantly."

Cokel thanked his family, especially his mother, for their support at his meets and encouragement in going out for the team.

"I would like to thank my family for always supporting me at my meets and practices," Cokel said. "But most importantly, I would like to thank my mom, because she is the one who got me into running, and she is the reason I am where I'm at today. We started running years ago, and when the chance came to sign up for cross country, she is the one who told me to go for it and sign up, and she has been at almost every single one of my meets cheering me on."

This past season marked Cokel's second year running cross country, and he enjoys being part of the Birds' team, and the sport in general.

"I have run cross country for two years now," Cokel said, "and what I like most about it is it takes my mind off everything, and it is a stress-relieving sport."

Cokel enjoys the outdoors very much as well, and whenever he has a chance during warmer weather, he and his mother both enjoy getting out and riding their bikes in the area's countryside, and he also enjoys four-wheeling when he has the opportunity. Cross country has helped teach Cokel much about life as well.

"Cross country has taught me to be more social," Cokel said, "and to keep a positive mindset about life."

Cokel also hopes to continue running in college but hasn't yet decided on a school to attend. He plans to study graphic web design in college.

Riverbender.com's Athlete of the Month program is made possible by the generosity of our sponsors and the cooperation of our area high schools. This is a great accomplishment and one to be very proud of. Please join us in congratulating this young athlete. We at Riverbender.com wish you continued success in your future!

