

Patrylak, Luitjohan Finish In Top Two, Grandone Places Seventh As Tigers Win Home Invitational Meet, Redbirds Seventh

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Edwardsville senior runner Geo Patrylak won his first-ever race, while Ryan Luitjohan came in second and Jacob Grandone came in seventh as the Tigers won their own invitational meet in a close team finish Saturday morning at SIU-Edwardsville's Mud Mountain course.

The Tigers won with 55 points, edging out Ft. Zumwalt West of St. Charles County, Mo., who had 57 points, for the team title. Another St. Charles County school, Francis Howell, was third with 106 points, followed by Ft. Zumwalt North in fourth with 111 points. Collinsville came in fifth with 126 points, followed by John Burroughs of Ladue, Mo., in sixth with 141 points, Alton was seventh with 151 points, Bluford Webber of suburban Chicago was eighth with 180 points and Duchesne Catholic of St. Charles was ninth with 204 points.

Although a scheduling mix-up held the number of teams and runners down, Edwardsville head coach George Patrylak felt that the meet was a success.

"We were fortunate to find 12 partial teams for the invitational," Patrylak said, "we were very fortunate to have coach (Mark) Tschudy and coach (Jess) Jacobs were able to get 42 middle school teams to participate in the middle school divisions, so we were able to host a meet with eight races, and over 1,500 runners."

The Tigers were able to meet their three main objectives for the race in winning the title.

"We were able to rest Ryan (Watts) for one more week," Patrylak said, "and then, we had some goals to accomplish individually and as a team. Our first goal was to win as a team, and we were able to accomplish that by sneaking past Ft. Zumwalt West by two points. Our second goal was for Geo to win the event, and he was able to accomplish that goal by running a strong second half of the race.

"Our third goal was to have Ryan chase Jacob to a more consistent race. He was able to do that for two-and-a-quarter miles, but then, I turned him loose because we were behind in scoring at that point in the race. Ryan jumped from sixth to second in the final eighty-fifth of a mile. So we were able to accomplish our three main goals while keeping the freshmen and sophomore runners in their race."





Patrylak won the race with a time of 16:58.87 on the three-mile course in his and Luitjohan's final home race on Senior Day, while Luitjohan was second at 17:09.13. Jason Copelin of the Jaguars was third with a time of 17:10.09, with the Vikings' Graham Black fourth at 17:26.40, fifth place went to Ft, Zumwalt West's Jack Rohr at 17:35.27, Taylor Mason of the Panthers was sixth at 17:41.36, Grandone came in seventh at 17:42.79, Tyson Murphy of Francis Howell was eighth at 17:48.04, Seth Hamerski of Webber was ninth at 17:47.14 and the Kahoks' Trey Peterson rounded out the top ten with at time of 17:57.48.

Besides Patrylak, Luitjohan and Grandone, Edwardsville had Ben Ziobro in at 18:42.15, Oliver Ferdinand had a time of 18:49.19, Sam Witter came in at 18:59.48 and Carson Bateman was clocked in 19:22.79.

Outside of Peterson, Collinsville's Andrew Gonski came in at 18:24.10, Brock Cunningham was timed in 18:25.17, Evan Heintz was in at 19:38.87, Alejandro

Mendoza's time was 20:02.46, Dylan Meek was in at 22:21.38 and Laurentino Martinez had a time of 22:29.85.

Dylan Forsythe led the Redbirds with a time of 18:24.77, while Victor Humphrey came in at 18:35.00, Simon McClaine had a time of 19:36.79, River Wrishnik was clocked in 19:39.28, Jonathan Krafka was in at 19:50.25, Kris Millsap's time was 23:29.62 and Lucas Landuyt was in at 24:41.05.

Among individual runners, Cameron Beckett of Maryville Christian came in at 21:06.62, Ladruis Estes of East St. Louis was in at 22:58.14, teammate Lamar Doss was in at 23:10.35, Jared Ury of Maryville had a time of 23:45.59., East Side's John Redmond was in at 23:53.89 and teammate Shaheed Gill was in at 24:33.48. The Lions and Flyers didn't record a team score.

The Tigers were able to reach their goals for the meet, but Patrylak also knows there's still plenty of work ahead for his team.

"Overall, we reached our goals," Patrylak said. "but we still have a lot of room for improvement."





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