

# **Senior Cross Country Runner Cole Martinez Is Quality Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram of Jersey Male Athlete Of The Month At JCHS**

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
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JERSEYVILLE - Senior runner Cole Martinez had a very successful season for Jersey Community High School, representing the Panthers well in the IHSA Class 2A state series. In the regional, Martinez advanced to the sectional with an overall seventh-place finish, coming in at 16:25.6 at the Highland regional, then in the Decatur MacArthur sectional, qualified for the state meet with a time of 16:39.32, finishing 48th with a time of 15:48.34.

Martinez was one of the Panthers' top runners and hardest workers, who has competed in the sport for all of his four years at Jersey, consistently finishing in the top ten of his races.

For all of his effort both on and off the courses, Martinez has been named Jersey's Quality Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram of Jersey Male Athlete of the Month.

Martinez, who ran for head coach Harold Landon, credited his big season as the reason he was selected for this month's honor.

"It was a great season with a third-place finish at (the Mississippi Valley) conference and qualification for the state meet," Martinez said.

Martinez thanked his family and the Panther supporters for his success and their support over his high school years.

"I would like to thank my dad, mom, stepmom, brother, grandparents and everyone else who has come to meets and supported me throughout my career," Martinez said.

Martinez has competed in cross country since his freshman year and enjoys many of the benefits of being involved with the team, along with his hard work during training.

"Since my freshman year," Martinez said. "I love competing, being part of a team, meeting new people and improving myself."

Being involved in sports in general, cross country in particular has benefitted Martinez in many other ways as well.

"It has shaped my friendships throughout high school," Martinez said, "and helped keep me motivated and focused on my goals."

Martinez is also a distance runner on the Panthers' track team and a member of the IHSA Scholar Bowl team. He's also a member of the school's National Honors Society

chapter, and doesn't plan on running in college, but is leaning towards attending the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, majoring in biochemistry with plans on becoming an optometrist after graduating.

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