

Geo Patrylak Blazes To 5K Mud Mountain Crown, Elite Eight Young Studs Win Team Title

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Recent Edwardsville High School graduate Geo Patrylak won the men's individual championship, while the Elite Eight Young Studs won the men's team title at the 26th annual Mud Mountain benefit 5K race and one-mile fun run Saturday morning at SIU-Edwardsville's famed Mud Mountain cross country course.

The annual benefit, which is a fund-raiser for the Edwardsville High, Lincoln Middle and Liberty Middle Schools' cross country and track teams, was another rousing success and has become an annual event looked forward to by the Edwardsville and Metro-East running communities.

"Overall, I think things were pretty successful," said race chairman and Edwardsville head cross country coach George Patrylak. "We had almost 300 runners registered for the 5K and fun run and approximately 65 of the runners competed in both events."

The men's team competition boiled down to a pair of Edwardsville High teams, as the Young Studs, consisting of Ryan Luitjohan, Geo Patrylak, Dane Shaw, Bruce Stover and Liam Hoferlin, defeated the Elite Eight Legends, who had former Tiger runners Jack Pifer, Franky Romano, Zach Walters, Todd Baxter and Justin Davis, with the Young Studs edging out the Legends for the title.

"it came down to the battle of our Elite Eight teams," George Patrylak said. "The corporate champions were Team Chiropractic Plus."



In the individual race, Pifer went out in front early, with a pack of eight runners trailing by about 10 meters after the first mile. Patrylak, along with Larry Huffman, the head coach at Waterloo High School, began to make a move in during the second mile of the race, coming out competing for the lead when the field emerged from the woods. Pifer began to close the gap late, but Patrylak was ahead going into the final straight, holding on to win the race by two seconds.

Patrylak won with a time of 16:32.7, with Pifer coming in second at 16:34.3, third place went to Huffman at 16:46.6, Romano came in fourth at 16:57.3 and Shaw was fifth at 17:03.5. Sixth place went to Ryan Luitjohan at 17:03.6, Marshall Phares came in seventh at 17:14.7, Luke Padesky was eighth at 17:28.1, Jackson Collman was ninth at 17:28.7 and Andrew Pace rounded out the top ten with a time of 17:36.1.

In the age group races, the 11-and-under winner was Ezekiel Askins, who had a time of 24:19.7, Colin Luitjohan was the 12-and-13 winner at 20:56.1, Jackson Amick took the 14-and-15 group title with a time of 18:11.0, Ryan Luitjohan was the 16-18 winner, Romano was the winner of the 19-24 group, Padesky won the 25-29 category, Phares won the 30-34 age group, Shaw took the 35-39 age category race, the 40-44 winner was Jason Jaxson at 20:11.6, Jeremy Stumpf won the 45-49 race at 23:11.1, Brian Quarton won the 50-54 age race with a time of 22:43.8, Ryan Yoch won the 55-59 age grouping at 22:59.7 and the 60-and-over winner was Mark Bradley at 27:17.2. In addition, the Clydesdale winner for runners 55-and-over went to Jonah Cope, who came in at 35:08.4.







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