

Nuttall Leads Edwardsville Girls, Freshmen Popelar, DeAvila Scores For Tigers In Eighth Place Finish At Palatine Invitational Meet Of Champions

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PALATINE - Edwardsville senior runner Emily Nuttall was the leading runner for the Tigers, while freshmen Madison Popelar and Antonella DeAvila finished in the team's top five, scoring points as the Tigers placed eighth in the Palatine Invitational Meet of Champions Saturday morning at Deer Grove East Park in Palatine, in the northwest suburbs of Chicagoland.



The Tigers finished eighth in the star-studded 29-team field with 309 points, with Elmhurst York winning with 54 points, Assumption Catholic of Louisville and Mt. Prospect tied for second with 116 points each, LaGrange Lyons was fourth with 180 points and Downers Grove North rounded out the top five with 239 points.

As was the boys race, the girls field was loaded with many highly ranked Class 2A and 3A teams to go along with Assumption, one of the best teams in Kentucky. The Tigers ran well against the field and showed many positives in the race.

"This was a similar situation, with 14 ranked Class 3A teams, including the top two teams in the state," said Edwardsville head coach George Patrylak. "There were five ranked Class 2A teams and Assumption High. Eighth place may have been a little higher than many teams expected, but I'm expecting bigger things from us going into the postseason."

The positives were very good indeed for the Tigers, who got good performances from everyone in the lineup, with the two freshmen coming through well.

"We had two freshmen step up and score points for us," Patrylak said, "with Madison Popelar and Antonella DeAvila scoring for us."

The individual winner of the race was Anna Hardin of Arlington Heights Hersey, who had a time of 16:57.97, with Bria Bennis of York second at 17:04.47, third place went to Rachel Soukup of Crystal Lake Prairie Ridge at 17:07.12, in fourth place was Hadley Fererro of Crystal Lake Central at 17:07.33 and Hailey Erickson of Mt. Prospect rounded out the top five at 17:09.49.

Nuttall led the Tigers with a time of 18:21.49, with Popelar in at 18:35.71, Olivia Coll had a time of 19:00.98, Emma Patrick was in at 19:10.77, DeAvila had a time of 19:16.55, Maya Lueking's time was 19:26.36 and Riley Knoyle was in at 20:00.53.

The Tigers now prepare for the Peoria Invitational next Saturday morning at Detweiler Park, the long-time home of the IHSA state meet and both Patrylak and his teams are raring to go.

"I'm excited to see what they can do with the cooler weather and more experience," Patrylak said.