



Oilers' Isaiah Kolmer Posts Most Courageous Performance Of Season, Is A Midwest Members Credit Union Male Athlete Of Month

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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WOOD RIVER - As the holidays are here, one is reminded of one of the most inspiring athletic accomplishments of the fall when on pure courage and determination, East Alton-Wood River High junior Isaiah Kolmer qualified for the boys cross country sectional with a three-mile PR time of 18:07.5 in the Trenton Wesclin Regional.

East Alton-Wood River head coach Russ Colona has witnessed a lot of positive performances in his long career with the Oilers, but this rainy, freezing cold day in October in Trenton is one he will never forget.

Young Kolmer had established a goal early in the season of qualifying for sectional as an individual. Isaiah had something terribly tragic happen to him and his family in early October when his mom was killed in a car crash near Grafton. Somehow, the young man pulled himself together, likely in memory of his late mother, and turned in the performance of his life in the Trenton-Wesclin Regional and posted a PR.

It was muddy, rainy, and an awful day for running, but Colona said the young runner simply had a will within to qualify for the sectional and he did in a time of barely over 18 minutes for three miles. He was the third individual finisher to qualify on to sectional. Isaiah is a Midwest Members Credit Union Male Athlete of the Month for the Oilers.

“Isaiah now has the running bug,” Colona said. “He is a great kid. It was so tragic that he lost his mother in mid-season this season in a car crash. I was so proud of him to qualify for the sectional. He has a great future ahead in running.”

Colona is a mentor and coach that any high school would love to have and he demonstrated it once again when Isaiah’s mother passed. He stayed for the entire visitation with his runner and grieved right along with the family at their loss.

“I feel that is something any coach should do in this kind of situation,” Colona said of the support for his young athlete. “I wanted to be there.”

“He was so happy when he qualified as the third individual,” the coach said. “You could just see the relief on his face when he qualified. It meant so much to him and us as a team.”

At this point, Coach Colona is very excited about Isaiah’s running future at East Alton-Wood River and he is especially looking forward to watching him in track and field in the spring of 2024.

“I am so proud of Isaiah,” he said.

Again, congrats to Isaiah Kolmer on his Midwest Members Credit Union Male Athlete of the Month honor.

