

September 15, 2011

Cross Country Teams Start Season with a Bang

The East Aurora cross country teams picked up where they left off a year ago by sweeping the team titles at the JFK Invitational this past Saturday on the two-and-a-half-mile course.

The boys varsity team, currently ranked first in New York State Class B, placed fourth in the top eight. East Aurora was led by junior Sean Phillips, who finished second, just one second behind the individual winner. Elliott Martynkiewicz finished fifth, followed closely by Gene Baritot in seventh and Brendan Keany in eighth. Larkin Bohanan finished 11th, and Robby Coulter and Corey Hensen finished 21st and 22nd respectively. EA scored a low 28 points to runner-up Canisius, which scored 82 in the 13-team field.

The girls varsity squad, currently ranked second in New York State Class B, took the top three places and seven of the first 11 to score a low 21 points to runner-up Williamsville North's 86 in the field of 12 complete teams.

Leading the way for EA were individual champion Marta McLaughlin, runner-up Sarah Anstett, and third place Paige Anderson. Also running very well for EA were: Megan Baritot eighth, Madeline Murray ninth, Hannah Rice 10th, and Gwen Federick 11th.

The boys JV team scored a low 21 points led by individual champion Nick Zee and runner-up Aubrey McLaughlin. Rounding out EA's top seven runners were Keith Horbachewski fifth, Charles DeCarlo sixth, Lewis Hoffman ninth, Chris Klocke 12th, and Matt Nason 15th.

The girls JV team also raced to victory with 18 points led by individual champion Mackenzie Donahue and runner-up Sidney Spaschak. Rounding out EA's top eight were: Rachel Mills fourth, Alisha West fifth, Rebekah Zee sixth, Hannah Hitchcock eighth, Lauren O'Connor ninth, and Emily Szopinski 10th.

Coach Walt McLaughlin was pleased with the team's performances. "We ran well in our first test," he noted. "Most of the team is just figuring things out at this point, and this was a good starting point. The key for us will be individual improvement. We graduated several of our top runners from last year's boys and girls state champion teams, but we have a great group of kids again this year and great participant numbers as well. With over 40 boys and our largest-ever girls team of 34, we are taking things one step at a time. Our biggest tests, as always, will come at the end of the season when things matter the most."

The EA cross country teams will travel to Firemen's Park in West Seneca this Saturday for the West Seneca Invitational where races are scheduled to start at 10 a.m.