

EPGMS Boys Run to 5th Place at State

56-second 1-7 pack time best in program history

[OCTOBER 15, 2022] – Sunshine and a brisk breeze greeted 234 runners competing in the IESA Class 2A Boys Cross Country State Championships held at Maxwell Park in Normal. At precisely 1:15pm, the starter blew his whistle, and the crowd went silent. Upon the pistol firing, the crowd erupted with cheers and the racers charged up the opening hill.

Luke Hinthorne (29th, 11.30) passed the half mile mark in 60th place, weaving through the crowded field. He had moved into 36th place at the mile, clocking 5 minutes 43 seconds. With less than 800 meters remaining, he briefly moved into 25th place, but with 400 meters to go was back to 30th. With one final surge down the long straightaway lined with screaming spectators, Hinthorne crossed the line in 29th, less than 5 seconds away from All-State honors.

Elijah Webster (44th, 11.50) and Finn Zeller (45th, 11.51) showed what teamwork can do, as both moved up through the field from start to finish, crossing the line in a photo finish that required photo review before reversing their finish order to give the edge to Webster. Zeller set the pace, while Webster chased, and it worked out well for both athletes. Race of the day honors for the boys went to Webster, as he improved his splits on this course from five weeks ago (6.14, 6.40) to 5.54, 5.56 on his way to tying his lifetime PR, and smashing his Parkside PR by 64 seconds. Webster moved up 21 spots in the final mile, while Zeller moved up 17.

The Titan #4, #5, and #6 runners had huge Parkside PRs as well.

Roman Wenger (89th, 12.16) ran #4 for the Titans for only the second time this season, clocking splits of 6.07, 6.08 to improve on his Parkside best by over a minute. He moved up 30 spots in the final mile—only 9 runners in the field of 234 made a bigger move than Wenger over the second mile.

Charlie Grammer (95th, 12.17) ran splits of 6.06, 6.11, and although he couldn't hold of Wenger down the final straightaway, he did pick up an impressive 21 spots over from the mile mark to the finish. Grammer also became the second-highest placing #5 runner at State in EPGMSXC program history after Maison DePauw (2016, 92nd).

Marcus Wiegand (105th, 12.23) got out strong and was on pace for a lifetime best, clocking 6.04 and running #4 for the Titans through the mile mark. His pace slowed a bit on the second mile, but he nevertheless picked up 3 spots and a 73-second Parkside PR.

Alex Lartz (112th, 12.26) closed things out for the Titans with a 35-second Parkside best, making it a perfect 14 for 14 Titans achieving Parkside PRs.

The Titan 1-7 pack claimed the first-ever EPGMS sub-60-second time (56 seconds) for a boys team at State. They also matched the best team placing in program history, placing 5th in both 2016 and 2022. Top 5 teams in the 27-team State Championships field were River Forest Roosevelt (121), La Grange Gurrie (122), Aurora Herget (139), Lindenhurst Millburn (147), El Paso-Gridley (202).

Nowark Grabs All-State Honors at XC Championships

Titan Girls Place 11th at State Finals

[OCTOBER 15, 2022] – A westerly breeze rustled through the trees of Normal’s Maxwell Park at 12:30 in the afternoon as 237 girls became motionless. The IESA Class 2A Girls Cross Country State Championship race was about to begin. The starter’s pistol fired, and a running frenzy was released onto the 2-mile course.

Verity Nowark (19th, 12.33) was not fazed by the competition and as soon as she crested the opening hill, immediately got down to business. Her negative-split racing style paid dividends at State, just as it has all season. Leaving the water tower behind and approaching the small wooded section she passed runner after runner, eventually moving into the top 50. Continuing to press the pace, she found herself in 33rd place at the mile mark (6.18). Nowark never let up, posting an even stronger second mile (6.14) as she moved up an additional 14 spots—more than any other athlete in the Top 25—to claim 19th and All-State honors. Nowark’s time of 12 minutes 33 seconds was a 97-second Parkside PR, a 10-second lifetime best, and the fastest Titan time since 2017, moving her up to #7 all time for EPGMS.

Elly Huette (50th, 13,11) moved up three spots in the final mile to sneak into the Top 50, finishing 17 seconds ahead of rival Grace Hartwig of Heyworth, who had bested Huette by 10 seconds at Sectionals.

Audrey Roth (95th, 13.40) ran negative splits of 6.51, 6.49 as she tore through the final mile picking off 27 competitors—grabbing more spots than all but 8 girls in the 237-runner field over the second mile. She was the 20th sixth-grader to cross the finish line.

Mya Griffin (106th, 13.47) has run sub-14 three times in her life, all three of those efforts coming back-to-back-to-back during this season’s October races. Her splits of 6.50, 6.57 were good for a 51-second improvement over her 2021 State performance.

Carly Whitcomb (152nd, 14.15) ran to a 103-second Parkside PR. Whitcomb opened with a 7.00 first mile and was in 152nd place. She held on to that position through the finish line one mile later, and it was an important spot to hold onto because it allowed the Titans to edge Route 24 rival Eureka by one point in the team standings, 277-278.

Ember DePauw (172nd, 14.31) opened with a 7.13, and then proceeded to move up 21 spots in the second mile as she ran to an incredible 160-second Parkside PR.

Avery Glacinski (191st, 14.46) posted splits of 7.20, 7.25 as she crushed her previous Parkside PR by 194 seconds, charging across the finish line with a 33-second lifetime best.

In the 27-team field, State-qualifying central Illinois schools were tightly grouped from 10th place through 14th place. Those team scores were Dunlap Middle (256), El Paso-Gridley (277), Eureka (278), Washington Central (343), Elmwood (353).

XC Boys Win Sectional Championship!

Hinthorne and Zeller lead strong Titan pack

[OCTOBER 8, 2022] – St. Joseph Middle School hosted the IESA Sectional E cross country races on a cool sunny Saturday morning. The two-loop course was all grass, circled a pond, and ran along a cornfield. The EPGMS Titan boys found the course to their liking.

The EPG boys were coming off a decisive victory in the 28-team Delavan Dare Classic, but it was yet to be seen how they would respond in a qualifying race. It turned out to be a record-setting day for the Titans at the Sectional Meet.

Luke Hinthorne (3rd, 11.36) ran his classic race of even splits and moving up through the field. Finn Zeller (4th, 11.40) had a sensational race, finishing just four seconds behind Hinthorne while outkicking Jackson Kruse of Herscher by three-tenths of a second. The pair of seventh graders set the tone for the race.

Alex Lartz (9th, 12.04) ran with authority, earning a Top 10 award. Not only was Lartz the top 6th grader in the race, but the next 6th grader did not cross the line until 33 places and 70 seconds later.

The Titan's #4-#5-#6 pack of Elijah Webster (12th, 12.15), Charlie Grammer (13th, 12.16), and Roman Wenger (14th, 12.21) finished ahead of every team's #4, and except for runner-up Tolono, ahead of every team's #2.

Marcus Wiegand (20th, 12.36) closed out the day for the Titans. 84 runners followed.

The Titans' 1-5 pack time of 40 seconds and 1-7 pack time of 56 seconds was their best of the year. The Boys' total team score of 41 points was the best Sectional score in the history of the EPGMS cross country program.

The Top 5 team scores were EPG (41), Tolono Unity (74), Monticello (80), Herscher (113), St. Joe (132).

The EPGMS Titan Boys Cross Country team will run in the IESA State Finals on Saturday, October 15 at Maxwell Park in Normal. They will line up in Box 11, with the starting pistol to be fired at 1:15pm.

Titan Girls Qualify for State Finals!

Nowark leads girls to team runner-up placing

[OCTOBER 8, 2022] – St. Joseph Middle School hosted the IESA Sectional E cross country races on a cool sunny Saturday morning. The two-loop course was marked with two lines designating a lane for the runners to follow around the other sports fields at the St. Joseph Community Sports Complex on the east end of town. Athletes followed the course around a small pond at the south end of the park. 17 schools and 95 runners were participating in the Girls race.

The EPG girls knew that the host Panthers would be out front. Second place would almost certainly go to Tolono Unity, a team that has brought home 4 State trophies (including 3 championships) from the past four State Finals. Tolono looked to have a talented group of runners yet again, as they were 193 points ahead of EPG at the Parkside Invite, and 249 points ahead of the Titans two weeks later at Detweiller. It seemed likely that the 3rd and final team qualifying spot would be fought between EPG and the other 14 teams.

Clifton Nash looked like they might give the Titans a run for their money early on, but as it turned out the Titans put 4 runners in front of Clifton's #2, as the Rockets failed to qualify their team (4th) or their top individual (11th), both finishing one place out of the final qualifying spot. However, Clifton is sure to be back stronger than ever next year, as their top four runners included three 5th-graders and a 7th-grader.

Surprisingly, the battle was Tolono v. EPG to see who would take runner-up honors and who would place 3rd.

Verity Nowark (2nd, 12.47) and Elly Huette (7th, 13.08) got out strong, crossing the half mile in the top 15. They needed to move up, and they did, with Nowark moving into 4th and Huette in the Top 10 as they crossed the 1.5-mile mark. With 400 meters to go, Nowark continued pushing, making a final surge to place 2nd overall, one second ahead of St. Joseph's top runner, Tessa Walker. Tolono's #1 runner placed 5th. Meanwhile, Huette had faded a bit during the final turn around the pond but regrouped and charged hard to pass a group of 3 runners just before the finish line. Tolono's #2 runner crossed the line 17 seconds later in 14th. Salt Fork's 10th place finisher did not figure in team scoring, so through two runners the score was EPG (9), Tolono (18).

A half second later, Tolono's #3 Brooklyn Mumm crossed the finish line in 15th, while EPG's #3 Audrey Roth (17th, 13.26) blazed across the line exactly one second but two places behind Mumm. That tightened things up just a bit, EPG (25), Tolono (32).

Mya Griffin (18th, 13.29) finished right on the heels of Roth as the Titans #4, seven seconds ahead of Tolono's #4 who placed 21st, opening a ten-point lead for the Titans with the score EPG (42), Tolono (52).

But Tolono was by no means finished, with their #5 and #6 runners separated from their #4 by just one other runner, giving them a final score of 74. That meant that EPG's #5 would need to place 32nd or better to defeat Tolono. The Titans' #5 passed PBL's Kyla Franckey as they headed down the homestretch, but Franckey responded and edged ahead of EPG's #5 as the finish line loomed. The Titan runner did not give in, digging down and surging yet again, winning the battle by seven-tenths of a second. Indeed, Carly Whitcomb (32nd, 14.18) provided a double-come-from-behind-finish to secure the team runner-up position for the Titans by a single point.

Ember DePauw (49th, 14.55) and Avery Glacinski (58th, 15.19) were #6 and #7 for the Titans, Glacinski earning the only Titan PR on the day, notching a 15-second lifetime best.

For the State-qualifying Titan girls, every point and every effort added up to their runner-up team placing. The Top 5 teams at the St. Joe sectional were St. Joseph (47), EPG (73), Tolono Unity (74), Clifton Nash (119), Monticello (156).

The EPGMS Titan Girls Cross Country team will run in the IESA State Finals on Saturday, October 15 at Maxwell Park in Normal. They will line up in Box 9, with the starting pistol to be fired at 12:30pm.

Doubling Down at Delavan Dare Classic

Titans take home 24 PRs and 2 trophies

[OCTOBER 1, 2022] – The Panthers of Delavan hosted a 28-team meet on a bright fall morning—the 45th running of the Dare Classic. Over 600 runners were on hand, along with many cheering

cross country fans pulling for their favorite athletes. The course behind the school featured a double loop through corn fields, bean fields, softball fields, and a solar field.

The EPGMS duo of Elly Huette (12th, 12.43) and Verity Nowark (13th, 12.43) were the first pair of Titan finishers to open the October racing season, crossing side-by-side yet again, both earning 12-second PRs. They finished 4 seconds ahead of 15th-place Grace Hartwig of Heyworth for the first time this season.

Mya Griffin (28th, 13.10) had the race of the day for the Titans, crushing her lifetime best by 84 seconds as she ran #3 for EPG. Running with Griffin throughout the race, Audrey Roth (31st, 13.15) followed with a 21-second PR of her own. Carly Whitcomb (77th, 14.12) and Ember DePauw (87th, 14.26) notched PRs as well, with DePauw running a pair of evenly split miles – 7.13, 7.13. Avery Glacinski (115th, 15.34) completed a perfect PR day for the Varsity girls, 7 for 7.

A few weeks ago, Eureka outpaced EPGMS at Furrow Farm by 21 points, but today the Titans found their rhythm, surprising the Hornets by 13 points to grab the 3rd place trophy. Final team scores for the Top 5 teams were Brimfield (109), Dunlap Middle (124), EPG (142), Eureka (155), Delavan (156).

In the Boys race, Luke Hinthorne (4th, 11.13), looked strong and determined as he continued moving up in the field throughout the race, clocking even splits of 5.36, 5.37. Finn Zeller (14th, 11.36), Alex Lartz (20th, 11.46), and Elijah Webster (27th, 11.59) all opened with fast first miles and hung on for sub-12 performances. Charlie Grammer (30th, 12.07) perfectly paired his splits of 6.04, 6.03 to earn a 34-second lifetime best. Roman Wenger (38th, 12.13) ran splits of 6.13, 6.00 to pick up a 30-second PR, while EPG's #7 Marcus Wiegand (41st, 12.17) was only one second behind Princeville's #5 runner and ahead of every other team's #5 in the 158-runner field.

The Titan boys were the only team (boys or girls) with a double-digit score on the day, scoring ninety and winning by 26 points. Final tallies were EPG (90), Dunlap Middle (116), Princeville (129), Dunlap Valley (145), Elmwood (200).

In the Open races, Kiana Mayne (31st, 15.06) was followed closely by Lucy Mann (38th, 15.20) as Mann clocked a 67-second lifetime best. Shelby Patten (59th, 16.09) also earned a PR in the 148-runner field. Nate Kingdon (2nd, 12.29), Braxton Romersberger (3rd, 12.35), and Landon Feit (7th, 13.03) all placed in the Top 10 out of 164 runners. Romersberger has dropped his PR by 110 seconds in the past 10 days. Russell Erwin (14th, 13.18) earned a Top 15 award, and was followed by Will Miller (22nd, 13.46), Owen Grammer (26th, 13.56), Dean Fletcher (38th, 14.15), Truett Campbell (39th, 14.15), Jude Roth (83rd, 15.22), Griffin Phillips (100th, 15.49), and Cooper Romersberger (126th, 16.54). Grammer followed up his September 26 Furrow PR with the biggest PR (54 seconds) of all the Titan boys at Delavan. Fletcher bested his 2021 Delavan time by 89 seconds.

Titan Boys Sweep Top 5 Spots at Quadrangular

Girls team runs to victory for 12th year in a row

[SEPTEMBER 26, 2022] – El Paso-Gridley Middle School hosted the annual Quadrangular at Furrow Farm on a sunny Monday afternoon. Four schools and 88 runners were competing.

EPG's Elly Huette (2nd, 13.29) battled Heyworth's Grace Hartwig for much of the race, before Hartwig edged ahead with about 1000 meters to go. Hartwig went on to win by 9 seconds over Huette, who held off teammate Verity Nowark (3rd, 13.30) by one second. The next three spots went to the Titans' #3, #4, #5 runners, who crossed the line within 7 seconds of each other – Mya

Griffin (4th, 14.44), Ember DePauw (5th, 14.45), and Carly Whitcomb (6th, 14.51). Despite the hilly Furrow course, all three girls were within 15 seconds of their lifetime best.

Avery Glacinski (8th, 15.56) and Kiana Mayne (9th, 16.15) supplied strong efforts for the Titans, as EPGMS took 7 of the top 9 spots. They were followed by Audrey Roth (15th, 16.57), Lucy Mann (18th, 17.20) and Shelby Patten (19th, 17.50) in the 32-runner field. Glacinski and Patten each ran to Furrow best times of nearly 3 minutes.

The girls continued their streak of Quadrangular titles dating back to 2010 (the race was not held in 2020), winning for the 12th time. Team scores Monday were EPG (20), Tremont (55), Heyworth (71). Pontiac had just four runners, so did not figure in the team scoring.

The Titan boys continued their winning ways at this meet as well, running to their 5th Quadrangular win in a row by sweeping the top 5 spots.

Luke Hinthorne (1st, 12.01) and Finn Zeller (2nd, 12.15) both climbed the Course Records list, moving up to claim the 4th-fastest and 7th-fastest all-time EPGMS clockings on the Furrow course. Elijah Webster (3rd, 13.03), Roman Wenger (4th, 13.11), and Alex Lartz (5th, 13.15) completed the sweep for the Titans.

Following one second after sixth-place finisher Ben Maas of Heyworth came 5 more Titans – Marcus Wiegand (7th, 13.31), Charlie Grammer (8th, 13.32), Braxton Romersberger (9th, 13.32), Russell Erwin (10th, 13.45), and Nate Kingdon (11th, 14.05). Other EPGMS finishers in the 56-runner boys field were Landon Feit (16th, 14.35), Owen Grammer (21st, 14.49), Truett Campbell (26th, 15.04), Will Miller (27th, 15.06), Dean Fletcher (28th, 15.25), Jude Roth (34th, 16.18), Griffin Phillips (46th, 17.57), and Cooper Romersberger (47th, 18.03). Grammer's 14.49 was a lifetime best...by one second.

Boys team scores were EPG (15), Tremont (75), Heyworth (77), Pontiac (79).

Déjà Vu: 21 PRs Again!

Elijah Webster runs 51-second lifetime best at Detweiller

[SEPTEMBER 23, 2022] – Dunlap Middle School hosted a 50-team meet at Detweiller Park, home of the IHSA Cross Country State Finals since 1970. The temperature was hovering around 62 degrees at the start of the Girls Varsity race, and the weather stayed steady through 4 races as 1600 runners raced through the 2.1-mile course.

The first 6 Titan girls to cross the finish line tallied lifetime bests. The Varsity girls were led by Elly Huette (47th, 13:34.5) and Verity Nowark (48th, 13:34.9). Their 2.1-mile mark converts to a 12 minute 55 second 2-mile time, good for part of a 4-way tie at #17 on the all-time list of EPGXC athletes.

Audrey Roth (107th, 14.17), Carly Whitcomb (198th, 15.18), and Ember DePauw (201st, 15.22) all ran to a converted 2-mile PR of more than 30 seconds, while Kiana Mayne (220th, 15.46) notched a 41-second PR. Avery Glacinski (251st, 16.59) ran to her second fastest time ever. The adjusted #1-#5 pack time of 1:43 was a season-best for the Titans and helped them finish with a team time 9 seconds faster than the 2021 Girls team and the fourth fastest ever for a Titan team on the Detweiller course.

Elijah Webster (50th, 12.55) went out on a mission to drop some time, and he dropped some jaws, with Luke Hinthorne (25th, 11.58) finally catching Webster just before the mile as they flew

through at 5.38, 5.39. Webster held on through 1.5 miles, then picked it up for a 6.04 mile 2, and a final 160 meters that earned him a 51-second lifetime best for 2 miles. Hinthorne backed his opening mile with a second mile of 5.45 as he flashed across the finish line in a 4-person pack separated by just two-tenths of a second, grabbing the 25th-place medal by one-tenth of a second. He also moved up to #11 (tie) all-time for EPGMS.

Finn Zeller (54th, 12.27) was the 5th fastest #3 runner in the race, running to a 27-second PR. Zeller, Webster, and Hinthorne all ran sub-12 adjusted 2-mile times. Alex Lartz (91st, 12.49) earned a 12-second lifetime best, while Marcus Wiegand (133rd, 13.14) ran to a 25-second PR. #6 Charlie Grammer (153rd, 13.21) and #7 Roman Wenger (174th, 13.35) were just off their PRs set two days earlier, but both finished ahead of Sectional rival Tolono Unity's #5.

The boys' team time of 59.53 was the first time an EPGXC team has broken 60 minutes since October 19, 2019 at the IESA State Finals, and the second-fastest Titan time at Detweiller ever.

Mya Griffin (61st, 15.20) led the open girls with a season best, while Lucy Mann (221st, 17.16) and Shelby Patten (230th, 16.30) both ran to PRs in the 442-runner field.

Nate Kingdon (26th, 13.17) moved up from 31st at mile 1 to 24th at mile 2, finishing 26th—exactly one place and one second out of the final medal position. Russell Erwin (47th, 13.37), Braxton Romersberger (50th, 13.39), Will Miller (135th, 14.34), and Truett Campbell (141st, 14.37) all earned ran lifetime bests for the second time in three days. Next across the finish line was Landon Feit (153rd, 14.43), Dean Fletcher (278th, 15.51), and Owen Grammer (340th, 16.26). The Titans wrapped things up with the next 3 runners also notching their second PR of the week – Jude Roth (344th, 16.32), Griffin Phillips (389th, 16.55), and Cooper Romersberger (459th, 18.22). Phillips ran splits of 8:01, 8:01 to earn the second-biggest Titan PR of the day.

Titan XC Brings Home Two Team Trophies

EPGMS runners set 21 lifetime bests at CCXC Invitational

[SEPTEMBER 21, 2022] – Corpus Christi hosted a 10-team meet at Ewing Park in Bloomington on an overcast Wednesday afternoon. 258 runners weaved through the grassy park and woody trails, passing excited cheering fans of all ages as they competed.

The afternoon was bookended by light showers before and after the 4 races, but there was no raining on the Titan PR parade, as EPGMS runners turned in 21 lifetime bests on the 21st of September.

Verity Nowark (3rd, 13.15) led the Titan girls with the first PR of the day, moving up from 9th at the first bridge crossing to a photo finish with runner-up Grace Hartwig of Heyworth at the finish. The 24-second PR was also the third fastest EPG time ever run on the Ewing Park course, behind only All-State runners Ruby Slightom (2017) and Caroline Wettstein (2021).

Next across the line for EPG came Elly Huetter (4th, 13.31) and Audrey Roth (9th, 14.08), Roth clocking an 8-second PR.

The #4 and #5 runners for the Titans delivered sensational runs – Carly Whitcomb (21st, 15.08) running to a 50-second PR and Ember DePauw (22nd, 15.09) right on her heels with the race of the day for the Titan girls, a 104-second lifetime best. Kiana Mayne (34th, 15.51) earned a season best while finishing alongside Mya Griffin (35th, 15.51).

The Titan girls earned a team trophy at this meet for the 5th year in a row, placing second. Top 3 teams were Metcalf (39), EPG (54), Tri-Valley (86).

Luke Hinthorne (6th, 11.56) ran sub-12 for the third time this season, clocking the fastest time on the Ewing course since 2018 when Sam Bushert ran 11 minutes 55 seconds.

The #2, #3, #4, and #5 Varsity boys for EPG all picked up PRs – Finn Zeller (10th, 12.18); Alex Lartz (13th, 12.24); Charlie Grammer (17th, 12.41); and Roman Wenger (19th, 12.43). 6th grader Lartz had the biggest PR of all Varsity boys, slicing 37 seconds off his previous best. Elijah Webster (22nd, 12.57) and Nate Kingdon (32nd, 13.20) ran #6 and #7 for the Titan boys.

The closest matchup in the Boys' team competition was for runner-up honors, as Metcalf (30) dominated for the victory. Trinity Lutheran (62) edged EPG (65) with those two teams snagging the 2nd and 3rd place trophies.

All three Titan athletes in the 53-runner Girls Open race took home a lifetime best and a Top 15 award – Avery Glacinski (3rd, 15.41), Lucy Mann (7th, 16.33), and Shelby Patten (10th, 17.00). The EPG runners in the Boys Open race were equally impressive with their performances, grabbing 5 of the Top 15 awards while running to 10 lifetime bests – each runner cutting an average of 45 seconds. Marcus (2nd, 13.12) was the only Titan in this race to not PR, placing 2nd in the 88-runner field behind winner Titus Black of Metcalf. Ten PR performances followed – Landon Feit (4th, 13.23), Russell Erwin (5th, 13.32), Braxton Romersberger (6th, 13.37), Will Miller (14th, 14.03), Truett Campbell (16th, 14.16), Owen Grammer (25th, 14.50), Dean Fletcher (26th, 14.51), Jude Roth (48th, 16.10), Griffin Phillips (55th, 16.54), and Cooper Romersberger (65th, 17.57). The biggest Titan PRs in this race went to Braxton Romersberger (48 seconds), Campbell (67 seconds), Roth (68 seconds), and Phillips (105 seconds).

Titans Collect 13 PRs at Illinois' Largest MSXC Invitational

Alex Lartz and Nate Kingdon run 40-second PRs

[SEPTEMBER 10, 2022] – Parkside Junior High hosted its annual meet under sunny Saturday skies at Normal's Maxwell Park. 58 teams were entered and over 1800 runners competed in one of four races.

Elly Huette (34th, 13.20) led the Titan girls in the 311-runner Girls Varsity race, clocking a 1-second season-best time. Verity Nowark (80th, 14.10) and Audrey Roth (93rd, 14.16) both ran negative splits – 7.10, 7.00 for Nowark and 7.15, 7.01 for Roth, while Mya Griffin (153rd, 14.57) and Kiana Mayne (213th, 15.54) ran #4 and #5 for EPG. Roth earned a 2-second PR and Mayne ran to a 17-second season-best. Carly Whitcomb (216th, 15.58) clocked a 1-second PR, and Ember DePauw (251st, 17.11) finished 2 seconds ahead of East St. Louis Lincoln's #1 and #2 runners. The Titan girls placed 22nd of 44 full teams with 552 points.

The Titan boys looked strong, led by Luke Hinthorne (13th, 11.43) running back-to-back sub-6 miles and earning a lifetime best by two-tenths of a second. EPG's 2-5 pack time of 51 seconds was turned in by Finn Zeller (52nd, 12.28), Elijah Webster (96th, 12.54), Charlie Grammer (123rd, 13.09), and Roman Wenger (148th, 13.19). Zeller and Grammer ran PRs of 3 seconds and 6 seconds, respectively. Marcus Wiegand (184th, 13.36) and Russell Erwin (250th, 14.17) ran #6 and #7 for EPG in the 369-runner field. The Titan boys placed 13th of 53 full teams, with very few Class 2A schools placing higher. Their 428 points was one point behind host 3A Parkside and one point ahead of 2A Metamora.

In the Open Girls race, Lucy Mann (133rd, 16.45) led the way for the Titans with a 2-second PR. Avery Glacinski (228th, 18.00) was one of four girls who clocked 18 minutes flat, and Shelby Patten (323rd, 19.22) ran faster than 241 of her competitors.

Alex Lartz (6th, 13.01) and Nate Kingdon (9th, 13.09) shared race of the day honors, continually moving up in the 587-runner field while looking stronger and stronger as they powered through the 2-mile course. Lartz clocked splits of 6.28, 6.33 as the pair ran the fourth and fifth fastest Titan times of the day, both slashing 40 seconds from their previous lifetime bests. Landon Feit (40th, 13.45) also found himself with a new PR after running splits of 6.57, 6.48. Braxton Romersberger (137th, 14.59) and Truett Campbell (200th, 15.35) both ran their second-fastest 2-mile time ever. EPG's Owen Grammer (332nd, 16.58) was followed by Jude Roth (361st, 17.18), Griffin Phillips (435th, 18.39), and Cooper Romersberger (441st, 18.43). Roth earned a 36-second PR, and Phillips ran to a 19-second lifetime best.

Next up for Titan XC is the Corpus Christi Invitational at Bloomington's Ewing Park on Wednesday, September 21. Races get underway at 4pm.

Splashing through Creeks and Climbing Hills at Furrow Farm

Titan girls earn 3rd place trophy; EPGMS runners claim 9 individual medals

[SEPTEMBER 6, 2022] – Titan Cross Country hosted the 15th Annual EPGMS Invitational at Furrow Farm with 22 teams competing. Four sets of runners in four races splashed through creek crossing #1, climbed the muddy bank and grassy hill, then cruised down a hill and ran along the creek before another douse of water at crossing #2. The course continued up to the pond, back to the corn tunnel, through the "W" and the cattle chute, into the apple trees, and up the final climb to the red barn. 568 runners crossed the finish line.

The second runner of the day to cross the finish line was Elly Huette (2nd, 13.43) as she made a bid for the victory before Peoria St. Jude's Shannon Zopel pulled away for an 18-second victory. Huette had faded to 3rd before finding the grit to close the gap on Dunlap Middle's Ellie Spanhook and pass her on the final hill, coming from behind to edge Spanhook by one-tenth of a second.

One of the most exciting performances of the day was turned in by #2 Titan Audrey Roth (11th, 14.18) as she kept moving up through the field, coming with 2 seconds of a Top 10 finish in her Furrow Farm debut. Roth clocked a 3-second PR on the challenging course.

Verity Nowark (19th, 14.39) ran #3 for the Titans and collected a varsity medal for her efforts. She was followed by #4 Mya Gramm (29th, 15.12) and #5 Carly Whitcomb (61st, 16.33). Ember DePauw (71st, 16.53) clocked a 13-second PR, while Kiana Mayne (79th, 17.01) ran 66 seconds faster than her best 2021 time on this course.

Of 17 full teams, the Titan girls came 3rd, team scores showing Dunlap Middle (95), Eureka (97), EPG (118), Dunlap Valley (144), Olympia (165). It was the second team trophy the Titan girls have earned this season.

Luke Hinthorne (4th, 12.20) found his way into the record books with his Furrow Farm debut, tying Reed Newcomb's 2018 time as the 6th fastest EPG time ever on the Furrow course. Finn Zeller (16th, 12.57) picked up a Varsity medal, while Charlie Grammer (34th, 13.42) and Elijah Webster (40th, 13.56) ran #3 and #4 for the Titans. Marcus Wiegand (43rd, 14.03), Nate Kingdon (44th, 14.11), and Alex Lartz (53rd, 14.20) closed out the Varsity race for the Titan boys, who placed 6th of 16 full teams with 133 points. Thomas Metcalf School (61) scored a decisive 35-point victory over Dunlap Middle.

In the Girls Open race, Lucy Mann (24th, 17.56) had almost moved into the top 10 after the second creek crossing, before fading to 26th. She fought back, passing two runners on the final hill

to grab the 24th-place medal. Avery Glacinski (38th, 18.54) and Shelby Patten (82nd, 20.48) also conquered the Furrow course, placing well in the 145-runner field.

Roman Wenger (2nd, 13.12) had the race of the day for the Titan boys, coming within 6.3 seconds of winning the 195-runner contest. His 12-second PR earned him runner-up honors. Russell Erwin (8th, 14.07) and Landon Feit (16th, 14.51) both earned medals as well. Eight more Titan runners crossed the Furrow finish line – Will Miller (49th, 16.10), Braxton Romersberger (55th, 16.23), Truett Campbell (69th, 16.49), Owen Romersberger (72nd, 17.04), Dean Fletcher (89th, 17.40), Jude Roth (104th, 17.54), Griffin Phillips (140th, 20.03), and Cooper Romersberger (141st, 20.04). Roth had the biggest of four Titan PRs, slicing 19 seconds off his best time.

Girls Team Wins at Black Partridge Park

Huette and Nowark finish 1-2 in Girls Race

[SEPTEMBER 1, 2022] – Metamora hosted a 7-team meet at Black Partridge Park with 153 runners completing the 2-mile course. Most of the course is on grass with a few trail sections rolling through the woods.

Elly Huette (1st, 14.03) was in second place at the half mile mark, looking strong and confident. She took the lead shortly after and won the race with a new EPG course record, besting Sophie Hinthorne's 2021 time by 3 seconds. With a smart first mile and her patented strong second mile, Verity Nowark (2nd, 14.20) pushed past several runners from the 0.5-mile mark to the 1.5-mile mark to place 17 seconds behind Huette, earning runner-up honors.

EPG's #3 and #4 Audrey Roth (11th, 15.11) and Mya Griffin (12th, 15.25) finished 14 seconds apart, with #5 Carly Whitcomb (20th, 16.42) closing out the EPG scoring for a 5-point Titan victory over Metamora, 46-51. Princeton placed 3rd with 69 points.

Other runners for EPG in the 75-runner race were Kiana Mayne (23rd, 16.53), Ember DePauw (29th, 17.21), Avery Glacinski (38th, 17.54), Lucy Mann (40th, 18.10), and Shelby Patten (42nd, 18.13). Patten ran to a 35-second PR.

Finn Zeller (10th, 13.16) found his way into the Top 7 EPG times on the Black Partridge course, sandwiched between #5 Dean Witzig (2019) and #7 Jack Reid (2019). Elijah Webster (14th, 13.53) and Charlie Grammar (15th, 13.54) were near each other for the entire two miles, with Webster making a come-from-behind surge in the final 100 meters to edge Grammar.

Alex Lartz (17th, 14.01) blazed to the finish, fighting with a fierceness that was needed to catch, pass, and hold off Ethan from Princeton (also 14.01) and Ethan from Metamora (14.02). Not to be outdone, #5 Nate Kingdon (21st, 14.13) held off another Ethan from Metamora by 3 seconds. Top 3 teams for the boys were Blessed Sacrament (46), Metamora (53), and EPG (77).

Other runners for the Titan boys were Roman Wenger (25th, 14.24), Russell Erwin (28th, 14.55), Will Miller (32nd, 15.07), Braxton Romersberger (33rd, 15.07), Landon Feit (34th, 15.13), Truett Campbell (41st, 15.35), Dean Fletcher (44th, 16.00), Owen Grammar (54th, 17.44), Jude Roth (57th, 18.49), Griffin Phillips (58th, 19.21), and Cooper Romersberger (60th, 19.38). There were 78 runners in the boys' field.

Titan XC Runs to 23 Season Bests at 3 Sisters Park

Big PRs for Nowark, Patten, Lartz, and Romersberger

[AUGUST 27, 2022] – The Mossville Warriors hosted a 19-team Saturday morning meet at Three Sisters Park just down the river from Chillicothe. The course started and finished through a clover pasture, with the middle section snaking through a wooded area. Over 450 runners finished one of the four races under sunny skies.

Elly Huette (5th, 13.21) ran to a 30-second season best and finished side-by-side with Dunlap Valley's Shelby Strong, both clocking exactly 13 minutes 21.2 seconds on the 2-mile course, with Huette edging Strong by the slimmest of margins. But it was Verity Nowark (15th, 13.39) who had the race of the day for the Titan girls, running splits of 7.10, 6.29 on her way to obliterating her PR by 66 seconds. Huette and Nowark both brought home Top 20 Varsity medals.

Rounding out EPG's varsity squad were Audrey Roth (27th, 14.21), Mya Griffin (36th, 14.48), Carly Whitcomb (69th, 15.59), Kiana Mayne (73rd, 16.11), and Lucy Mann (86th, 16.47). Roth (7.12, 7.09) and Mayne (8.09, 8.02) both ran negative splits. All 7 girls ran season-best times.

The top 7 Girls' teams were Brimfield (88), Delavan (99), Dunlap Valley (114), Mossville (131), EPG (138), Limestone Walters (156), and Tremont (214).

With Blessed Sacrament's Maxwell Kirby running to a course record 10 minutes 57 seconds and winning by nearly half a minute, Luke Hinthorne (7th, 11.43) focused on chasing down the chase pack. After opening with a blazing 5.41, he faded a bit in the second mile but held on for a huge 35-second PR and the #17 spot on the All-Time list for EPGMS. Runner-up Luke Fady of St. Jude was the only 7th grader ahead of him.

Finn Zeller (21st, 12.31) and Elijah Webster (25th, 12.41) finished a few places out of the medals but both picked up big PRs of 27 and 30 seconds, respectively. Zeller ran nearly identical splits of 6.15, 6.16. EPG's #4, #5, #6, and #7 runners all ran negative splits – Charlie Grammar (44th, 13.16); Roman Wenger (49th, 13.24); Landon Feit (66th, 13.51); and Russell Erwin (67th, 13.52). Six of the Titans' varsity boys ran to PRs, with Grammar missing a lifetime best by just 1 second.

The top 7 Boys' teams were Blessed Sacrament (82), St. Jude (94), Tremont (129), Chillicothe (138), EPG (142), Dunlap Valley (156), and Elmwood (158).

In the Girls Open race, Avery Glacinski (18th, 16.14) finished in a pack of six athletes who were within 5.2 seconds of each other. Glacinski clocked splits of 8.24, 7.50 to pass several competitors in the final mile, earning a Top 20 medal. Ember DePauw (27th, 17.06) ran even splits of 8.32, 8.34 on her way to a 49-second PR, while Shelby Patten (55th, 18.48) ran 49 seconds faster than her previous best – per mile – to record a 98-second PR.

The Titan boys brought home 4 medals in the Boys Open Race, with Alex Lartz (3rd, 13.41) and Nate Kingdon (4th, 13.49) leading the way. Kingdon ran to a 47-second PR, while Lartz came through with the biggest PR of any Titan, slicing 141 seconds off his previous best. They both finished just ahead of fellow 6th-grader Isaac Flora of Farmington.

Braxton Romersberger (10th, 14.25) clocked splits of 7.17 and 7.08 as he found the passing lane and just kept moving up in the 125-runner field on his way to a 99-second PR. Will Miller (19th, 14.48) finished in medal position by clocking perfectly even splits of 7.24, 7.24. Next through the finishing chute for the Titans came Truett Campbell (25th, 15.23); Dean Fletcher (26th, 15.32); Owen Grammar (27th, 15.34); Cooper Romersberger (76th, 18.22); and Griffin Phillips (87th, 18.58). Campbell, Romersberger, and Phillips each ran to a PR of between 46 and 50 seconds.

In all, Titan runners earned 23 season best times on the day and will be looking for continued improvements at Metamora's Black Partridge Park on Thursday. Races start at 4:15pm.

Boys Win 9-team Meet at Eureka Lake

Hinthorne leads strong boys pack; Girls place 3rd

[AUGUST 23, 2022] – Eureka hosted a 9-team meet at scenic Eureka Lake, with 182 runners completing the 1.95-mile course. Athletes followed the shoreline on their left before turning right and continuing up a slight incline and into the woods. The trail looped through the woods, including a tour of the Hornets' Nest, with runners then returning to the lake and charging uphill into the finishing chute.

Elly Huette (5th, 13.36) looked strong as she ran to the 3rd best time in Titan history on the Eureka course, 8 seconds ahead of Sami Allen's and Tristyn Grube's 2016 time.

Audrey Roth (10th, 14.16) and Verity Nowark (11th, 14.23), running in their first 2-mile cross country race, made an impressive debut in the 88-runner field. Mya Griffin (17th, 14.32), running #4 for EPG, almost chased down the #4 runners from Delavan and Eureka, who placed 15th and 16th, respectively. Carly Whitcomb (34th, 15.48) was the Titan's fifth runner.

Next across the line for EPG was Kiana Mayne (41st, 16.16), Lucy Mann (45th, 16.24), Ember DePauw (62nd, 17.28), and Shelby Patten (72nd, 19.55).

The top 3 teams were Delavan (56), Eureka (67) and EPG (76). The Titans edged Mossville for the second week in row, this time by just one point.

Luke Hinthorne (4th, 12.00), running in his first ever cross country meet, shifted gears at the mile mark and passed about 10 runners in the final half of the race to lead the Titans. EPG's 2-3-4 runners broke up St. Jude's front pack with Finn Zeller (6th, 12.39) and Marcus Wiegand (7th, 12.41) getting in front of the Fire's #3 runner and Elijah Webster (9th, 12.51) besting their #4 runner. Charlie Grammar (11th, 12.55) made a huge move in the final 800 meters, surging to an 11th place finish.

Roman Wenger (22nd, 13.34) ran strong and steady, with Russell Erwin (24th, 13.46) and Landon Feit (26th, 13.47) following closely. Nate Kingdon (31st, 14.14), Will Miller (35th, 14.32), Dean Fletcher (38th, 14.45), and Owen Grammar (44th, 15.05) all finished in the top half of the 94-runner field, with Fletcher running to a lifetime best by 36 seconds.

The next 3 Titans came through in a pack – Alex Lartz (51st, 15.38), Braxton Romersberger (52nd, 15.40), and Truett Campbell (55th, 15.45). Closing out the race day for EPG were Jude Roth (67th, 17.46), Cooper Romersberger (73rd, 18.43), and Griffin Phillips (78th, 19.16).

The Boys team, who found themselves about 35 points down at the mile mark, moved up nicely in the last half of the race to post a 5-point victory over runner up St. Jude. The top 3 teams were EPG (37), St. Jude (42), and Eureka (64).

Next up for Titan XC is a 19-team meet at Chillicothe's Three Sisters Park, hosted by the Mossville Warriors.

EPGMS Girls XC Opens Season with Championship Run

Huette and Zeller set Titan course records; Boys team 5th

[AUGUST 16, 2022] – Peoria St. Jude hosted an 18-school meet at Donovan Park on a sunny Tuesday afternoon. Over 300 runners paired up with a teammate at the 4th Annual Holy Hokum Karem Relays. Each athlete completed an 800m hilly grass loop three times, handing off a baton, or in some instances a carrot, alternating 6 legs of the 3-mile relay.

EPG's Elly Huette (9.11) was the first Titan to hand off, placing the baton into the hand of Ember DePauw (10.42) at 2 minutes 52 seconds, followed by a pack of Titan girls – 6th grader Audrey Roth (10.06) at 3 minutes 5 seconds, 8th grader Mya Griffin (10.33) at 3 minutes 8 seconds, and 7th grader Verity Nowark (9.52) at 3 minutes 9 seconds. Shelby Patten (16.05) took the baton from Roth, and after they had each run 3 loops, she crossed the line to claim 48th place of 71 pairs in the race. Avery Glacinski (11.42) and Carly Whitcomb (11.26) paired up to place 23rd in 23 minutes 8 seconds.

The three scoring pairs for the Titans were Huette and DePauw (3rd, 19.53); Griffin and Nowark (6th, 20.25); and Lucy Mann and Kiana Mayne (19th, 22.56). Mann clocked 11 minutes 48 seconds for her 3 legs, while Mayne's splits added up to 11 minutes 8 seconds.

The EPG girls (26) pulled off the win by 2 points over runner-up Mossville (28). Had any of the three scoring pairs run just 4 seconds slower, they would not have brought home the championship trophy. Huette set the all-time Titan record on the course by running to a total time of 9 minutes 11 seconds – besting Caroline Wettstein's 2021 mark by 28 seconds.

The EPG boys race featured 82 pairs, with the top Titan pair of Elijah Webster (9.29) and Marcus Wiegand (9.27) placing 13th. The Titan boys placed 5th as a team, displaying their depth with the best pack time of all teams (33 seconds) and highest-placing 4th pair to cross the finish line.

Other individual times for EPG athletes were Roman Wenger (9.30), Nate Kingdon (9.46), Charlie Grammar (9.55), Alex Lartz (9.59), Landon Feit (10.11), Russell Erwin (10.22), Braxton Romersberger (10.30), Truett Campbell (10.56), Will Miller (10.57), Dean Fletcher (11.02), Owen Grammar (11.04), Jude Roth (12.25), Cooper Romersberger (15.01), and Griffin Phillips (15.01).

Seventh-grader Finn Zeller's time of 8 minutes 49 seconds (2.49, 2.55, 3.05) places him at the top of the all-time list of Titan runners at Donovan Park, 25 seconds faster than previous record-holder Israel Nowark (2021).

The Titans head to a 9-team meet at Eureka Lake hosted by the Eureka Hornets next Tuesday.