

October 17, 2024

## **Creek Cross Country Girls Second in Trailways Conference, Boys Eighth**

Janesville, WI - The Johnson Creek High School Varsity Girls' Cross Country team earned second place on the Trailways Conference podium Thursday afternoon, a school-best year-end ranking. Four of the five runners recorded personal best times, and the fifth a season-best, in a battle where they knew every position counted. Speaking of every position, the top two Bluejays crossed the line neck and neck for the final spot on First Team All-Conference, with Senior Rylee Hucke getting the edge by a shoulder-length 0.39 seconds over Freshman Lia Constable. Sophomore Lauren Nadboralski accompanied Constable on Second Team finishing in eleventh place, and Freshman Kiara Dach earned an Honorable Mention in eighteenth.

Head Coach Benjamin Hail, who meticulously programs the training beamed, "It has been an amazing season, but we aren't done yet! This Girls' team has had some amazing results this season and we are hopeful we will be stamping our ticket to the state meet, as a team, next Saturday at the sectional meet in Albany."

Junior Francisco Gutierrez has been beating his 2023 times by astounding margins all year, after a solid summer of training and staying healthy, and he finally earned top scorer of the night for the Varsity Boys. He lowered his personal record time by more than 18 seconds, down to 18:48.43, edging out Junior Evan Chowanec by five seconds, who has been battling foot pain on and off that reared up during the race. Freshman Max Chowanec shot out of the starting box hard, leading the pack at the gun, and held on to earn a new personal record by more than 32 seconds. This was a great showing for the Boys team.

Hail continued, "The Boys' team is young, and with no seniors on the team, they will continue to grow and improve as they have committed to off season training. This will be a solid group returning next season. I expect they will all run their career bests on October 26th in Albany at sectionals."

Coach Beth Hanna added, "Our Bluejays ran hard at conference. Their results demonstrate the hard work they have put in both prior to the season and over the last couple of months at practice and in races. We are so proud of the dedication, tenacity, and resilience of this team and are confident those characteristics will be on full display at next week's Sectional race."

The Bluejays enter Tournament competition now with Sectionals in Albany on Saturday, October 26. The top teams and individuals on that day will compete in the State Meet the following weekend in Wisconsin Rapids.

Scoring varsity girls: Senior Rylee Hucke (Seventh, 20:50.29), freshman Lia Constable (Eighth, 20:50.68), sophomore Lauren Nadboralski (11th, 21:17.68), freshman Kiara Dach (18th, 21:46.62), and senior Molly Burke (29th, 23:00.67).

Scoring varsity boys: Junior Francisco Gutierrez (28th, 18:48.43), junior Evan Chowanec (30th, 18:53.44), sophomore Collin Hucke (45th, 19:45.35), freshman Max Chowanec (53rd, 20:09.40), and sophomore Duncan Thomas (58th, 21:01.57).

#### Middle School

Seventh-grader Bradley Hail advanced into second place halfway through the just-under-two-mile course and held the position to the end solidly. Sixth-grader Charli Wendt was the team's top finishing girl in 26th place of 64 finishers.