

October 4, 2024

### **Creek Cross Country Girls Third at Nightfall, Boys Seventeenth**

Lake Mills, WI - The Johnson Creek High School Varsity Girls' Cross Country team placed third of 19 scoring teams at the Nightfall Classic in Lake Mills Friday night with a score of 132 points, claiming two medals placing in the top 20 individually. Three of the five runners set personal records, and one ran a season best time.

The boys earned 17th of 22 scoring teams with 415 points. They crossed the line in their typical finishing order, with leader Junior Evan Chowanec just two seconds shy of setting a personal record, running a time two full minutes faster than this race last year, while battling nagging foot pain that has him spending many of his workouts cross-training on a stationary bike. He has been stacking his volume of work with high quality and is hungry for the late season meets. Sophomore Duncan Thomas had the most stand-out performance, setting a personal record by one minute three seconds and running this course four minutes twenty seconds faster than last year. Freshman Max Chowanec also stood out, as his pace in the second mile slowed less than the race leader's did, and his pace the final 1.1 miles quickened by more than the leader's did, allowing him to make up a lot of ground after the one mile mark. Four of the six runners set personal record times.

"This concluded a higher mileage week of training, including two hard workouts, one just Thursday, and head coach Benjamin Hail, leading the program for the fourth year, just told the squad to have fun, and not worry about their results at this unique meet under the lights. It was exciting to see these high caliber performances on tired legs without expectations, knowing they'll face some of these teams again at conference and sectionals," said coach Natasha Steenbergen.

The Bluejays are going into heads-down training now with nearly two weeks between meets, when they'll take on the Trailways Conference rivals at Blackhawk Golf Course in Janesville, Thursday, October 17.

Scoring varsity girls: Freshman Lia Constable (15th, 20:59.3), Senior Rylee Hucke (18th, 21:03.4), sophomore Lauren Nadboralski (22nd, 21:31.8), freshman Kiara Dach (28th, 22:05.3), and senior Molly Burke (57th, 23:17.7).

Scoring varsity boys: Junior Evan Chowanec (45th, 18:45.6), junior Francisco Gutierrez (71st, 19:12.6), sophomore Collin Hucke (83rd, 19:30.5), freshman Max Chowanec (135th, 20:41.9), and sophomore Duncan Thomas (137th, 20:48.0).

### Middle School

The first mile was critical in determining the outcome of the shortest course the middle schoolers will run all year. Seventh-grader Bradley Hail and eighth-grader Reed Wilbanks had great starts out of the box, and ultimately finished third and fourth respectively, where they'd settled into early. Sixth-grader Charli Wendt was the team's top finishing girl.