

September 21, 2023

Cross Country: Three varsity runners medal and eight middle schoolers earn ribbons in Horicon

Horicon, WI – The Horicon River Run Invitational was a story of intra-season and year-over-year improvements for the Johnson Creek Bluejay Cross Country team. The varsity boys placed tenth with senior Tyler Skogman earning a medal for his nineteenth-place finish. The varsity girls placed eleventh with freshman Lauren Nadboralski and junior Rylee Hucke earning medals for their seventh and tenth place finishes, respectively.

Coach Ben Hail remarked, “River Bend Park is a great course for athletes to run fast times, and the competition is solid. All the girls, and all but two boys ran personal records. This team is making solid progress week after week. We set some big team goals at the beginning of the season and the athletes are setting themselves up nicely to achieve, or possibly exceed, some of those goals. The last 4-5 weeks of the season are going to be very exciting.”

Coach Brett Perucco added, “Our athletes have been battling illness and injury all week, but they still showed up to compete. It was fantastic to see how many personal records were earned, regardless of their condition. I’d expect to see continued improvement once we’re completely healthy again. These kids are really working hard.”

Coach Natasha Steenbergen summarized, “The boys were just eight points over the team ahead of them, and twenty over eighth place. They’re right there. Francisco (Gutierrez) improved his time here from last year by 2:41 and ran the strongest second mile on the team. He’s one to watch. On the girls’ side, Ava (Sixel) improved her time here over last year by 1:52 and has been having a fantastic senior year after putting in so many years of work building to this point, and Rylee improved 1:35, continually shaving time off her personal record and keeping in the mix for medals everywhere she races.”

Middle School boys and girls raced together and were scored separately. Horicon awarded ribbons to the top fifty by sex. Johnson Creek runners earned eight: girls Lia Constable (3rd), Kiara Dach (11th), Allison Malueg (46th), Keira Bakken (47th), Bella Achter (48th); boys Bradley Hail (11th), Max Chowanec (13th), and Ethan Broich (24th).

Coach Beth Hanna noted, “It has been so exciting to see our middle school runners continue to grow. Those new to the sport are gaining confidence in their abilities and returners are becoming increasingly strategic on the course — all leading to PRs and great races for our middle school team.”

Next week is unique with the squad split racing different meets. Middle School travels to Jefferson Tuesday, and High School heads to Lake Mills Friday for the annual Nightfall Classic – a team favorite.

Scoring varsity boys: Senior Tyler Skogman (19th, 18 minutes, 25 seconds), senior Connor Gerstner (54th, 20:07), freshman Collin Hucke (55th, 20:10) senior Ben Trudell (71st, 21:27), and sophomore Francisco Gutierrez (79th, 21:44).

Scoring varsity girls: Freshman Lauren Nadboralski (seventh, 21 minutes, 01 second), junior Rylee Hucke (tenth, 21:25) and seniors Ava Sixel (68th, 25:31), Maggie Markus (70th, 25:48), and Hailey Kvalheim (75th, 26:03).