

September 26, 2023

### **Cross Country: Middle Schoolers excel at large Jefferson Invitational**

Jefferson, WI – Eighth-grader Lia Constable delivered a stellar performance crossing the finish line of the 3-kilometer middle school girls race in third place Tuesday evening in a time of 12 minutes, 29.21 seconds. The Bluejays added this meet to their schedule late, finding the event where they typically had a bye week, so no one had experience on this course. Constable saw the 170 other girls around her and took off fast from the starting gun, straight to the front of the pack. She finished less than 30 seconds behind the winner, and earned a medal for her top-five position. The team earned fourth place with 135 points out of thirteen scoring teams.

Sixth-grader Bradley Hail and eighth-grader Max Chowanec were also hot from the gun, surging to the front of the pack of 185 boys to finish their 3K race, coming in tenth (11:57.02) and 13<sup>th</sup> (12:11.50) respectively. Reed Wilbanks, a dual-sport seventh grader, ran his first-ever meet, and was the third scoring boy for the team with a time of 13:55.80. The team placed 12<sup>th</sup> of 14 with 248 points.

Coach Jeff Constable remarked, “I was very proud of our middle school team. The hard work they have been putting into the last few weeks shows as they continue to improve in their times and strengthen their confidence to compete.”

Coach Natasha Steenbergen added, “The depth of our girls team, and the front-end speed of our boys team is carrying everyone forward to massive improvement over the season. Earning a medal and having three others in the top fifteen of their sex, with the balance of the scoring girls not far behind, at a meet this size speaks volumes. We’re here to compete.”

The Johnson Creek High School team travels to Lake Mills Golf Course Friday for the Nightfall Classic. Parking and admission bundles must be purchased in advance at [www.adesports.com/nightfall-classic-xc](http://www.adesports.com/nightfall-classic-xc). Our Division Three boys race at 7:10 and the girls at 7:45, with larger schools following thereafter. The full squad then travels to Waterloo Firemen’s Park Tuesday, October 3.

Scoring girls: Lia Constable (third, 12 minutes, 29 seconds), Kiara Dach (15<sup>th</sup>, 13:55), Allison Malueg (38<sup>th</sup>, 14:37), Ashlynn Goulet (39<sup>th</sup>, 14:38), and Madison Blakey (43<sup>rd</sup>, 14:46).

Scoring boys: Bradley Hail (tenth, 11:57), Max Chowanec (13<sup>th</sup>, 12:12), Reed Wilbanks (73<sup>rd</sup> 13:56), Joey Steenbergen (85<sup>th</sup>, 14:25), and Diego Arevalo (138<sup>th</sup>, 16:51).