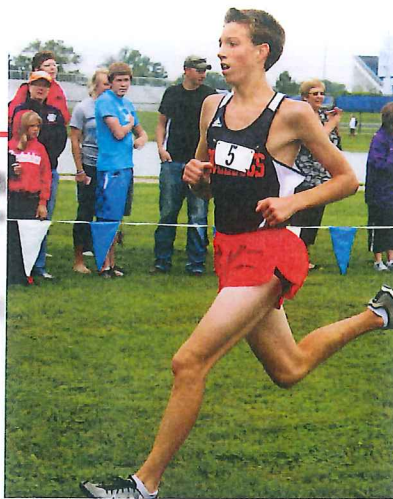


"We wanted all seven varsity to place top ten."

- Ben Crow (10)

Sophomore Ben Crow runs into the shoot to finish off his race at the conference meet. Crow shares that his goal was to: "Stay with **Jack Hyde (11)**." Crow also shared what the team goal was: "We wanted all seven varsity (runners) to place in top ten."



"It was a lot of fun because you get to meet new people."

- Callan Whitehouse (09)

Freshman Callan Whitehouse competes in the open race at Bloomington. Whitehouse shared what it was like being on the team for the first time: "It was a lot of fun because you meet new people, you get to run with them, and they help you with race strategies."



Back Row (Left to Right): Coach Todd Lafond, Mason McAnally, Alex Keeble, Kenney Pauley, Jackson Powell, Chris Williams, Joey Magyar, William Wolf, Tristan Ray, Gabe Pommier, Coach Neal Garrison. **Middle Row (Left to Right):** Brian Butcher, Kyle Sheehy, Ryan Hodge, Andrew Walmer, Tyler Jesswein, Trevor Hanlon, Joe Churm, Callan Whitehouse. **Front Row (Left to Right):** Stret Beal, Ben Crow, Evan Burge, Riley Fortune, Ryan Huff, Jack Hyde, Cody Jesswein.

1st SECTIONAL'S

2nd STATE

Boys Cross Country

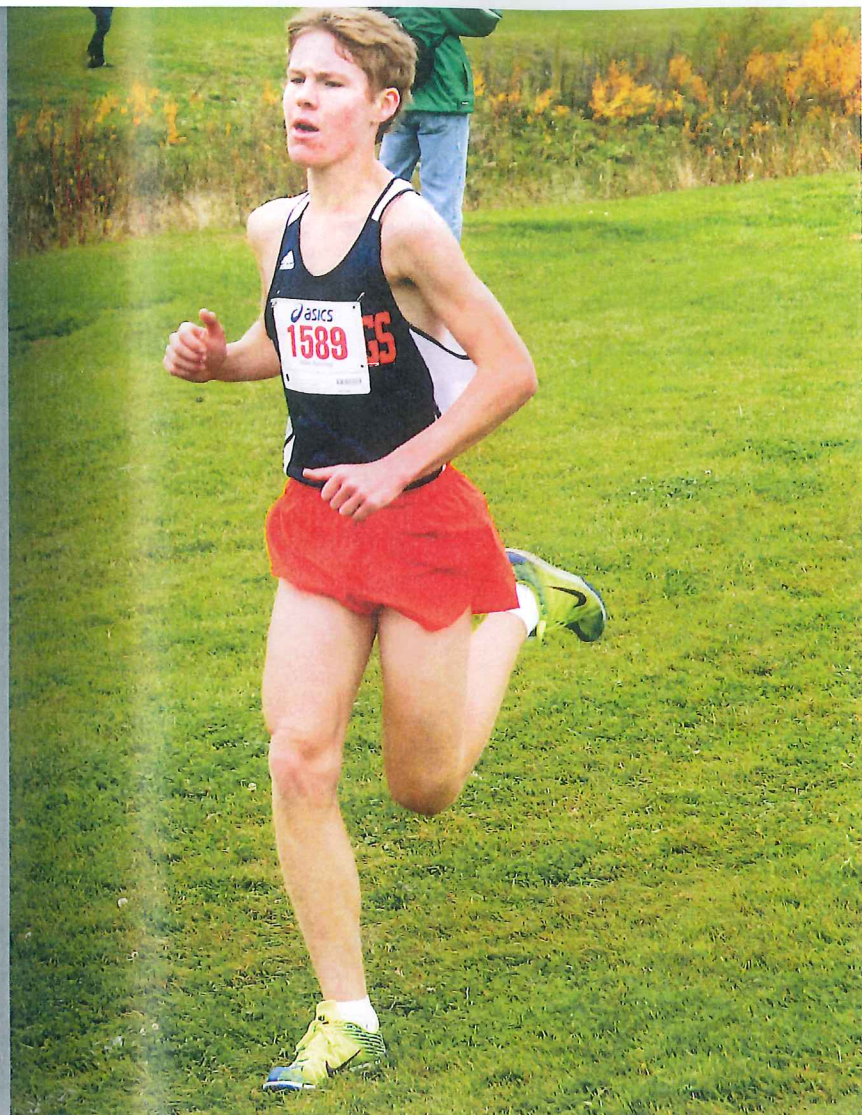
on top

Spread by Megan Perrero

Junior Alex Keeble participated in his third year of high school cross country this past year. Over the years Keeble explained that his experiences have changed. "I transitioned from being a follower to a leader because I'm an upperclassman now. The atmosphere was also more goofy, but I think that's a good thing because I like to laugh at practice," Keeble shared. This fun environment is what Keeble attributes to their success. "I think if you're serious all of the time you'll hate what you're doing. If you're having fun you'll want to work hard," he continued. However practice wasn't the only place he worked hard. Keeble elaborated, "I also did long runs on the weekend which were usually about 15 miles." Despite all of his hard work he still faced a major obstacle midway through the season. "I got a bacterial infection so I had to take antibiotics and use an inhaler when I needed it, including the state meet," he explained. Because of his infection he wasn't sure what to expect. However Keeble's hard work paid off in the end. He tied the school record and placed fourth at the state meet. Keeble admitted tying the school record was his biggest accomplishment. "I thought it'd be kinda cool," he confessed. Another obstacle the team faced was other people's perspective of the cross country team. "I think people think we're a bunch of quirky and kinda weird guys. I want to change their perspective to show them that's not true. I have changed my perspective over the years. I don't think we're weird anymore because cross country attracts a wider variety of people than it used to," concluded Keeble.

"If you're serious all the time you'll hate what you're doing. If you're having fun you'll want to work hard."

- Alex Keeble (11)



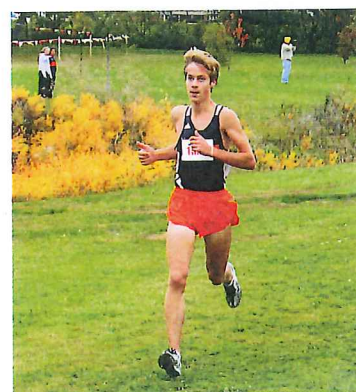
Just Keep Running. Junior Andrew Walmer competes in the varsity race at conference. Walmer shared that his goal for the season was, "...to beat my personal record from last year in my first race which I accomplished, and break into the fiftteens. I didn't meet this goal because of my injury." Walmer further explained that his injury prevented him from participating in "tough workouts for speed that helps you improve a lot" and he "lost the speed I built up." He also mentioned how he overcame his injury, "I just kept running because in running you can't take a day off. Instead, I just took it easy to continued to run." Despite this setback, Walmer was able to keep his and his team's spirits up by "jok(ing) around to build up team competition."



Nervous Nelly. Freshman Evan Burge chases after a Mattoon runner at the conference meet. Burge illustrated how his perspective of cross country changed over the season: "At first I thought I was going to have to run a ton of miles and that it would be really hard. But Garrison explained we only have to run as much as we are comfortable with."



Just A Little Longer. Senior Trevor Hanlon rounds a corner on the conference course in Bloomington. Hanlon shared all he could think about was, "I gotta hold on for just a little longer." Hanlon continued to add that he stays motivated throughout his race because "My teammates push me. They keep me motivated to run faster so we can have a better chance of winning the race."



Beat The Competition. William Wolf (12) finishes his race in third place at the conference meet. Wolf explained that his thoughts going into the race were: "I hope I don't get out kicked." As for his goal he wanted to "beat U-High because they're the biggest competition."



Work Hard Race Hard. Joey Magyar (11) runs head-to-head with an opponent to the finish line. Magyar explained his strategy to beating his opponents in the shoot: "Sprint faster. But, it's the work you put in rather than the desire to win that makes you win."



1. No Matter What. Junior Jack Hyde finishes off his race in fourth place at the conference meet. Hyde admitted he was sick before the meet so he "took antibiotics, took medicine, drank water, and did blood replacement therapy." He continued to explain his mind set going into the race. "Run hard no matter what." **2. Goal Achieved.** The team poses in the gym after their ceremony in honor of them placing at state. The team received a banner along with the trophy and medals. **3. McAnally Mountain.** Mason McAnally (11) races against a Mt. Zion runner in the open race at Bloomington. **4. Victory Pose.** The team poses for a picture with their trophy from state. The team placed second out of 26 teams. **5. Wanna Be On Top.** Junior Alex Keeble competes against a runner from Danville. Keeble was the conference champion and explains, "It took my team's support and my coach's amazing motivational speeches to win." **6. Open Season.** Sirel Beal (10) competes in an open race at Bloomington.

