



By Russ Pankonin
The Imperial Republican

Two meets. Two titles.

Second consecutive year to win their own invite.

The Longhorn boys' cross country team have posted some high marks for themselves already just two weeks into the season.

After winning the Cambridge invite the opening week, the Longhorns turned in an impressive effort to win their own invite here last Thursday, Sept. 10.

"To win our meet is really exciting," Coach Carl Zuege said.

That's because the competition at the Imperial invite has continued to get better every year.

"This meet's just gotten progressively better in the last five years," he noted.

Overall, the number of kids competing in cross country is up, Zuege said. Plus, more schools are coming to the Imperial meet.

To win this meet for the second year in a row stands as a big accomplishment, Zuege said.

Going into the meet, Zuege knew his runners in positions three through six would really have to step it up to notch another win.

With Tyler Talbott taking third and Kyle Bottom grabbing sixth, Zuege knew the team's third and fourth place runners needed strong finishes to take the meet.



Shane German, in his second meet ever, finished 13th overall and was the third finisher for the Longhorns.

Alec Spady just missed a medal at 17th but their combined finishes proved enough to give the Longhorns a comfortable margin of victory, with just 37 points.

Ogallala's jayvees won a tie-breaker to finish second with Dundy County/Stratton third, each with 53 points.

The Longhorns' Tom Sullivan finished 25th in the field followed by Joel Fisher at 32nd in the 71-runner field.

Zuege said German showed great progress over the previous week by running an outstanding race.

Spady competed well and showed his speed in the latter part of the race. Zuege expects Spady to improve as the season progresses, which will complement Talbott and Bottom well.

Talbott and Bottom ran smart races and paced themselves well throughout the race which was won by Koby Archuletta of Paxton in a time of 17:24.35. Talbott was 25 seconds behind.

Zuege said Fisher may have shown the most improvement of any of his runners, taking an entire minute off his time from the first week.

He said Tom Sullivan struggled some during the race but rebounded with a strong effort to take 25th.



McCook wins girls' title

Zuege said the girls' field was stacked with some good teams this year too, but none better than McCook.

McCook's Jessa Sughroue won the race and all five of her teammates placed in the top 15 to medal.

Zuege said he couldn't recall a time when one team medalled all of their runners.

With such an impressive finish, McCook finished with just 21 points to easily win the title by 31 points.

For Imperial, the girls finished seventh among the eight teams scoring. There were five other schools competing in individual competition.

Zuege said his girls will continue to improve weekly as they get their legs into racing condition and they get a little more experience.

Senior Jilanne German led the girls with a 28th place finish in the 66-runner field.

Shanna Carter moved up from the fourth position runner at Cambridge to the second position last week with a 30th place finish.

Zuege said she really ran a strong race and is progressing well.

Breanna Krutsinger finished in 35th, Kacia Smith 39th, Hannah Harmon 45th, Devon Vaverek 53rd and Lydia Harmon 58th.

McCook meet today

The Longhorns travel to McCook today (Thursday) for their invitational. Zuege said this is always one of the most competitive races of the season, with schools from all four classes represented.

The girls' race begins at 4:30 p.m. MT followed by the boys' race.

Results of last week's meet are as follows:

Imperial Invite

Boys' division

Team results—1st, CCS, 37; 2nd, Ogallala, 53; 3rd, Dundy County, 53; 4th, McCook, 72; 5th, Paxton, 84; 6th, St. Pat's 96; 7th, Perkins County, 100; 8th, Bertrand/Loomis, 110; 9th, Sutherland, 160.

Individual results—1st, Koby Archuletta, Pax., 17:24.35; 3rd, Tyler Talbott, 17:49.79; 6th, Kyle

Bottom, 18:00.32; 13th, Shane German, 18:58.81; 17th, Alec Spady, 19:08.77; 25th, Tom Sullivan, 19:45.86; 32nd, Joel Fisher, 20:28.94.

Girls' division

Team results—1st, McCook, 21; 2nd, Bertrand/Loomis, 52; 3rd, Dundy County, 58; 4th, Southwest, 75; 5th, St. Pat's, 80; 6th, Perkins County, 96; 7th, CCS, 112; 8th, Hershey, 123. Individual results—1st, Jessa Sughroue, Mc, 16:18.36; 28th, Jilanne German, 19:24.73; 30th, Shanna Carter, 19:54.50; 35th, Breanna Krutsinger, 20:11.11; 39th, Kacia Smith, 20:29.07; 45th, Hannah Harmon, 21:03.33; 53rd, Devon Vaverek, 21:54.41; 58th, Lydia Harmon, 23:30.56.