

2015 Meet Recaps



Best Finish Ever for EPGXC at State, New School Record in Process

Freshman Cate Atkins ended the Titans' two-year absence from the IHSA girls cross country championships with her qualification as an individual out of the Elmwood Sectional last week. This week she ran almost an identical time at the State Meet course, crossing in 19:19 for 67th place (IHSA, 70th on the FloTrack results?) She got out a little fast in 6:02 but held onto her position during mile two, running 6:42. She came charging back in mile three with a 6:34 for her 19:19, besting her time from Peoria Heights by 16 seconds on the same course and maintaining her 10th fastest EPG time for the course and her third place on the Top Titans leaderboard behind Julie James and Karly Miller. The next three years look bright for Cate as we work towards getting back to State and earning some more PRs over the next three years.

On the guys side, we had an outside chance of stealing a trophy this year, but it would have taken perfect performances across the board. Knowing this, it was a little disappointing and perhaps frustrating when a couple races did not go as planned, but the fact remains that we worked our butts off over the last weeks, months, and years, and we have emerged as stronger and better athletes because of it. We did not come back from Peoria with a trophy this year, but we finished higher than any team in school history (which you may try to disqualify since the program is only in its 11th year, but many schools who have had programs for much longer than ours have never placed as high as 7th, especially in a year when the competition was as tough as it was). Our guys got after it from the start, with Hunter leading the sprint through the mile mark in 4:49; Andy, Adam, and Noah did not register at the mile mark, but Ryan got through at 5:11, Shelby at 5:21, and Quinn at 5:24. It was a little quick and our second miles faded considerably. All seven guys were picked up at the 2-mile mark, again Hunter in the lead, crossing slightly faster than his 3200 school record in 9:55. Andy was next, also in a 3200 PR of 10:18. Ryan Filkins kept the hammer down and pushed a second mile of 5:29 en route to a 10:40 at the two. Adam Ludy was next, but had fallen 20 seconds behind Filkins, crossing just over 11 minutes. Shelby, Quinn, and Noah crossed at 11:14, 11:18, and 11:19 with one mile to go. At the finish line, four Titans came across with lifetime PRs:

-Hunter Cobbley finished in 14:58.7, good for 9th in the State and a new EPG record! It is worth noting that since the adoption of the three class system, only nine guys in Class A had broke the 15-minute barrier, and nine guys broke that yesterday.

-Ryan Filkins crushed his lifetime PR with his 16:11, dropping from his previous PR of 16:30 set three weeks ago.

-Quinn Killian shaved another four seconds off his lifetime PR with his 17:09.

-Noah Smith dropped the biggest chunk of all, running a 17:11, down from 17:47 at Peoria Heights.



10-17-15 Peoria Heights

Saturday October 17 will go down as one of the better days in EPGXC History. The day started off with our Junior High representing the program with full boys and girls teams at IESA State. The girls ran first and did awesome!

The team earned the highest placing at State of any EPGXC team with their 9th place finish. First team in the top ten. Those girls:

Julia Reid (8) 12:48.7

Allison Kelly (8) 12:52.5

Sami Allen (7) 13:01.8

Hannah Ludy (8) 13:02.8

Tristyn Grube (7) 13:03.9

Tori Witzig (7) 13:16.5

Molly Holt (8) 13:30.1

I'm pretty sure (but you'd have to confirm with Coach Heffron) that every one of those times was a lifetime PR!

The boys ran next as the first Junior High boys team to make it to State. They placed 19th as a team with 381 points. Those boys:

Garrett Forrest (8) 11:51.2

Jordan Shelton (8) 11:51.6

Sebastian Meyer (7) 11:52.1

Zac Nelson (8) 11:52.7

Aidan Killian (8) 12:23.7

Nathan DeMarb (7) 12:29.5

Randy Kent (8) 12:54.5

No one on that team had been under 12:00, so to have four guys all under, and six of them earn lifetime PRs was a solid team effort.

It was a great day for EPGXC and the high school hadn't even unloaded the bus in Peoria yet...

The first race was the varsity girls saw five Titans toe the line. We had some aggressive goals set at the premeet meeting, but the weather was great and the girls were ready. We got out fast, all five crossed way ahead of schedule, but managed to hold on that second mile and still within reach of our goal times. Cate Atkins led the way, crossing the mile in 6:13 and the two in 12:55 before finishing in a 36-second lifetime PR of 19:35, earning her 41st place. Running #2 for EPG was Maddie Morrison, who was close to her season PR in 21:41. Courtney Cobbley earned her lifetime PR with her 22:29 and Megan Endress chased her up the hill in 22:52, also a lifetime PR. Carmen SantAmour took 25 seconds off her lifetime PR, running 25:21 to finish off the top five. Our average for the race was 22:24, 56-seconds faster than our 2014 average at the same meet, and faster than our teams in 2011, 2012, and 2009 as well.

On the guys side, the best teams in the state were in attendance in Unity, Elmwood, SJO, Monticello, Shelbyville, PBL, Robinson, Carlinville, and EPG. We would have to run really well to earn one of the top four trophies at this meet. Run well we did. Hunter Cobbley set the tone up front, leading the field through the mile mark in 4:54-- setting a nice even and honest pace. The top four strung out the field, leaving just Cobbley, Andrew Warnes, Tyler Johnson, and the Landon Kid from Carlinville in the small lead pack as they crossed the two in 9:57. From there Warnes and Johnson showed their track speed and took the top two spots with sub-15 times. Landon held on for third but

was coming back to Hunter as he finished in a school record 15:04.5, breaking his 15:23 from the State meet last year. But Hunter's PR and SR was not our only record on the day. Andy Layden set yet another lifetime PR, shedding a large chunk of time down to an awesome 15:30, placing 17th among some of the fastest runners in Illinois. Adam Ludy looked stronger than he has all season, running a 16:13 and beating his FTF time. The race of the day may belong to Ryan Filkins, though, as he set his first lifetime PR since September of 2014. It has been a challenging 14 months since that performance and his 16:30 performance was even sweeter due to the waiting. Shelby Heffron logged his first sub-17 grass time, with a 16:56, only one second off his SJO time and lifetime PR. Quinn Killian set a 31-second lifetime PR with his amazing 17:13! You've seen Quinn's name a lot recently in workout write ups as he consistently goes farther and faster than what has been asked of him, and that PR is a direct result of his dedication. A sub-17 time is not out of the question for Quinn when we return to this course on Nov. 7. Jimmy Engelhorn finished the first season of a promising XC career with a lifetime PR of 22:19, despite a side stitch for the last half mile. Our top five average was a jaw-dropping 16:03, a new school record by 22 seconds over our 2013 State meet average. In the last two years we have tapered down an average of 13-seconds from our Peoria Heights average, so look for big things at State. When team scores shook out, Unity won easily with SJO in a comfortable second, but beyond that the race for third was wide open. Carlinville beat us here in September, but we have progressed more than them since then and they finished 7th. Monticello won the Amboy meet on Monday, but had an off day yesterday finishing 6th. Elmwood, who beat us by one point at their own meet, tied with us at 219 points for fourth, and beat us for the trophy by going to the tie-breaking sixth man. Robinson used a tight pack, putting their fifth through the chute with our fourth to take third. If we can move up just three seconds per person on Nov. 7, and everyone else stays the same, we will be in the hunt for a team trophy.

In the open, the boys were hungry for PRs and rested and ready to go. A pair of freshmen led things off as Noah Smith and Will Bushert stayed within ten yards of each other over the entire 3-mile course finishing in 17:47 and 17:48, respectively. That is a lifetime PR of 28-seconds for Noah and 66-seconds for Will. Both earned medals for their top-twenty finishes and Noah earned himself the opportunity to run on the Regional Team at Eureka this Saturday! Nathaniel Schug looked strong as he ran to a huge season PR of 18:29, considering he hadn't been under 20 all season, it was quite the performance for Schug. Also under 20 for the first time was Drew Rose, whose

19:43 was a 50-second lifetime PR and a full three minutes faster than where he was in September. Sam Poppen also came to race, his 23:13 being his fastest of 2015 by 3:10, that's a three-minute and ten second PR! Jeb Uphoff got out of the gates strong, running 6:30 for one, but was unable to hang on and slipped to 13:38 at the two before finishing in 20:53. His brother Jesse had the race of a lifetime, running 26:24 for three miles, six minutes faster than his first meet, and besting his lifetime PR by 1:41.

The girls open was combined with the guys and Lauren and EmmaLee both ran to lifetime PRs. Lauren dropped from 29:44 to 28:14 and EmmaLee dropped from 31:46 to 31:15.

In short, it was a great day to be part of the EPGXC program. Huge thanks to the parents and coaches for the continued support at both the junior high and high school levels as we continue to develop a community and a culture dedicated to developing good runners and great kids.



10-24-15 Regional at Eureka

Both the boys and girls cross country teams have qualified to the next round of the State series, moving out of the Eureka Regional to the Elmwood Sectional.

The ladies knew that they had to beat either Farmington or Delavan to earn one of the top seven spots, but Delavan only had four girls on the line, so the Titans were guaranteed a qualifying spot before the gun even went off. This didn't stop the Titans from beating the Farmington Farmers anyways as the Titans were led to a 6th place finish by freshman Cate Atkins in 19:35. This put Atkins in the record books as the third fastest Titan ever on the Eureka course and paved the way for a 22:00 top five average, our fastest of the year. Maddie Morrison took 40 seconds off her time from last week and ran a 21:01. Courtney and Megan were both under 24 again, and Carmen SantAmour broke 25 for the first time all season with her 24:42. Mercedes Gregory had a large PR, running 24:51, her fastest of the year by over two minutes. EmmaLee DeMarb finished her race strong covering the course from the 2-mile mark to the finish in 9:35.

The boys held back from an all-out effort, but still managed to come away with a second place finish behind an impressive Elmwood team. Hunter Cobbley led the way with a 15:41, and Andy Layden repeated as our #2 in 16:10. Adam Ludy closed the gap between himself and Layden, running 16:33, and the dynamic duo of Filkins and Heffron came across in 17:08 and 17:16 to finish off our scorers. Quinn Killian continued his sub-18 streak with a 17:49 and Noah Smith closed off the day with an 18:40.



10-31-15 Sectional at Elmwood

For the third year in a row, EPGXC is sending the entire boys team to the State cross country championships. In addition, Cate Atkins has qualified as an individual, becoming our first qualifier since Julie James in 2012.

Atkins ran an amazing race, setting a lifetime PR of 19:17 on a soft and sloppy Elmwood course (she ran a 20:33 on the same course three weeks ago). She was in about 32nd place at the mile mark, but consistently and repeatedly moved up through the field of girls to fight her way to 16th overall. Nine of the girls in front of Cate had qualified with their teams and so Cate earned the seventh and final individual qualifying spot. Cate's place led the girls team to a 16th place finish, only two points behind Illini West.

Running #2 for the Titans was Maddie Morrison, who went out aggressively and held on for a 21:53, 20 seconds faster than her Elmwood Invite time in far worse conditions. Megan Endress stepped up to be the Titans #3, running a 23:22- over a minute faster than one month ago. Sarah Schug returned to the course and ran a 23:28, and Courtney Cobbley finished off the Titan scorers, running a 23:46. This put our average at 22:21, which is faster than we ran as a team at Detweiller (a flat course in ideal conditions) and even beats our converted average from Eureka, and our fastest top five average all season (even faster than the SJO drag race). Carmen SantAmour ran a 25:12, a lifetime PR on the slippery hill-fest, and Mercedes Gregory finished off her senior year and final IHSA cross country meet (she can still come back to the [Furrow Euro](#) for perpetuity) in 25:25, a lifetime PR, bringing our total to three lifetime PRs despite the hills and weather.

On the guys side, we were in pretty good shape heading into the race, so our goal was to stay on our feet, relax, and run just fast enough to advance. As I told Mr. Filkins as our guys crossed the 2.5-mile mark in fabulous position, "We may have just accidentally won the meet!" Indeed, when team scores sorted out, we had beaten the Elmwood Trojans 79-85, a feat we had been close to (two 1-point losses and a tie), but never accomplished all year. It was pretty awesome, and we get a sweet plaque to add to the trophy case where Sectional Championships have generally been reserved for golf teams, bass teams, and a girls basketball team. That being said, Elmwood consistently steps up at State, and we will definitely have our work cut out for us to remain ahead of them and the five teams who escaped the Decatur Sectional this Saturday.

Individually, Hunter Cobbley somehow managed to stay upright as he slipped along the golf course in the lead pack with Tyler Johnson and Matt Osmulski before cruising in for a third place finish. Andy Layden stayed close to Cobbley, and held off Elmwood's Derek

Mccooy to take 5th and keep us and Elmwood tied through our #2 men. We separated from Elmwood in a way we haven't done all year, by putting our #3 and #4 in front off their #3, with Adam Ludy running 16:46 and Ryan Filkins running 16:54 for 15th and 16th place (14 and 15 in team points) to Elmwood's 3-4 placing of 25th and 26th (23 and 24), giving us an 18-point lead heading into our 5th-men. Shelby Heffron was our #5, running a 17:32 for 48th overall (42 in team points) bringing our total to 79. Elmwood's 5th came in at 17:16 for 30 points, thus Shelby protected our lead and secured the Sectional Championship. Quinn Killian was our #6 in 18:04 and Noah Smith closed the gap and ran much better than last week with his 18:14.

The guys looked relaxed (and muddy and wet) and contained, and we are in great shape to perform this Saturday at Detweiller.