

The Girls Place 13th – Paul Stamm Earns All-State

It was a cold mostly sunny Saturday at the world class Lavern Gibson Cross Country course in Terra Haute where 48 teams and 440 runners converged to compete for the state championship and 9 of those runners were from a small catholic school named Cardinal Ritter by far the smallest school at the meet and one of smallest ever. Like they have the past two seasons, the remarkable history breaking runners of Cardinal Ritter did not disappoint. Nor did the Cardinal Ritter spirit as their teammates were one of the highlights before and during the race waving the red school flags with the other shirtless teammates baring the last name of the boys in red letters. It was sight to see.

Juniors Paul and Wil Stamm started off the afternoon in the boys race at 1 pm. Wil ran very well in his first state appearance and admitted afterwards, "that course was harder than I thought... it was good to get this race experience for next time I run here". Got to love the attitude as he was already thinking about next year. He finished in the top third of the runners in a very respectable 71st out of 220. Paul became the first male runner from Cardinal Ritter to earn All State honors with a podium finish of 16th. He ran a smart race staying with the lead pack and as it leaned out maintained his position until the end. It was so neat watching him wear his medal with a well deserved pride of accomplishment to cap off an amazing year. He even allowed me to touch it and it gave me goosebumps. Paul earned it as he was a committed and determined runner that started in June and the result was no surprise to anyone.

The dream continued as the girls demonstrated that they deserved to be here placing 13th and barely missed beating Chatard who placed 4th last week and who they have no come close to in the previous races. A big reason was that Junior Hannah Wells ran her best race of the season by far finishing in the middle pack. Fellow Junior Jenna Gruber did what she always does and ran a very solid race placing in the top half. Sophomore Sarah Jacob started out slowly as many young runners would do in such a highly competitive and fast first mile. She recovered very well passing many in the last half of the last half of the race. Seniors Mariah Wehrle, IU bound, placed 23rd and ran an excellent race barely missing All State for the meet yet she will be named All State along with her sister Mary Anna latter. Mary Anna, a West Point recruit, was very disappointed after the race as she fell from 9th at 4K to pace 26th. I felt so badly for her. Yet what she did was amazing as she was about 15th and within site of the finish line when she almost passed out and went down hard as she pushed herself way beyond the limits her young body could withstand. I was told about it and it was very scary. What was beyond belief is she had the remarkable will power to stand up and finish, placing 26th and then immediately pass out crossing the line. One day she will be very proud of that amazing finish. It just demonstrates who she is and why she is so good. Sunday Mariah and Mary Anna were chosen based on their state finals finish to run for the Indiana XC All Star Team and will run in Kettering on Nov 16th on the same course we ran the Midwest Catholic. I was so proud of Seniors Annie Waters and Jessica Bontempo as they ran hard earned well deserved cheers as they ran to the finish line. They made us all proud.