

Prep Sports | updated: 9/3/2016 6:36 PM

Cross country: Geneva runners shine at Leavey Invitational



Geneva senior Tyler Dau finishes first just ahead of Marmion senior Charlie Zimmer during the boys varsity race at the St. Charles East Invitational cross country meet Saturday morning at LeRoy Oakes Forest Preserve in St. Charles.

Jeff Knox | Staff Photographer

By Jared Birchfield
Daily Herald Correspondent

Geneva's cross country teams had a good day at the Jeff Leavey Invitational at Leroy Oakes in St. Charles on Saturday.

Senior runner Tyler Dau won the boys varsity race while the varsity girls took the team title.

One result was expected but the other was a "pleasant surprise," according to Bob Thomson, who coaches both squads.

"Tyler did really well last year. He was up there in a lot of meets. I think he was third here last year so is was not that unexpected for him to do really well," Thomson said. "He trained really well this summer and he's a solid competitor.

"The girls I think might have been a bit more of a surprise. We had a couple of girls step up today that were injured last

year like Holly Nusser and Ebony Trout. Both of them were scorers for us today," said Thomson. "Emma Ehrhardt, who was third today, is a returning all-stater. She was banged up little bit this summer and despite being all taped up today, still did a great job."

Dau completed the three mile course in 15:32.

He trailed Downers Grove North's Alec Danner and Marmion's Charlie Zimmer early in the race.

"I knew the pace be pushed at the beginning so I let them go out a little bit. Right after that first mile I dial backed a little bit," Dau said. "I had worked my way through the woods to get back up to the top spot and didn't really catch up to anyone until the last 400 meters."

Zimmer finished second with a time of 15:33 and Danner's time of 15:35 earned his third place.

Danner's teammates Ryan Birkmeier (15:45), Jacob Ridderhof (15:45) and Nicholas Chudzik (15:48) crossed the finish line right behind him to help secure the team title for Downers Grove North. The Trojans placed six runners in the Top 10 to earn a team score of 26.

Downers Grove North coach John Sipple attributed the victory to his squad's experience.

"We have a lot of returners back on our varsity," Sipple said. "All of our seven that ran this meet last year are back this year. This was a good start, but we have a long way to go."

Geneva came in second (99), followed by Marmion (105), host school St. Charles East (118) and Batavia (122).

Barrington's Jocelyn Long also came from behind to win the girls varsity contest. She trailed St. Charles North's Audrey Ernst early in the race.

"I wanted to make sure that during the first mile I didn't go out too fast so I was trying to pace it out so that I had more to give during the second half," the junior harrier said. "I passed her just about after the mile mark. We went to the woods kind of on the downhill and from that point on I was by myself."

Long completed the course in 17:26. Ernst came in second with a time of 18:04. Ehrhardt clocked in at 18:41 followed by York's Sarah May (18:55) and Anna Arrick of St. Charles East (18:58)

Geneva won the race with a score of 58 followed by Batavia, which tallied 64 points. York (80), Barrington (112) and St. Charles East (155) rounded out the top five.

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