Punxsy Boys race to fastest times of the season in gaining a split against Elk County and Saint Marys in Cross Country action

The Punxsy boys cross country team traveled to Saint Marys to face off against the Dutch and a formidable Elk County Catholic squad, prevailing 15-50 against the host team while falling 17-40 against the Crusaders. Despite the setback against Elk County all 13 Punxsy runners ran their best time of the season over the 3.1 mile distance.”

“I thought our guys did a very nice job today, running well within themselves through the first mile before cutting loose a bit for the remainder of the race,” said head coach George Wehrle. “Saint Marys has a fairly quick course and the weather finally relented a bit as far as being much less humid, but even so the team really came through with a nice result.”

Elk County swept the first three places before Punxsy’s Owen Bartlebaugh broke up their pack by running a fast 17:45 to place fourth. “Owen likes to go out hard and control the race from the front, but today he hung back a bit and really ran well the last half of the race,” said Wehrle. “He has the tools to be one of the best runners ever for Punxsy and is well on his way as a freshman.”

Ethan Brentham had another strong performance as he placed 7th overall with a time of 18:05. “Ethan is quite a bit ahead of where he was at this time last year, and I think having Owen to train with will help them both immensely,” said Wehrle. “Ethan’s best is still to come, but where he’s at now isn’t too shabby either.”

Jake Dinger had a strong run to place eighth out of 33 runners in a time of 18:26. “Jake and Ethan ran together for quite a while, and Jake hung on to run his fastest time by 22 seconds”, said Wehrle. “Owen, Ethan and Jake are

providing us with a strong showing up near the front in every race.”

Sophomore Ethan May placed 10th overall with a solid time of 19:12, with a quartet of teammates in Alex Eberhart, Liam Storms, Corbin Heitzenrater and Evan States following in short order. “Alex, Ethan, and Evan all ran their best times of the year by 30 seconds or better, and Liam broke 20 minutes for the first time in his career,” said Wehrle. “Corbin was only 3 seconds from breaking 20, and Evan was just four seconds shy of that mark. Last year we only had three guys under 20 the entire year, and this year we already have six and two more guys are just seconds away.”

Kevin Ingros ran 21:12 to place 19th, with Jacob Good crossing in 25th place at 22:07. “Kevin ran strong to slice his career best time by six seconds, but Jacob had a huge 42 second improvement over his best time ever,” said Wehrle.

Sam Rodgers claimed the 27th spot with a time of 23:26, his best by 1:21. Luke Poole ran 27:04 to place 31st while Copeland Whitfield placed 33rd in 30:16. “Sam and Luke both are coming off being a bit under the weather the past few days but they managed to run their best times by over a minute each,” said Wehrle. “However, the top prize for improvement goes to Copeland, who sliced close to 18 minutes from his proviso 5k in that hot and hilly DuBois race a week ago. He’ll never improve by that amount again, but his time of 30:16 was a big step toward being competitive.”

Punxsy’s dual meet record moved to 2-2, with both losses coming at the hands of Elk County. “There’s no shame in losing to ECC as I believe they will make a serious challenge for the single A state title later this season,” said Wehrle. “We are making steady progress and can hopefully put on a good showing against defending district 9 AA team champion Bradford next week.”

Brookville will host Punxsy and Bradford next Tuesday.

**Results on back**

**Complete Results: Punxsy 15, Saint Marys 50; Elk County 17, Punxsy 40**

L. Hoffman(ECC)17:26; Dippold(ECC)17:28; Z. Wortman(ECC)17:31; Bartlebaugh(P)17:45; B. Hoffman(ECC)17:57; I. Wortman(ECC)18:03; Brentham(P)18:05; Dinger(P)18:27; Thompson(ECC)18:31; May(P)19:12; Eberhart(P)19:46; Storms(P)19:54; Heitzenrater(P)20:03; Vallone(SM)20:04; States(P)20:04; Wolfe(ECC)20:17; Ingram(ECC)20:40; Pfoutz(SM)20:43; Ingros(P)21:12; Kneidel(SM)21:21; Swalligan(DCC)21:26; Uberti(ECC)21:34; Ritsick(DCC)21:44; Tettis(SM)21:51; Good(P)22:06; Gerg(ECC)22:27; Rodgers(P)23:26; henry(SM)23:47; Piccolo(SM)23:54; Johnson(ECC)26:10; Poole(P)27:04; Schreiber(ECC)27:05; Whitfield(P)30:16