

East Rankin Academy Cross Country concludes 2022 season

Special to Pelahatchie News

The MAIS 5A East Rankin Academy (ERA) Patriot Cross Country Team concluded their 2022 regular season on October 24.

The season began last spring as new team members eagerly joined the burgeoning running program for summer training. The team added nine new athletes to include six sixth graders, a seventh grader, a freshman, and a sophomore. Collectively, the close-knit team of distance runners includes eleven different sets of siblings, a testament to the positive energy the group exudes.

The 2022 season brought growth to the Patriot men, many of whom have competed since their sixth grade year. Week after week, the boys set new personal records with the junior varsity (JV) boys soaring to the top of the MAIS JV rankings with multiple team wins. As the JV team is ninth grade and younger, the young men occasionally joined the varsity duo of Grayson Blair and Jackson Fountain to set 5K benchmarks.

The competitive season kicked off on August 13 with the Simpson Early Bird at Neely Farms in McGee. Both JV teams won their respective two mile races, with Emma Raines earning her first ever win for the girls and Jadon McGee taking 3rd in the boys' race. The varsity girls team took 2nd in the 5K behind MAIS 5A division rival, Simpson Academy.

The second meet of the season was hosted by Jackson Academy, featuring the JV boys winning a consecutive meet, with Jadon McGee taking 2nd and Jon Riemann taking 3rd. The varsity girls team won their first 5K meet

of the season with eighth grade, Leah Collipp, taking 2nd overall. The JV girls team took 3rd overall in the two mile race.

The team next took on public and private schools in the MC Watson Opener at Choctaw Trails in Clinton. Due to the size of this meet, the varsity girls' team was divided into multiple races by time standards. Varsity girls in the top division (5K Red) finished 4th out of 18 teams. Varsity girls in the mid-level



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The ERA Lady Patriots Cross Country Team competed at the 2022 MileSplit Mississippi Meet of Champions on November 12. Picture (l to r) are: Kaylynn Ramirez, Audrey Mayatte, Leah Collipp, Emily Williams, Arin Hawk and Emma Raines. Not pictured: Katie Lee Tadlock.

division (4K White) finished 5th out of 8 teams. The JV boys running in the 3K took 3rd out of 13 teams, and the JV girls took 5th out of 13 teams.

Three days later, the team was back competing at Neely Farms in the Park Place Invitational. The varsity girls team took home their second win of the season, with Emily Williams taking 3rd as the top varsity finisher. The JV boys got their third win of the season, with Jadon McGee the top finisher in 2nd.

The JV girls team finished 2nd overall.

Next up was a true test of depth, the Patriots taking on Ocean Springs, the No. 2 public school in the state, on their home course. Top varsity finisher Leah Collipp went head-to-head with Ocean Springs senior Ashton Rainey, but fell short of the win. Collipp settled for 2nd individually and a PR of 19:45. Picking up first place team hardware, the varsity girls finished to win by five points in an upset. The JV boys stepped

Invitational. The Lady Patriots went into the meet as the heavy favorite and did not disappoint. Taking her first ever varsity win was sophomore Audrey Mayatte, just outpacing teammate Leah Collipp. The rest of the team combined for the win over the home team. The varsity and JV boys' teams once again combined for improved PRs in an elite men's field. Additionally, the JV girls finished 8th out of 11 schools in the JV 3K.

The ERA Lady Patriots Cross Country Team competed at the 2022 MileSplit Mississippi Meet of Champions on November 12 at Choctaw Trails in Clinton. Going toe-to-toe with other state champions and time qualifiers, the Lady Patriots were once again victorious, capping off the 2022 Mississippi cross country season with the MileSplit Mississippi winners' cup and a team average of 20:10.80. The Lady Patriots qualified to the meet in every possible way, winning the MAIS 5A state championship, finishing as the top team in the Jackson Metro region AND by meeting or exceeding the team average of a 21:40 5K.

The Lady Patriots finish included three girls in the Top 21, all now part of the overall All State team. Included in that trio was top finisher Audrey Mayatte, in 7th and part of the First Team All-State team; Leah Collipp, in 8th and part of the Second Team All-State team; and Emily Williams in 20th and part of the Honorable Mention All-State team.

Thus concludes a very successful 2022 cross country season as the athletes look forward to holiday break and preparing for track and field season in the spring.

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Yogi Bear on the Lake receives awards

The ARVC award was the second major accolade received by the Jellystone Park location in Pelahatchie this year. This summer, it was voted the top RV Park in the United States in *USA Today's* 10 Best 2022 Readers' Choice competition.

Also, at the 2022 Camp Jellystone Symposium Awards, Pelahatchie won several awards. Camp Jellystone presented its annual awards to exemplary Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park

Camp-Resorts franchisees throughout the U.S. and Canada during the franchise network's annual symposium conference at the Charleston Area Convention Center.

At the symposium, Yogi Bear on the Lake in Pelahatchie won a Pinnacle Award, awards for outstanding recreation and outstanding customer service, and was nominated for the Southern Region's Resort of the Year.



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