



### **TOP 3 APPROACH ONE MILE**

Pictured are Senior Jaxson Sottos, Sophomore Henley Bourne, and Senior Graysen Carlson

### **LEAFS OPEN SEASON WITH ANNUAL "RUST BUSTER"**

On Tuesday, August 19th, the Leafs hosted their annual "Rust Buster" Time Trial. This meet has existed in some form since the fall of 1986. Back then, the meet was called the "Alumni-Open" and anyone could run. That included parents, siblings, community members, etc. In fact, the boys Soccer team used to participate. The girls Volleyball team jumped in a few times also. The meet

used a handicapping system that saw every class and gender start at a different time in the same race. It was a LOT of fun but due to I.H.S.A. rules, Coach Ehlert changed the structure of the meet when he took over in the fall of 2018. It had to be done. In addition, he changed the course due to construction in the park. He also decided to change the distance for this meet which changed it from two miles to 3000 meters.

Anyway, the team was treated to a drastic change in temperature and humidity from earlier in the week. On the previous day (Monday), the "Feels Like" temperature got up to 108 Degrees. All practices were canceled. The race time temperature was 81 degrees with a light, 9 mph northwest breeze. The only negative was the fact that a storm blew through the night before and dropped over an inch of rain. The end result was the course was a bit soft, especially on the lower portions of the Richmond Hill Course. By the way, this was the first of four home meets that G.H.S. will host in 2025. Future events will include: the Geneseo Invitational (Saturday, September 20th), The Western Big 6 Conference Meet (Thursday, October 16th), and the I.H.S.A. Sectional Meet (Saturday, November 1st).

The current race format for the "Rust Buster" has everyone start at the same time. The boys and girls race starts at the same time....no handicap. There was also a middle school race that ran the last mile of the 3K course. They also start at the same time. On to the race recap.

The Maple Leafs were led by Senior Jaxson Sottos, Sophomore Henley Bourne, and Senior Graysen Carlson. The three of them broke away early in the race. Jaxson ended up winning the race in 10:27 (A NEW Senior Class Record) and just off his personal best of 10:05 for the race set last year in perfect conditions on a fast, hard course and sits as the second fastest time EVER on the course. Sophomore Henley Bourne finished a mere once second back. He was closing fast and his time of 10:28 is the 4th fastest time EVER for a GHS runner and second fastest Sophomore time. Up next, was Senior Graysen Carlson who was "Clocked" in an impressive time of 10:56. That time ranks Graysen as the 11th Fastest Maple Leaf EVER. It also ranks him as the 7th Fastest Senior. Great Job, Men.

Rounding out the Leafs' "Top 5" were Seniors Aidan Bries and Kaden Elmer who placed 4th and 5th. They both ran really smart races. Aidan's time of 11:01 moves him into the 13th Fastest time EVER. It also ranks him as the 9th Fastest Senior on the course. All this with a bad tummy on the day. Kaden also impressed. He "Stopped the Clock" at 11:04 which is the 10th fastest time for a Senior in the meet's history. Kaden already blasted a 10:42 last year in the great conditions which has him sitting 6th All-Time. Great Stuff, Men. In case you noticed, that's 4 Maple Leaf Seniors in the Top 5. This is a team that possesses a plethora of talented seniors with a tremendous leadership skills. The season is a going to be a LOT of Fun.

Rounding out the Leafs' Top 10 were Sophomore Greyson Claerhout who placed 7th overall and was timed in 12:09 which ranks him 19th on the Sophomore list. Sophomore Fritz Bolme placed 9th overall in 12:44 and moved into 21st spot on the Sophomore list for the course. Up next was rapidly improving Sophomore Rylan Carlson who placed 11th overall in the race and was timed in 13:02. His time moves him into the 24th spot on the GHS Sophomore List. The Leafs' 10th Man was Junior Micah Johnson who placed 13th overall in the race and was timed in 13:38. Great Efforts, Men.

Next up was Junior Jacob Berry who placed 14th overall in a time of 13:50. He was the Maple Leafs' 11th man on the day. Close behind him was Freshman Willi Davis who placed 17th overall in the race in a time of 14:18. His time was good enough to "Crack the Top 25 Freshmen list. He now sits as the 23rd Fastest Freshman in GHS History for this race. Willi was the 12th Maple Leaf to cross the finish line. Up next was "Rookie" Cole Henson. Cole recently joined the team and was racing with zero summer base work. Pretty dang impressive. In fact, he "Cracked the Top 20" overall in the race. Cole placed 19th overall in the race in a time of 14:33. He was the 13th Maple Leaf runner on the day. Way to Roll, Men.

Not far behind was Senior Calvin Bell who placed 21st overall in a time of 15:02. Calvin was the Leafs' 14th man on the day. He was closely followed by Junior Connor Runty who placed 22nd overall in a time of 15:10. Connor was the Leafs' 15th man in the race. Up next was Sophomore Noah Arnold who placed 23rd overall in a time of 15:25. Noah is a recent transfer to GHS from the Quad Cities. We are glad he decided to join our team. Noah was the 16th Maple Leaf on the day. Next up was Freshman Phoenix Sottos who placed 27th overall in the race and was timed in 18:16. Phoenix was the Leafs' 17th man to "Cross da Line". Great Job, Men.

Senior Jameson Coppejans and Junior Jack Kreiss were unable to race. Look for them to be "Wearing da Green" sometime soon. They both have a plethora of potential and are a sure bet to help add more depth to the Maple Leaf Roster.

An added "Twist" to this year's race was the sub-division of the boys team into two teams and then score the meet as a "Dual Meet". The senior captains selected the teams and the meet played out better than anyone could have dreamed....a 28-29 point showdown. The team of Jacob Berry, Henley Bourne, Graysen Carlson, Jameson Coppejans, Kaden Elmer, Cole Henson Jack Kreiss, Kael McCord, Connor Runty, and Phoenix Sottos ended up winning. That, despite two of their team members didn't race. Amazing. They beat the team of Noah Arnold, Calvin Bell, Greyson Claerhout, Fritz Bolme, Aidan Bries, Rylan Carlson, Willi Davis, Micah Johnson, and Jaxson Sottos. The idea for the team competition was a "Brain Child" of the Maple Leafs Dynamic Duo. That would be coaches Todd Ehlert and Jeff Brown. Well done, Men. It was a Great Idea.

Great start to the season, Men. It was a LOT of fun watching each of you race. Some of you started too fast and paid the price for that. Others had a bit too much left "In the Tank". Next time. A few of you nailed it and were "Running on Fumes" as you kicked it in. Every race is a learning opportunity. Every course we race on is unique and presents its own challenges. You will also need to factor in your constantly increasing fitness level. This team contains a unique mixture of personalities. The key is to believe in each other and work as a collective group (called a TEAM) to chase potential. You will be trained to PEAK when it matters the most..... CHAMPIONSHIP MEET SEASON. That is at the end of the season for our "Newbies". It is a true honor to have each of you on the team. All the best in the coming weeks as you make this season come alive with excitement. Dream Big and then back those dreams up with the commitment that excellence demands.

## 2025 Rust Buster Time Trial

Tuesday, August 20<sup>th</sup>

Race Time Temperature: 81° Nice

Wind: 9 mph from the NNW

Dew Point: 75°

Course Conditions: Grass soft from an inch of rain last night.

Race Distance: 3,000 Meters

### OVERALL RACE RESULTS

	<u>NAME</u>			<u>RACE TIME</u>	<u>Mile Split</u>
1.)	Jaxson Sottos	12	M	10:27	5:38
2.)	Henley Borne	10	M	10:28	5:39
3.)	Graysen Carlson	12	M	10:56	5:42
4.)	Aidan Bries	12	M	11:01	5:52
5.)	Kaden Elmer	12	M	11:04	5:53
6.)	Kael McCord	10	M	11:45	6:19
7.)	Greyson Claerhout	10	M	12:09	6:16
8.)	Brooklyn Smith	11	F	12:25	???
9.)	Fritz Bolme	10	M	12:44	6:46
10.)	Evy DeBaene	10	F	12:58	???
11.)	Rylan Carlson	10	M	13:02	7:05
12.)	Charlize Wachtel	09	F	13:18	???
13.)	Micah Johnson	11	M	13:38	6:59
14.)	Jacob Berry	11	M	13:50	7:24
15.)	Lucy Wachtel	11	F	13:59	???
16.)	Liberty Brumbaugh	12	F	14:08	???
17.)	Willi Davis	09	M	14:18	7:22
18.)	Alivia Brown	10	F	14:23	???
19.)	Cole Henson	10	M	14:33	7:44
20.)	Ayla Schultz	11	F	14:51	???
21.)	Calvin Bell	12	M	15:02	7:36
22.)	Connor Runty	11	M	15:10	7:48
23.)	Noah Arnold	10	M	15:25	7:32
24.)	Faith Kuster	09	F	15:40	???
25.)	Stella Allison	10	F	16:11	???
26.)	Hannah Stone	12	F	17:38	???
27.)	Phoenix Sottos	09	M	18:16	9:45
28.)	Jessa Gramling	12	F	18:36	???
29.)	Kjerstin Wildermuth	12	F	18:55	???
30.)	Tylatha Midina	09	F	24:35	???

## GENESEO BOYS RANKING

	<u>NAME</u>			<u>RACE TIME</u>	
1.)	Jaxson Sottos	12	M	10:27	5:38
2.)	Henley Borne	10	M	10:28	5:39
3.)	Graysen Carlson	12	M	10:56	5:42
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12.)	Willi Davis	09	M	14:18	7:22
13.)	Cole Henson	10	M	14:33	7:44
14.)	Calvin Bell	12	M	15:02	7:36
15.)	Connor Runty	11	M	15:10	7:48
16.)	Noah Arnold	10	M	15:25	7:32
17.)	Phoenix Sottos	09	M	18:16	9:45

Did not compete

Jameson Coppejans 12

Jack Kreiss 11

Team Spread

1 - 5: 0:37

1 - 7: 1:42

1 – 10: 3:11

First Name	Last Name	Division	Grade	2025 Results	2024 Results	2023 Results	2022 Results
Jaxson	Sottos	Male	11	10:27	10:05	10:22	11:26
Henley	Bourne	Male	9	10:28	11:42	Middle School	Middle School
Graysen	Carlson	Male	11	10:56	11:04	13:05	DNR
Aidan	Bries	Male	11	11:01	11:25	12:20	12:10
Kaden	Elmer	Male	11	11:04	10:42	10:57	11:27
Kael	McCord	Male	9	11:45	12:19	Middle School	Middle School
Greyson	Claerhout	Male	9	12:09	13:08	Middle School	Middle School
Fritz	Bolme	Male	9	12:44	13:08	Middle School	Middle School
Rylan	Carlson	Male	9	13:02	14:28	Middle School	Middle School
Micah	Johnson	Male	10	13:38	11:31	11:53	Middle School
Jacob	Berry	Male	10	13:50	14:39	15:34	Middle School
Willi	Davis	Male	9	14:18	Middle School	Middle School	Middle School
Cole	Henson	Male	10	14:33	DNR	Middle School	Middle School
Calvin	Bell	Male	11	15:02	13:32	14:26	17:43
Connor	Runty	Male	10	15:10	14:22	14:27	Middle School
Noah	Arnold	Male	10	15:25	DNR	Middle School	Middle School
Phoenix	Sottos	Male	9	18:16	Middle School	Middle School	Middle School
Jack	Kreiss	Male	10	DNR	10:43	11:16	Middle School
Jameson	Coppejans	Male	12	DNR	DNR	DNR	DNR





### **SOPHOMORE Kael MCCORD SELECTED AS "BELL RINGER"**

Pictured is Sophomore Kael McCord who was selected as the "Bell Ringer" for the "Rust Buster"

### **SOPHOMORE Kael MCCORD "RINGS da Bell"**

Sophomore Kael McCord was selected as the Geneseo Boys Cross Country "Bell Ringer" for the annual "Rust Buster" which was held on Tuesday, August 20th. The award was created by Head Maple Leaf Boys Cross Country Coach, Todd Ehlert, with a little help from "da Committee". The "Bell Ringer Award" honors a team member selected by a committee consisting of all of the senior

Maple Leaf Boys Cross Country Coach, Todd Ehlert, with a little help from "da Committee". The "Bell Ringer Award" honors a team member selected by a committee consisting of all of the senior team leaders and the coaching staff. Each member of the committee nominates two athletes. The committee discusses each nominee until a winner has been selected. Considerations for nomination include both practice and competitive performances. Possessing high levels of both Passion and Purpose are Omnipotent. An award winner is selected after each meet.

Kael ran a great race over the challenging 3,000 meter Richmond Hill Park "Rust Buster" course and was the Maple Leafs 6th runner on the day. This was the first time in his career that he "Cracked" the Maple Leafs "Top 7". He surprised quite a few teammates in doing so. His time of 11:45 moved him into 13th place on the All-Time Top 25 GHS Sophomore Individual List. He also "Cracked" the Top 25 All-Time Individuals List (any grade level) with his time and now sits in 22nd place. Great start to the season, Kael. Last season Kael's time for this meet was 12:19 so he dropped 34 seconds off that to run 11:45. That is a ton of time and what makes that time drop even more impressive was the fact that over an inch of rain fell on the course the night before this year's race. The course was wet in the low spots and thus run slow. Compare that with the perfect weather that the runners enjoyed in the 2024 race. The coaching staff estimated that this year's course ran at least 30 seconds slow. That means we can take another 30 seconds off Kael's time (in theory). See what I mean. Great start to the season. Keep up the great work, Kael. All the best in the coming weeks and months of the season.

The Maple Leafs have set some big goals for the 2025 season. Most of those goals involve the team running its best races when "Championship Meet Season" rolls around and the end of the season. Included in those meets will be: the Conference, Regional, Sectional, and State Meets. Only the first two meets are guaranteed. The Leafs will have to qualify for both the I.H.S.A. Sectional Meet by placing in the top 6 teams at the IHSA Regional meet. Then, they hope to qualify for the I.H.S.A. State Finals by finishing in the Top 7 teams at the Sectional Meet. Not an easy assignment but a team goal none the less. Kael provides the Leafs critical depth. It will be a lot of fun to see how much Kael will improve as the season progresses. Keep up the solid work, Kael. Kael is a part of the Geneseo "Super-Sophs". His class is "LOADED" with a ton of talent and the work ethic to take it to the highest levels. Keep a close eye on these youngsters. They are going to leave a long-lasting mark on the proud Geneseo Distance Running Tradition that already exists. Keep "Dreaming Big" and then backing those Dreams up with the Commitment that Excellence DEMANDS.

Kael enjoyed a tremendous Freshman year earning Varsity Letters in both Cross Country and Track and Field. That is extremely impressive for a Freshman. He just kept his head down and did whatever was asked of him. He never complains and is a great teammate. That is a wonderful combination of traits to possess. He is also a great guy and a true pleasure to have on the team.

Here is what Kael has to say about his athletic history.

**9th Grade:** "This year I had no idea what to expect, but it also ended up being my favorite year of XC yet. My first goal was a sub 19, and since my first time was already a 19:20 (or 30



somewhere in there) it came pretty quick. There were a lot of meets where I had band conflicts, such as at the Freeport race. At Freeport, the top 5 medalists got a pretzel, and I was in the Open Race. I didn't really expect to get a pretzel, but when I learned I was in 7th place and I passed someone in 6th I had a goal. Greyson Claerhout was the next person up, and eventually I passed him. I also think I passed another kid for 4th. The pretzel was pretty good, but I did have to leave for marching band after finishing. At that race I did beat my goal with a 18:46. Later in the season at Metamora, I ran a 17:44 (or something like that) but it was a short course. At Conference I was actually sick while I ran, so after a mile of running good, I got hit by a brick wall. From there my pace dropped, my legs felt heavy, and my only goal was to keep moving. I did manage to finish it with around a 19:20, but I felt lightheaded, and confused kind of like when you wake up on the couch after accidentally falling asleep. At the JV State we ran with only freshmen so we were able to have only Geneseo people in the top 4 which was really cool. I ended up going to State which was really cool to see everyone run. The course was pretty wet though."

"Track this season was pretty interesting. I had always hated the 400, since the first (and until this season last) time running it in 7th grade for the practice meet. But since I didn't know what running events I wanted to run in got put in for the 400 at the practice meet. My goal was to run a 60 second 400, but somehow I ran a 57.91! From then on I kept doing the 400 and actually grew to enjoy it, I even ran in some B-Level 4x4s (at A-B-C Meets)! I did Pole Vault this year the vaulters were able to vault 1-2 times a week, so I grew from a 8'9" PR all the way up to a 10'9" PR (I barely missed out on that 11' PR). Somehow, somehow, I ended up being an alternate for the 4x4 for State, so I got to go with them for that, which was overall really fun. I got to watch amazing runners, vaulted, and I even got to help with the bar for Pole Vault! I was probably only a couple yards from the last lane while people were running!"

**8th Grade:** "This year was out for XC I ended up becoming the number 2 on our team. My goal was a sub 12 minute 2 mile. Most of the races this year were pretty similar to the last year, except at one race I was close to Micah who usually beat me by quite a bit. He did have a side cramp though, but I'll take my wins where I can get them. Sectionals of this year was at Richmond hill, I ended up running around a 12:10 getting me a medal for Sectionals at 10th place, but Henley was right behind me and nearly took that! During State this season I gave it everything and managed to finally get that sub 12 with a 11:58."

This Track season I told myself that if I was in 4x2 again I wouldn't do the mile since I didn't feel like dealing with that again. Sure enough, I was in the 4x2 again and didn't do the mile more than our practice meet. This year I decided to try out Long Jump and Triple Jump since I wasn't doing the mile anymore. Pole Vault was pretty much the same as the year before, except Henley made a two foot PR before the season started so there went my number 1 spot. The 4x2 was kind of a mess this year since we kept jumping between 3-4 different people so we had to get stuff changed each time. I enjoyed Triple Jump a lot, but Long Jump I found I didn't like very much, but since I was in our top 3 I was stuck with the it. Overall, that season I got better at stuff, but nothing really eventful happened for me.

**7th Grade:** "This is where I started XC, which I first considered doing after I heard a friend of mine (Micah Nicke) was doing it. I started with a 14:36 (ish) for my first race and at the Moline course (the same one we are doing Monday!) I cut that down to a 14:01 which I didn't break for a while. I finally cut it down to a 13:36 once the weather started to cool down, and eventually I think a low 13s. I believe it was then that I managed to knock Henley out of the top 7 and run Varsity for Conference which was also at the Moline course. At that race, Micah wasn't doing so well for that first lap, so I tried to stay with him, and eventually more people from our team joined us. Our number 1 and 2 came in quick and then the final 5 of us came in all around 12-12:45. I personally got a 12:26 at that race which was my PR at that time and allowed me to run at Sectionals and State."

"For Track I came because I enjoyed XC so much, I wasn't really sure what I wanted to run though. Eventually, after hearing some friends were doing Pole Vault I picked that, along with the mile. I also got to run in the 4x2 which was directly after the mile, which did end up affecting things later. My main goal for the mile was to get a sub 6 minute mile, which I did eventually get and set a PR for that season at 5:45. For Pole Vault I kind of came in not knowing what to expect, but somehow managed to become our number one pole vaulter. At Sectionals I ended up dropping the mile so I wasn't gassed for the 4x2, (which was suggested by Coach Ehler). At that meet, we got 6th in the 4x2 which was better than we expected at least. I also qualified for Pole Vault being both the winner of our sectional, and hitting the qualifying height of 7'9".

**Prior to 7th grade:** I did Soccer when I was around 4, don't remember it very well. And then I did Baseball for a couple years in elementary school, but then the pandemic hit and I never really wanted to start it again. There was also a time where I did wrestling in 4th grade for a year, but I didn't enjoy it too much.

Kael is the proud son of Steve McCord and Amanda McCord (previously Mierop.) He is also the proud "Big Bro" to Ian McCord 8th, and Colin McCord 6th.

Here are Kael's answers to his "Bell Ringer Questions: **Nickname:** "KP (some of my family members call me that , its just my initials for my first and middle name)." **School Clubs or other Organizations you have taken part in:** "I do youth group on Wednesdays at my church, but that's about it ".; **Favorite Food:** "I enjoy a lot of foods, but the food I can never get enough of is a good chicken pot pie."; **Favorite Movie:** "I watched the Truman show a couple months ago and it was really enjoyable, so probably that as of now." **Favorite Music (Genre or Group):** "Music has kind of jumped around a bit. Not too long ago it was rock/hard rock, but right now it is just kind of just whatever puts me in a good mood."; **Athletic Hero:** "I don't really watch any sports, and eventually the Olympics I didn't watch much of, so I don't have one." **Favorite Quote:** "My favorite quote is goes along the lines of "God won't give you more than you can handle." That quote just is a nice thing to be able to keep in mind when things may seem overwhelming of hard."; **How Did You Decide to Join the XC Team?:** "Like I said in the athletics section, I joined because I heard my friend was joining. Eventually when he moved on to Football in high school I kept doing XC and have loved it."; **What Advice Do You Have for Anyone New to the**

**Sport?:** "If you ever feel like quitting or giving up on it, just give it one more season. There have been some times where I really had no desire to run and do XC, but I showed up for the season and walked out loving it".

**Comment from Head Coach Todd Ehlert:** "We are excited for Kael this year. Last year he had a break out year and was in our top 10 guys. He is an interesting combination of a distance runner and a pole vaulter. We have had a few of those in our time for cross country. He has come in a little out of shape from not running a lot in the spring, but we believe Kael has a lot of potential to be great this year. With some work, Kael could challenge the top five. It is going to be a great season".