



GHS MEDAL WINNERS

Pictured are Rylan Carlson, Jameson Coppejans, Fritz Bolme

LEAFS ROLL AT "JV STATE"

On Tuesday, October 21st, The Leafs traveled to Sterling's Hoover Park to participate in the annual Sterling 09/JV Invitational. Head Maple Leaf Boys Coach Todd Ehlert "Nicknamed" the meet "JV State" and that has stuck. The meet is the last meet of the season before the team enters the IHSA Series. During that portion of the season, each team is limited to only 7 runners. Luckily, Sterling offers this meet which gives athletes one final opportunity at the peak of their fitness.

The weatherman made it a bit challenging to put it mildly. The winds were blasting from the west at 25-30 mph. Winds gusts were predicted to climb to 45 mph. A daytime high of 53° with racing conditions having a 37° "feels like" wind chill made the day one not to be forgotten soon. It was a true test of will and the Leafs passed with flying colors. It should also be pointed out that the course was changed last year and the racing distance moved from 3 miles to 3.1 (5K).

The field included teams from: Dixon, Geneseo, Rochelle, Rock Falls, Rochelle, and Sterling. I've never been able to figure out why more teams don't choose to participate in this meet. The meet format has 4 races. Freshmen only first (girls and boys together in separate races) and then the

JV race (everyone else)...ditto on the genders. "Hardware" was awarded to the top 5 finishers in the Freshman Race and to the top 10 in the JV Race.

The Freshman Race took off at 4:30 p.m. sharp. The 14 runner field also contained 6 girls. Thus, 20 runners responded to the IHSA starter's "Crack" of the pistol. The Leafs' only Freshman this season has been Phoenix Sottos. He very hard worker and has a tremendously positive attitude. The Hoover Park course is very cool and winds though a wooded area numerous times. There are quite a few trails and it can be a bit confusing. Unfortunately, for Phoenix, he found himself in "no man's land". He was all by himself for much of the race. He still put forth a strong effort. He was timed in 28:23 which was a bit off from his Sterling Rock River Run Invite time of 26:35. That time has Phoenix "sitting" as the 7th fastest Freshman EVER for a GHS athlete on the course. Great Season, Phoenix. Time for the GHS "Hype Squad". Be a difference maker.

Next up was the JV Race which started around 4:45 p.m. Dixon is currently ranked #1 in all of the 2A and their depth is impressive. They ended up taking the top 5 spots and also grabbed 9th and 11th places. Their 3rd and 4th place finishers were only freshmen. Impressive stuff. There were 24 male finishers who were joined by 18 females. A special thanks to the Sterling coaches and runners for putting on a great event under trying weather conditions.

The Leafs were led by Sophomore Rylan Carlson. His improvement from last season is remarkable. He ran a very intelligent race and just kept moving up. He placed 6th overall and was timed in 20:08. Remember, the racing conditions were TERRIBLE. That is Flying. He now has the 12th fastest time EVER in GHS history on the course. He also moved into 6th spot on the GHS Sophomore list. He shared that this was the first medal he has ever won. Great Stuff, Rylan! It won't be your last. It is going to be a lot of fun watching you continue to improve over the coming seasons. Stand ready to action if any of the Varsity gets sick or hurt. If you don't "toe the line" on Saturday, then help lead the Geneseo "Hype Squad" to try and inspire the Leafs to qualify for the Geneseo Sectional Meet on Saturday, November 1st.

Sophomore Fritz Bolme was the top Maple Leaf for much of the race until he caught a nasty side stitch late in the race. He fought bravely and still placed 7th overall. His time of 19:46 just missed his personal best on the course of 19:42 set at the Rock River Run XC Invite back in September. That time has Fritz in the #14 GHS spot All-Time (any grade level) and in the #8 Sophomore position. Great Stuff, Fritz. You possess a wonderful mixture of both Passion & Purpose. The GHS "Super-Sophs" are going to make some major noise at the State Level before you graduate. Stand ready in case you are needed in during the IHSA Series (illnesses & injuries do happen.) If not, then try and cover as much ground as can during the IHSA Series Meets and help to inspire your teammates. Thanks for being such a great kid.

The next man up for the Leafs was "Rookie" Senior Leader Jameson Coppejans. "Jamo" found himself in 10th place for most of the race and held that spot to the end. The top 10 earned highly prized medals. Well done, Jameson. He shared that this was the first medal that he has ever won. AWESOME STUFF. Try and nail some more next spring during Track season. Jameson was timed in 20:21 which placed him 19th on the All-Time Top 25 Individual list for GHS athletes (any grade level). He also moved into 11th place on the Senior list. Way to roll and lead via example. Now it will be time to help lead the Geneseo "Hype Squad". You learned first hand last

night just how much having teammates cheer for you can help. The way the you held on to that 10 place spot was impressive. *Carpe Diem*. We are sure glad you joined the team.

Sophomore Cole Henson was up next and concluded his debut season with another great race. Earlier this season, Cole was timed in 23:31 for this course in pretty great weather. In this race, he competed in very challenging conditions and took OVER 2 MINUTES. off that time. He was "Clocked" in 21:06 and placed 14th overall in the race. His time moved him into 21st place on the GHS All-Time Top 25 Individual List. It also moved him into 9th place on the GHS Sophomore list. Great Stuff, Cole. Next will be to "Jump on Board" the Geneseo "Hype Squad" and help to inspire the Varsity Top 7 during the IHSA Post-Season. The Regional Meet is up first. The top 6 teams will then qualify for the Geneseo Sectional. There, the Top 7 teams will qualify for the STATE MEET. That is our teams goal. Do your best to help make that dream come to fruition.

Junior Jacob Berry was the next Maple Leaf to "Break the Tape". He placed 15th overall in the race and was timed in 21:23. That time places him in 22nd place on the All-Time GHS Top 25 Individual List (any grade level.) It also moved him into the #6 spot for a GHS Junior. All that in nasty weather. Great racing Jacob. Next up will be some duty with the Geneseo "Hype Squad" in trying to help inspire the Varsity Top 7 in the IHSA Post-Season. The team's pre-season stated goal of qualifying for the STATE FINAL is on the line. Do your best to help make that happen. After that, it will be time to start planning on the leadership from next year's seniors (That's YOU & your fellow Juniors) We have complete faith in the leadership that your class will provide strong leadership. All the best.

Senior Leader Calvin Bell was up next for "da Leafs". Calvin concluded his Geneseo High School "Harrier" (XC) career in style. He sprinted across the finish line in 21:34 to place 16th overall in the race. He was just off his personal best on the course which was set last year (21:02). That time already had him "holding down" the #20 spot on the GHS All-Time Top 25 list. His 21:34 time moved him into 12th place on the Senior GHS Top 25 list. Great effort, Calvin. The weather was pretty nasty to put it lightly. Now it will be your chance to help lead the Geneseo "Hype Squad". The opportunity to help inspire the Varsity Top 7 during the IHSA post-season. The team's pre-season goal of returning to the IHSA State Finals is "Still in Play". Do your best to help make that dream come true. All the best to you in the future. Thanks for all of your efforts.

The "Little Johannson" was up next. That is Junior Micah Johnson. He sprinted home in a time of 21:37 and placed 17 overall in the nasty weather. His previous best time of 19:30 from last year already has him ranked as the 13th fastest individual Maple Leaf (any grade) EVER on the course. His 21:37 moved him into 7th on the GHS Junior Top 25 List. So what's next? We hope that you will help lead the Geneseo "Hype Squad" during the IHSA post-season. Inspiring the Varsity Top 7 is the goal. Every single second will matter. *Carpe Diem!* "Detweiller Fever"....CATCH IT. Then, it will be time to start planning with your fellow juniors for next year. The leadership of this team will be in your hands. We have complete faith. Keep Dreaming BIG! Thanks for always being such a great guy.

Junior Connor Runty was the next Maple Leaf to "Break the Tape". He was timed in 21:46 and placed 18th overall in the race. He was just off of his personal best for the course (last year he

ran 21:30 in great weather). That time ranks him as the 23rd fastest GHS Runner on the All-Time Top 25 List (any grade). His 21:46 moved him into 8th on the GHS Junior List. Great Stuff, Connor. You ran an AWESOME Race. We know that you have marching band conflicts and understand. Try and give the team whatever support that you can as the Varsity Top 7 "Gets after it" in the IHSA post-season. Hopefully, that will include a "Date at State". We are also confident in the leadership you and your fellow juniors will supply the team next season when you are SENIORS. We are very proud of you. Congratulations on a great season.

Next up for the Geneseo Maple Leafs will be the Bartonville (Limestone) IHSA Regional on Saturday, October 25th. The top 6 teams in the meet will advance to the Geneseo IHSA Sectional Meet to be held on Saturday, November 1st. At that meet, the top 7 finishing teams will qualify for the IHSA State Finals to be held at Peoria's Historic Detweiller Park on Saturday, November 8th. Come on out and "Back da Leafs".

Date: 10/21/2025								
Meet: Sterling 09/JV Cross Country Invite								
Site: Sterling's Hoover Park								
Conditions: Daytime high of 53° ...20-30 mph winds (gusting to 45 mph) Cold!								
Racing Distance: 5K (3.10 miles) New course last year.								
Team Finish:	No Team Scores							
	TIME	ATHLETE	PL	R	1-M	2-M	3-M	AV.
1	19:30	Rylan Carlson-10	6	JV	6:07	???	???	6:16
2	19:46	Fritz Bolme-10	7	JV	5:56	???	???	6:21
3	20:21	Jameson Coppejans-12	10	JV	6:22	???	???	6:33
4	21:06	Cole Henson-10	14	JV	6:30	???	???	6:47
5	21:23	Jacob Berry-11	15	JV	6:29	???	???	6:52
6	21:34	Calvin Bell-12	16	JV	6:37	???	???	6:56
7	21:37	Micah Johnson-11	17	JV	6:22	???	???	6:57
8	21:46	Connor Runty-11	18	JV	6:40	???	???	7:04
9	28:23	Phoenix Sottos-09	14	9	8:23	???	???	9:08
	DNC	Noah Arnold-10	Injury					
	18:02	J.V. Leader-11	1	JV	???	???	???	5:48
	19:45	09 Leader	1	9	???	???	???	6:21
		Geneseo Spread						
		1-5	1:57					
		1-7	2:07					
		1-10						

Sterling JV Invitational HS

OFFICIAL 📅 Tue, Oct 21, 2025 🗺 Hoover Park, IL US

Men's Results

5,000 Meters Freshman

Official Team Scores

1. Rock Falls 20

2. Rochelle 35

14. 10 Cole Henson	21:06	Geneseo
15. 11 Jacob Berry	21:23	Geneseo
16. 12 Calvin Bell	21:34	Geneseo
17. 11 Micah Johnson	21:37	Geneseo
18. 11 Connor Runtz	21:45	Geneseo
19. 11 Austin Carrell	22:32	Sterling
20. 12 Patrick Jones	23:14	Rock Falls
21. 10 Dominick Joyce	24:02	Rochelle
22. 10 Liam Bertsche	24:29	Rochelle
23. 11 Antonio Flores	25:53	Rock Falls
24. 12 Quinn Stahr	26:32	Rock Falls

1. 9 Jerimiah Bennett	19:45	Sterling
2. 9 Brady Gross	19:59	Princeton
3. 9 Gustavo Flores	20:13	Rock Falls
4. 9 Blake Plummer	20:29	Rock Falls
5. 9 Ryan Mealing	20:31	Rock Falls
6. 9 Tristan Hiltz	20:51	Sterling
7. 9 Luis Esparza	20:59	Rock Falls
8. 9 Blake Shelby	21:15	Rochelle
9. 9 Tyler Sutton	21:44	Rochelle
10. 9 Christopher Nambo	21:49	Rochelle
11. 9 Sami Aljabari	21:57	Rochelle
12. 9 Josh Parsons	22:02	Rochelle
13. 9 Sebastian Lavelle	25:56	Rock Falls
14. 9 Phoenix Sottos	28:23	Geneseo

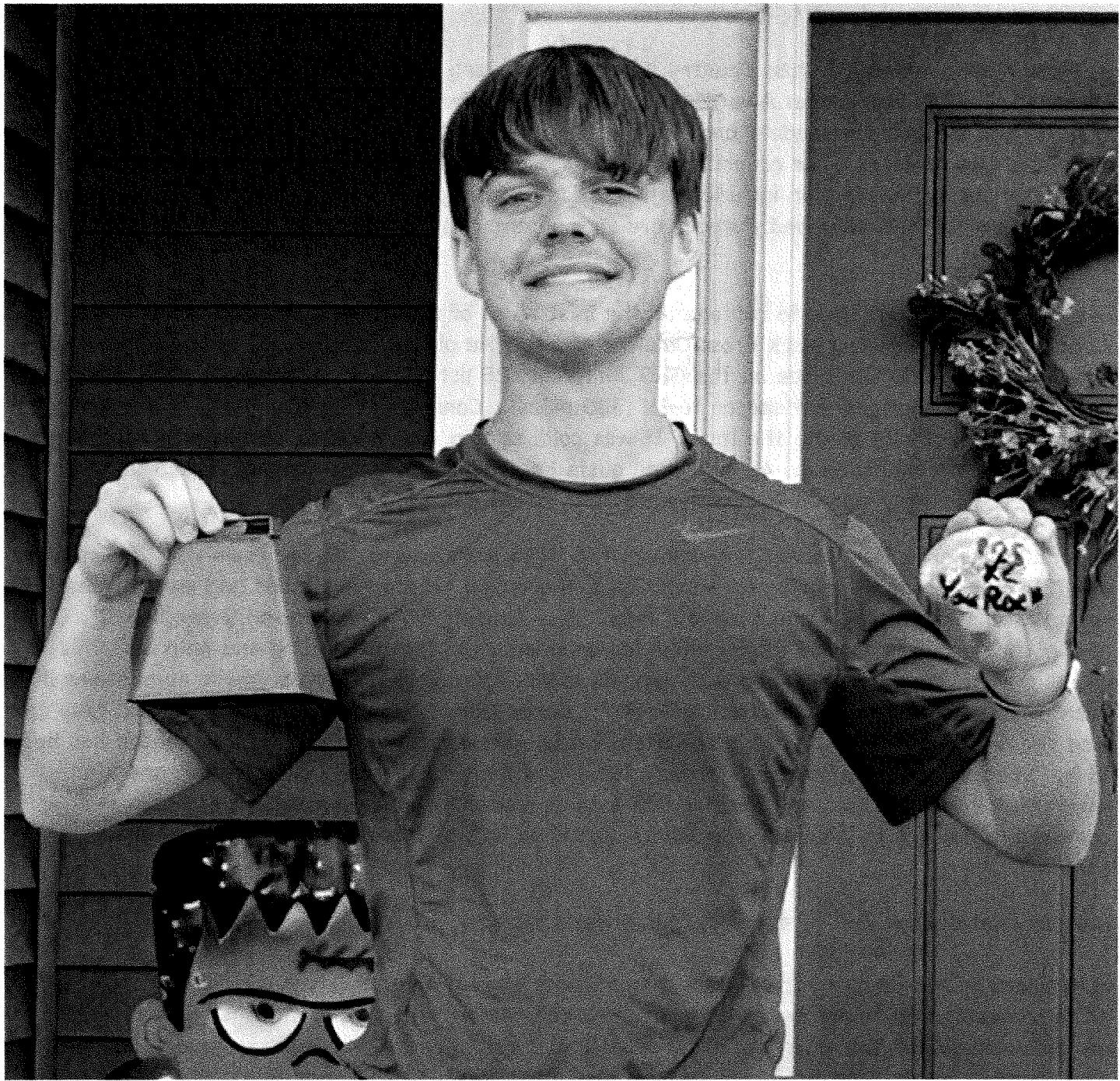
5,000 Meters Junior Varsity

Official Team Scores

1. Dixon 15

2. Geneseo 45

1. 11 Brody Hopper	18:02	Dixon
2. 12 Noah Terviel	18:03	Dixon
3. 9 Jense Atkinson	18:06	Dixon
4. 9 Jaron Greve	18:12	Dixon
5. 9 Jacob Wendt	18:13	Dixon
6. 10 Rylan Carlson	19:30	Geneseo
7. 10 Fritz Bolme	19:46	Geneseo
8. 10 Owen Roddy	19:50	Sterling
9. 11 Deaglan Taylor	19:53	Dixon
10. 12 Jameson Coppejans	20:21	Geneseo
11. 12 Andrew Osborn	20:50	Dixon
12. 11 Geronimo Zepeda-Flores	20:56	Rochelle
13. 10 Allister Swanson	21:03	Princeton



**JUNIOR CONNOR RUNTY SELECTED
AS "BELL RINGER"**

Pictured is Junior Conner Runty who was selected as the team's "Bell Ringer" for the Sterling 09/JV Cross Country Invitational

JUNIOR CONNOR RUNTY "RINGS da Bell"

Junior Connor Runty was selected as the Geneseo Boys Cross Country "Bell Ringer" for the Sterling 09/JV Cross Country Invitational held on Tuesday, October 21st. 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 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.

Connor picked a great time to run one of the best races of his life. He "Roared" to a time of 21:46 on Sterling's Hoover Park Cross Country course. He placed 18th overall in the field. His time moved him into 8th place on the GHS Junior Top 25 list EVER for the course. Remember, the course was changed last season to 5K (3.10 miles). Connor and "da boys" also faced pretty challenging conditions during the race. It was cold, raining, and WINDY. Challenging conditions make races more memorable. 45 mph wind gusts helped to make that happen. Great Job, Connor. It was very cool to see your teammates select you for this honor.

So what's up next? The season has entered the IHSA Post-Season. Every team will be limited to entering only 7 runners moving forward. Thus, the racing season for Connor and most of the GHS team has concluded. How can they still help? By "Jumping On" the Geneseo "Hype Squad". The goal of this group is to help inspire their teammates during the races. Try and help lead this group, Connor. Try and cover as much ground as you can and get to spots where no one else is. Each of you can become "A Difference Maker". Carpe Diem. Hopefully, your efforts will help to lead the Geneseo Harriers back to the State Finals. The Leafs' main goal for the season has been to be "Dancing at Detweiller" on Saturday, November 8th. That Dream is Still Alive and Well. After that, it will be time to transition into a team leader for your Senior Year. We have complete confidence in you and your fellow "Senior to Be". Congratulations on a tremendous season.

Here is what Connor had to say about his athletic history:

11th Grade: "My junior year of Cross Country was a great season, I have started to put on a lot of muscle compared to my freshmen year and I can feel myself getting stronger (even flexing on my teammates). But this year was truly special as I got to run with all of my friends and create new stronger bonds with the team. I had a new mental attitude this year to never give up and it paid off as I saw my times getting better and better each week and I am truly amazed at how far I have come since my first year of Cross Country. I plan to do Track in the spring as well as a varsity sprinter and hope it will bring me further in my running career and help my improve myself as well as my speed and times of the track.

10th Grade: "Throughout my sophomore I really started to take it up a notch in my sports, I got huge PR's in Cross Country during the fall and got so close to breaking 20 minutes with a time of 20:03! I had so much fun that year and improved a lot, even earning a medal at JV State for 7th place! During the spring of this year I also did Track, I was absolutely working my butt off and was one of their top varsity runner for the 100 meter dash all the way up to the 400 meter race. I was also on some relay teams and went to all the meets this year as part of the Varsity team".

9th Grade: "I was kind of nervous for my first season of high school Cross Country because I knew it was a longer race of 3 miles! But throughout the course of the season I got continuously better, starting at a time of like 24 minutes, I worked my way all the way up to a time of 20:32 , which became my PR for the season! I also ran that time at JV state where I won third place and a medal which is one of my proudest moments. I also ran track this year, and I went with the team to all of the varsity meets, I was improving a lot and even got to run some Varsity races and relays with the team at some pretty big meets. This is where the drive for wanting to improve my running ability really developed in high school and this made it a very memorable freshmen year for me."

8th Grade: "This was my very first year in Cross Country and honestly, I had no clue if this was going to be something I'd stick with. But throughout the year I discovered how much I love it and I even got to be in the top ten on the team even when it was my first year!! My fastest time was about 13 minutes which was a huge improvement for myself and I had so much fun doing it, this experience was what made me decide that I was going to do high school cross country. I also did track this year, and this year I started to figure out what I was good at. I began doing sprints and was one fo their top guys for all of the meets. I got be in some relays as well that I got to run with at sectionals which was truly one the best times of my life because I realized that this was the type of sport I wanted to do. This year was where I fell in love with running and I will never forget it".

7th Grade: "This was the first year I started running in Track, to be honest I wasn't very good, in fact not at all. But this is where my love for running began and it was honestly so much fun to get to be part of an actual team and experience races and the adrenaline rush of being in a fast paced sport".

Prior to 7th grade: "I did Soccer and Baseball. I Soccer, I was whatever was needed but i liked playing Goalie and in Baseball I was Catcher, and played Second Base, and Center Field."

Connor is the son of Cathy & Thomas Runty. He is also the proud "Big Bro" to Violet (15, freshmen), Simon (12, 7th grade), & Amelia (10, 5th grade.)

Here are Connor's answers to his "Bell Ringer Questions": **Nickname:** "My friends and family call me Runty or Connorman (sometimes CRUNTY), or as Coach Freddy may say... The Fastest Drum Major in the State!!" **School Clubs or other Organizations you have taken part in:** "I have taken part in Marching Band in which I am the Drum Major which is the highest position, Honors Band where I am first chair tenor saxophone, Jazz Band I also play tenor saxophone but get a lot of cool jazz solos, ILMEA which is almost like State for band, Boy Scouts, Track and Field, Baseball which I played until high school and I loved it, and I volunteer all around town when I can which helped me become who I am today."; **Favorite Food:** "Definitely. Lasagna"; **Favorite Movie:** "Any Marvel movie or Fantastic Mr. Fox";; **Favorite Music (Genre or Group):** "The FUNK or Christian music";; **Athletic Hero:** "Micheal Jordan because he never gave up and always tried his best even when he was unsure or not at 100 percent";; **Favorite Quote:** ""Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that"(MLK), because it shows the importance of always showing

love to people, and why sometimes when you think hating someone will make them hate you less, the only way to reach through to someone is through love. I also love the quote "You don't bite the hand that feeds you!" because it's awesome".; **How did you decide to join the Cross Country team?** "I decided to join the Cross Country team mainly because at the time I wanted to try something new, I had no idea that running was going to be something that I stuck with throughout my high school career. I did have some of my friends convincing me to join, but it wasn't until I saw the team atmosphere and all the fun that they were having that I really decided that this was going to be the sport that I chose to do. Since then it has made me into the best version of myself teaching me valuable life lessons like never giving up, and truly helped me get to where I am today".; **What Advice Do You Have for Anyone New to the Sport?**: "For anyone new to the sport my advice to you is to not give up at the beginning of the season and to leave it all out on the course. Even if you don't see your times where you want them to be at the beginning of the season, keep practicing because I promise you they will get better. I've seen it. And make sure you give it all you got because if you truly give it your best, you will feel like you've accomplished so much, and truly you have".

Other team members who were nominated and discussed for this week's "Bell Ringer Award" were: Calvin Bell, Fritz Bolme, Rylan Carlson, Jameson Coppejans, & Micah Johnson.

Comment from Head Coach Todd Ehlert: "Connor is on his third year of Cross Country. He had an awesome run at the JV State meet in Sterling. He was very excited to have a season best run on Tuesday night. PR for a 5k for him. He has done a great job balancing marching band and cross country. This is his first Bell Ringer award of his career. Congrats, Connor.