

Stanton Shines at Twilight Night Run

Mustangs finish strong, facing competition under the lights

By: Junior Azlynn Johnson



Starlight Strides. Junior Noah Schmidt strides past his competition at the Fremont Twilight. Runners from all classes and size ran along each other. "Running cross country in the dark: part cardio, part hide-and-seek with your own feet," Schmidt said.

After-Dark Distance. Senior Alton Wurdinger pushes past his competitors from Logan View. The night run provided a unique opportunity to run with glow paint and lighted paths. "Night runs are intense – every shadow feels like a competitor chasing you," Wurdinger said.

Chase Schwartz, and Noah Schmidt. The boys came in with a score of 97 team points to earn them fifth. "Even with hard competition, it was a very fun and good experience to run at night," McKie said.

The Tiger Twilight course featured flat fields at the Johnson Crossing Academic Center. The flat course and 82-degree weather contributed to many runners achieving personal records or season bests. The evening meet gave way to cooler temperatures at night, creating ideal conditions for runners. The course consisted of four one-kilometer loops, which were lit up by ground markers, each containing portable lights at every corner. "This course and meet was fun and everyone should dream of having a meet like this one," C. Johnson said.

This meet allowed the Stanton Cross Country team to compete against teams they rarely face during the season. With all classes running together, the race featured strong competition that led to individual growth. "Having an all-class meet was nice because, it gave us good competition and helped push me towards my goal time, I was hoping to reach," A. Johnson said.

The Stanton Cross Country team traveled to Fremont on Friday, Sept. 12, to compete in its first-ever twilight night run. Fremont hosted 21 schools from across Nebraska for the Tiger Twilight meet. Runners represented classes from A to D, with Stanton as the only class D school competing. "It was a great experience to see other runners we would not normally see. It was also a fun event as we got to race in an environment we have not been a part of before," Stanton Head Cross Country Coach David Ernesti said.

With all classes competing together, teams were permitted to enter as many as ten runners. This meet included Middle School boys and girls running 1.5 miles, Reserve High School boys and girls running 2 miles, Junior Varsity boys and girls, and Varsity boys and girls both running 3.1 miles. Stanton had two girl runners compete in the middle school division: eighth grader Kinzie Weideman and seventh grader Teghan Johnson. Eighth-grade boys Jaocuin Renn, Braxton Borgmann, and Henry Nordby ran with seventh grader Samuel Villanueva-Salazar in the middle school boys division. Renn medaled, taking second place with a finishing time of 9:23, followed by teammate Borgmann, who placed twenty-fifth with a time of 11:05. "It was hard, but I had to push through," Borgmann said.

In the Varsity girls division, Stanton had seven girls competing: Senior Tiffanee Glasser, Juniors Azlynn Johnson, Harrison Blum, Bria Johnson, Kaelyn Cook, and Cenna Johnson, with Freshman Jadeyn Hansen.

Medaling in this meet was challenging due to the expanded level of competition. For middle school, the top 25 runners received medals, while in high school, Class C/D awarded medals to the top 20 finishers and Class A/B to the top 30 finishers. "It was a fun experience to run at night and compete against every class even in the tough competition," Junior Harrison Blum said.

Stanton captured five medals for the team. A. Johnson, B. Johnson, and Blum were medalists in the girls' division bringing home three medals for Stanton. A. Johnson placed 13th overall, but with a first-place finish in Class C/D with a time of 20:13. Blum with a time of 23:54.14 just crossed the line down to the millisecond before B. Johnson with a time of 23:54.81. Blum secured 17th place in class C/D, with B. Johnson following as 18th. "It was nice to have Harri by my side to push me through the race," said B. Johnson.

The Stanton girls took home fourth as a team with a score of 64, consisting of the top four runners.

In the Varsity Boys division, the Mustangs had five boys compete: Seniors Mason McKie and Alton Wurdinger, and Juniors William Bryant,