

State Cross Country Tournament 2021

November 18, 2021

Rock County Star Herald Special Commemorative Edition



Girls

Conference Champions

Section 3A Champions

Third-place state Class A



Boys

Conference Runner-up

Section 3A Runner-up

Ninth-place state Class A



The Luverne High School boys' and girls' cross country teams posed for a team picture Oct. 19 after earning the runners-up and champion Big South Conference small school titles respectively. Weeks later, the teams earned the same honors at the Section 3A championships in Madison, qualifying both teams to the state cross country tournament in Northfield. The tournament berths were the fourth time in school history and the first since 2011 that both the girls' and boys' team competed . Pictured on the cover are members of the 2021 Luverne High School cross country teams that includes (in front, sitting, from left) Tiana Lais, Kayla Bloemendaal, Ella Schmuck, Brynn Boyenga, Grace Ingebretson, (knealing) Makena Nelson, Jenna DeBates, Tenley Nelson, Andrea Luitjens, Olivia Lund, Khloe Visker, Kianna Winter, Maddy Schepel, Mariah Knorr, Maria Rops, (back) Marcus Papik, Riley Ripka, Camden Janiszeski, Leif Ingebretson, Logan Ommen, Ryan Fick, Carson Tofteland, Sage Viessman, Pierce Cunningham, Griffen Jarchow, Owen Janiszeski, Eli McLendon, Ethan Rahm, Camden Hoven, Kaleb Hemme and Zach Brown.



GIRLS

**SECTION 3A
CHAMPS**

**STATE MEET
3RD PLACE**

**TENLEY
NELSON
2ND PLACE**

**JENNA
DEBATES
3RD PLACE**

BOYS

**SECTION 3A
2ND PLACE**

**STATE MEET
9TH PLACE**

**CAMDEN
JANISZESKI
15TH PLACE**

**OWEN
JANISZESKI
17TH PLACE**

Congratulations

**TO THE BOYS' AND GIRLS'
CROSS COUNTRY TEAMS**



Pictured are Tiana Lais (front), Maria Rops (left), Kianna Winter, Kayla Bloemendaal, Jenna DeBates, Tenley Nelson, Ella Schmuck, Khloe Visker, Grace Ingebretson, Brynn Boyenga, (back) Pierce Cunningham, Kaleb Hemme, Leif Ingebretson, Ryan Fick, Carsen Tofteland, Owen Janiszeski, Camden Janiszeski, Griffen Jarchow, Sage Viessman, Camden Hoven, McKenna Nelson and Ethan Rahm.

‘Stay humble. Stay hungry.’

Luverne’s cross country teams find year-end success at the finish line

Stories and photos by Mavis Fodness

At the Nov. 4 pep fest for the Luverne High School girls’ and boys’ cross country teams, coach Pete Janiszkeski was quick to turn the spotlight from his runners to other student groups.

“We are blessed in Luverne with a lot of activities,” he said. “We had fall play put on a great production. We had a marching band with a good season. Tennis, volleyball and football with great seasons. Best wishes to the volleyball team as they play for their sub-section championship.”

While the volleyball players came up short against the No. 1 seed, the cross country runners were fresh off winning the Section 3A girls’ team championship and the boys’ team turning in a runners-up performance.

The school’s 650 sixth- through 12th-graders gathered for a pep fest in the school’s new performing arts center in a celebratory send-off for runners competing at the Nov. 6 state tournament.

For only the fourth time in school history — and the first time since 2011 — both the girls’ and the boys’ cross country teams qualified for the state tournament.

The girls’ team was returning for their eighth-consecutive state tournament appearance.

The boys’ team was returning after a nine-year absence.

“This crew has had a great season,” Janiszkeski said at the pep fest. “They accomplished a lot of things, but that is probably not what got them here — if they focus on accomplishments, they miss the meaning of things.”

“Stay humble. Stay hungry.” is the mantra Janiszkeski instilled in his runners for 2021.



Luverne Cross Country Coach Pete Janiszkeski (standing) addresses middle and high school students gathered in the school’s performing arts center Thursday afternoon, Nov. 4, for a pep fest that sent both the girls’ and boys’ cross country teams off to the state tournament. Team members included (from left) Kaleb Hemme, Leif Ingebretson, Owen Janiszkeski, Carsen Tofteland, Ethan Rahm, Griffen Jarchow, Khloe Visker, Ella Schmuck, Kianna Winter, Maria Rops, Brynn Boyenga, Makena Nelson, Kayla Bloemendaal, Jenna DeBates, Grace Ingebretsen, Tiana Lais, Tenley Nelson and assistant coach Jodi Nelson. Missing is senior Pierce Cunningham.

Team mantra: ‘Stay humble. Stay hungry.’

“If the competition won’t humble you, then life will humble you,” continued Janiszkeski. “We

really try to keep ourselves humble, which leads up to staying hungry and challenge ourselves and each other to strive for excellence and be a better version of ourselves — that really

helps us accomplish the things that they’ve accomplished.”

The goal for both teams was to return to the state cross coun-

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Luverne’s Tenley Nelson (700, far left) is among the top three runners during Saturday, Nov. 6, state cross country meet on the campus of St. Olaf College in Northfield. Amanda Overgaauw (706) from Murray County Central won the race. Nelson was second and Jade Rypkema (653) finished fifth. The sunny weather and high 50-degree temps made good running conditions.



Luverne junior Camden Janiszkeski (509) paces himself during Saturday’s state cross country meet in Northfield. Janiszkeski earned all-state honors for his 15th place finish out of 159 runners.



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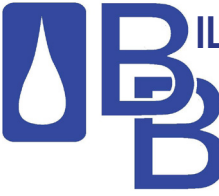
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try meet conducted annually at St. Olaf College in Northfield.

At this state tournament, Janiszeski challenged his runners to best the finish of previous Luverne teams.

For the boys’ team, they were to best the eighth-place team finish of 2004. None of the current boys’ runners had previous state experience.

The team had eight out of its nine former members returning in 2021, including Griffen Jarchow, a senior.

After finishing his first state race, Jarchow congratulated his younger teammates while looking toward the future.

“It’s good for you guys to get that experience,” he said.

The boys’ team finished ninth out of 16 teams in Class A with 159 runners completing the 5,000-meter course over rolling hills.

Thousands of people cheered from the sidelines.

“At first, it is a little overwhelming — especially for your first run,” said Camden Janiszeski, a junior.

Camden came into the state meet as top runner from the Section 3A championships. His brother, Owen, was second.

The brothers made school history this year when they finished 15th and 17th individually at the state meet. It was the first time LHS had two runners earn All-State accolades in the same year.

Besting previous team’s state finishes

Goals for the girls’ team were similar to the boys’: to best previous teams’ performances.

That meant the girls’ aim was to reach the top of the awards podium as winners of the Class A race.

In 2019 the girls’ team finished second, after finishing in fourth place (and off the podium) for three straight years (2015 to 2018).

Unlike the boys’ team, the girls’ team had several returning runners with state tournament experience.

Leading the team was senior Tenley Nelson, who has been a member of the team since 2016. Individually she’s placed third (2019) and fifth (2018) at the state tournament.

This year she placed second and led the LHS

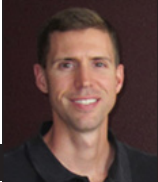
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LHS boys’ team state tournament 2021



Above left: Sophomore Ryan Fick (505) runs with teammate freshman Sage Viessman (513) during the Saturday, Nov. 6, state cross country meet in Northfield. **Above right:** Freshman Leif Ingebretson finished in 124th place. **Below left:** Griffen Jarchow (511), a senior, ran his last high school cross country race at the state tournament. Jarchow helped the Luverne High School team to a ninth-place finish. **Below right:** Camden Hoven keeps pace with runners during the 2021 state boys’ cross country meet in Northfield. Hoven finished 149th.





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Above: Luverne junior Camden Janiszkeski (509) also earned all-state honors for his 15th place finish out of the 159 runners competing in the Class A event. **Below:** Owen Janiszkeski (510) finishes as the 17th overall individual. His finish earned the LHS freshman an all-state distinction at the state tournament.



Photo courtesy of Angie Janiszkeski
Owen and Camden Janiszkeski

Janiszkeski Brothers

Three letters describe the atmosphere the Janiszkeski brothers, Camden and Owen bring to each other on the Luverne High School cross country team — F-U-N.

“It’s just fun,” said Camden, a junior. “I love pushing him. He’s got some special talent so it is fun watching that develop and push him to be his best.”

The brothers were among four LHS cross country members who achieved All-State status for their performances at the state tournament Nov. 6 in Northfield. The feat (with girls’ runners Tenley Nelson and Jenna DeBates) was a first in school history.

Family is credited in the brothers’ running success.

The Janiszkeskis grew up around the sport of running with their dad (and cross country coach), Pete, being influential in their decision to take up cross country.

However, Pete wasn’t the only influence in their running lives. Uncles Kevin and Chad (Pete’s brothers), who also have a passion for the sport, also competed in track and cross country during their high school years.

“Both boys have been spectators at the state cross country meet since they were

babies,” their mother, Angie, said. “Camden attended his first state track meet in utero when Chad was the 3,200-meter champion and placed second in the 1,600-meter run.”

The brothers have also been around LHS runners for most of their lives and enjoy the running atmosphere.

“Both of us love the sport so much and we are students of the sport,” Camden said. “I love watching races, college races and all that — going back we study races sometimes.”

The brothers were already studying the state course, watching the AAA portion of the state meet after running their own 5,000-meter race over the same terrain.

A desire for improvement has permeated from the years of being around the LHS teams during their dad’s 20-year career.

“Everybody pushes everybody every day,” Owen said. “If someone has an off day, we try to push them.”

Earlier this season, Camden was the one having off days. He struggled with what he describes as a “nagging Achilles injury and little stuff” that kept him from running at his best.

His mother noticed Camden’s struggles. “Camden didn’t finish his first race this season due to pain in his Achilles area and then for the next few races he had to stop to stretch 2-4 times during the race — something he’s never done before.”

Camden’s strength improved at the end of the season, while Owen continued to improve.

At the Section 3A meet in Madison, Camden overcame his injuries and finished first in the race that brought the boys’ team to a second-place finish and a berth in the state tournament for the first time since 2011. Owen was right behind in second place.

The accomplishment wasn’t lost to their dad/coach.

“It is so rewarding to watch their passion for running and competing blossom,” Pete said. “Watching their love for the sport, their selflessness towards their teammates, and their respect for their competitors grow — as well as the conversations and experiences we get to share with each other — has been unbelievable and is something I cherish.”



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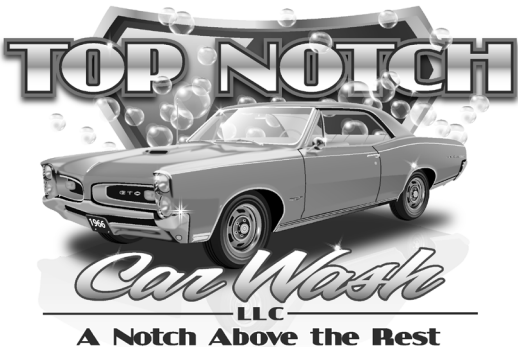
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team to a third-place finish.

The experience left the senior in tears. “It’s kind of hard to put into words,” Nelson said. “It just means so much because for so long it was hard to get on the podium.”

School history was achieved when two girls’ runners earned individual medals for finishing in the Top 10.

Joining Nelson on the awards podium was Jenna DeBates, a sophomore, who finished third. Her previous best state finish was 18th in 2019.

Success, DeBates said, comes from the team building and continued support among the teammates throughout the season.

Pulling together to reach the state podium again this year wasn’t an easy one.

“It was so special for us (as a team) because we lost four or five of our top nine runners. It was like coming into the year as a fresh team,” DeBates said.

In addition to the usual loss of members due to graduation, injury forced senior and veteran runner Brooklyn Versteeg out for the season.

Team support leads to strong program

Team building begins each summer during a summer running camp for both the girls’ and boys’ teams.

Unlike other sports, cross country has boys and girls traveling and competing on the same courses.

For senior runner Nelson, the boys’ team qualifying for the state meet this year had extra meaning.

“I think it is really cool and makes it more special,” she said. “Because not only are we close as a girls’ team, we are also close as an entire team.”

DeBates said when she first joined cross country as a seventh-grader three years ago, the older runners were encouraging but Nelson took on an extra role.

“She was probably the first person I would look to if I had a question,” DeBates said. “As soon as I cross the finish line — no matter what type of race she had — she’d reach over and help me.”

That support was also shown by graduates of the LHS cross country program as they cheered from the sidelines at the state event.

Nelson said she noticed the familiar faces of program graduates.

The remembrance of the cheers brought additional tears to Nelson. “It means a lot,” she said.

The team support is emphasized by Coach Janiszkeski and remembered by the

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LHS girls’ team state tournament 2021



Above left: Luverne junior Tiana Lais (699) heads to the back portion of the state cross country course. Lais finished the 5,000-meter course in 105th place out of 159 runners in Class A. **Above right:** Khloe Visker (702) competes in her first state cross country tournament. Visker finished 92nd. **Below left:** Sophomore Jenna DeBates runs an easy pace Saturday on her way to a third-place individual finish. **Below right:** Junior Grace Ingebretson (698) pushes herself Saturday, Nov. 6, in the state cross country tournament at St. Olaf College, Northfield.



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Above left: Ella Schmuck (701) and Kayla Bloemendaal (696) come down the final stretch before turning uphill to the finish line. Schmuck finished 60th and Bloemendaal 63rd in Saturday, Nov. 6, state race. **Above right:** Senior Tenley Nelson heads into the final stretch run to the finish line at the state tournament. Nelson placed second individually in the Class A tournament. **Below left:** The Luverne girl's cross country team gather together minutes before the start of the state tournament. **Below right:** Final high-fives before the tournament start.



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runners that include his son, Camden.

"We always get the analogy at the beginning of the year that we're one link in a big chain and that we're as strong as our weakest link," Camden said.

Coach Janiszkeski talked to each of his teams after their respective meets. He congratulated each of them for reaching all of this year's goals but the last ones — to best previous LHS teams at the state meet.

"When you shoot for the moon sometimes you hit the stars and today you were the stars," he said. "This has been one of the best days in Luverne cross country ever."

Boys', girls' state tournament results

The boys' cross country team placed ninth (with 222 points) out of 16 teams competing at the state tournament. There were 159 individual runners.

Winning the Class A boys' race was Jacob McCleary, a senior, from Perham high school in a time of 16:09.64.

Nova Classical Academy was the first-place team with 122 points.

Placing and times for the Luverne team runners were as follows:

- 15th, junior Camden Janiszkeski, 16:59.04.
- 17th, freshman Owen Janiszkeski, 17:02.54.
- 94th, senior Griffen Jarchow, 18:00.58.
- 117th, freshman, Sage Viessman, 18:25.28.
- 124th, freshman, Leif Ingebretson, 18:39.23.
- 136th, sophomore Ryan Fick, 18:41.49.
- 149th, junior Camden Hoven, 19:53.28.

In the girls' Class A race, Murray County Central High School junior Amanda Overgaaug won the 5,000-meter race with a time of 18:09.13. There were 156 runners in the Class A girls' race.

Staples-Motley High School won the team trophy with 103. Luverne, at third place, finished with 117 points.

- Placing and individual times for the Luverne team runners are as follows:
- 2nd, senior Tenley Nelson, 18:47.00.
 - 3rd, sophomore Jenna DeBates, 19:06.82.
 - 60th, eighth-grader Ella Schmuck, 20:47.18.
 - 63rd, sophomore Kayla Bloemendaal, 20:52.12.
 - 72nd, junior Grace Ingebretson, 21:05.95.
 - 92nd, seventh-grader Khloe Visker, 21:45.94.
 - 105th, junior Tiana Lais, 22:07.90.



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Awards podium state tournament 2021



Above: Tenley Nelson (left) placed second individually while teammate Jenna DeBates (right) placed third individually. Right: The team poses with their third place trophy. Pictured is (front, from left) Tiana Lais, Tenley Nelson, Jenna DeBates, Ella Schmuck, Coach Pete Janiszkeski, (back) assistant coach Jodi Nelson, Brynn Boyenga, Kianna Winter, Khloe Visker, Kayla Bloemendaal and Grace Ingebretson. Below: Coach Pete Janiszkeski gives his team their third-place medals.



2021 Luverne Cross Country

Girls Conference Champions
Girls Section 3A Champions
Girls State Class A – 3rd Place

Boys Conference – Runner-Up
Boys Section 3A – Runner- Up
Boys State Class A – 9th Place

Individual Accomplishments

Conference

- Tenley Nelson - 1st – All Conference
- Jenna DeBates – 3rd – All Conference
- Kayla Bloemendaal - 4th – All Conference
- Ella Schmuck – 5th – All Conference
- Grace Ingebretson - 9th – All Conference Honorable Mention
- Camden Janiszkeski – 5th – All Conference
- Owen Janiszkeski – 6th – All Conference
- Griffen Jarchow – 9th – All Conference Honorable Mention

Sections and State

Girls	Sections	State	Boys	Sections	State
Tenley Nelson	2 nd	2 nd	Camden Janiszkeski	1 st	15 th
Jenna DeBates	3 rd	3 rd	Owen Janiszkeski	2 nd	17 th
Ella Schmuck	11 th	60 th	Griffen Jarchow	12 th	94 th
Kayla Bloemendaal	14 th	63 rd	Sage Viessman	24 th	117 th
Grace Ingebretson	20 th	72 nd	Ryan Fick	42 nd	126 th
Khloe Visker	24 th	92 nd	Leif Ingebretson	44 th	124 th
Tiana Lais	29 th	105 th	Camden Hoven	64 th	149 th
Kianna Winter	ALT	-	Carsen Tofteland	ALT	-
Brynn Boyenga	ALT	-	Kaleb Hemme	ALT	-

“To give anything less than your **BEST** is to sacrifice the gift.”

- Steve Prefontaine



JOHN DEERE



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