



### **Kwekel beats defending state champion**

CENTRAL LAKE - The word spread.

With an enticing shorter distance to break athletes into the season, cross country squads from far and wide traveled to Central Lake on Saturday for the 2nd Annual Ryan Shay Cross Country Invitational, held at McPherson Farm. In terms of teams and runners present, the meet virtually doubled in size over the inaugural event last year.

Bellaire's Emily Kwekel delivered an early season wake up call to many by defeating Mt. Pleasant Sacred Heart's Bridgett Bennett, the defending Division 4 state champion and meet record holder, by 11 seconds to win the race in 12:20.7. Classmate Katie Odom ran as well (41st-15:49.9).

The Ellsworth Lady Lancers placed fifth in a stacked field that included Harbor Springs, Sacred Heart, and Boyne Falls. Freshman Olivia Certa (14:04.4) led the way by rounding out the top 20. Other point earners were: Lindsey Fisher (27th-14:26.6), Tara Essenberg (44th-15:52.7), Jalyn Ingalls (50th-16:25.6), and Norma Oviedo (58th-16:58.8). Other finishers were Emily Veenstra (67th-18:04.8) and Chelsea Randall (72nd-19:11.7).

In other local individual results, Sarah Lambert (13:59.8) represented Central Lake with an 18th place finish, Taylor Roberts (48-16:06.3) and Kristi Leitow (53rd-16:37.4) led Alba, and Kaylee Moore (49th-16:10.9), Monique Hockridge (56th-16:54.1), Audry Burk (69th-18:23.7), and Kendra Thompson (73rd-20:02.4) paced Mancelona.

The host Trojans had a respectable sixth place showing in the boys varsity race behind Harbor Springs, Sacred Heart, Onaway, Boyne Falls, and Wolverine. Central Lake Junior Jordan Becker led the local contingent as he cracked the top 10 with a seventh place finish (11:05.5). Other Trojan finishers were: Zack Harvey (20th-11:49.4), Ryan Moore (31st-12:19), Logan Snyder-Olsen (55th-13:20.6), and Spencer Moore (14:24-73).

Ellsworth, with just one upperclassman, placed seventh and was led by Sophomore Jacob Seaney (18th-11:47.7). Other point earners were: Jordan Muma (22nd-11:49.9), Dalton Swenson (39th-12:37.3), Jacob Collins (57th-13:21.2), and Chance Randall (65th-13:46.8).

The young Ironmen took eighth and were paced by Freshman Shayne Dingman (23rd-11:50.2). Other point earners were: Cameron Skutt (35th-12:23), Sunny Ray (45th-12:50.7), RJ Homan (54th-13:20.3), and Dan Johnson (59th-13:32.8). Also finishing was Max Koenig (70th-14:18.4).

Alba placed tenth as a team and was led by Wilby Gates (53rd-13:16.5). Other point earners were: Joe Dixon (56th-13:21), Mark Millard (61st-13:35.8), Eric Irish (64th-13:39), and Steven Strouse (74th-14:26.3). Other finishers were Joey Jewell (77th-14:33.5) and Trevor Pigg (79th-14:40).

In the JV race, Alba's Tianna Windish (9th-16:14.9) had a top 10 finish. Also finishing were: Emily Harris (19:25.1), Breeann Hoogerhyde (24th-20:14.1), and Katie Milbocker (28th-21:22.3). Running for Central Lake were: Sarah Eklund (15th-17:22.7), Megan Brown (18th-18:24.5), and Wilhelmina Witt (19th-18:24.5). In the boys JV race, Daryl Kiel (6th-14:23) and Alex Carter (13th-15:39.3) ran for Mancelona, Alba was represented by Ron Westcott (8th-14:36.9), Andy Shepard (11th-15:17), and Ian Pigg (15th-16:03.3)