

Bigger, stronger Evans is surprise winner

Written by Jim Ecker

Saturday, 27 August 2011 19:14 - Last Updated Saturday, 27 August 2011 19:20



Linn-Mar sophomore Josh Evans has bulked up.

He's no longer the little kid who measured 5-foot-4 and 105 pounds last spring during the high school track season.

He's noticeably bigger now.

"I'd say probably 5-foot-6 1/2, maybe 5-7. Probably 110 to 112 pounds," he said Saturday.

Well, maybe "bulked up" isn't the right description, but he's definitely bigger and stronger.

Evans proved it Saturday morning with a convincing victory at the 28th Cedar Rapids Prairie Invitational with a 16-minute clocking for five kilometers.

The Lions placed six runners in the top 20 and edged Iowa City West for the team championship, 59-61.

Daniel Murphy finished ninth for Linn-Mar, followed by Tyler Chlystun (13th), Keegan Cook

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(17th) and Matt Simon (19th). Bryce Poellet finished 20th, but wasn't needed for the team scoring.

Evans hid in the middle of the pack as the field climbed the first hill at Prairie, then began picking off runners.

"I wasn't really expecting to win. I was hoping to get a good time and hang with some of the better guys here," he said. "I was kind of surprised when I was able to pass them."

Evans passed Etienne Nzoyisaba of Washington, who finished second in 16 minutes, 18 seconds. He passed Isaac Jensen, of Iowa City West who placed third in 16:25 and also passed Conner Smock of Mount Vernon, who was fourth in 16:27.

"I just feel like I've been getting faster and faster," Evans said. "My endurance seems to stay the same. I can tell I can sprint better now."

Evans missed the early part of the 2010 cross country season with a stress fracture in his right shin. He's completely healthy now and prepared for the season with regular 7 or 8 mile runs during the week and 10 or 11 mile jaunts on weekends.

As far as he's concerned, the longer the better. "I don't think marathon yet," he said. "Maybe 8Ks would be kind of fun."

The Washington Warriors finished third out of 16 teams behind Nzoyisaba and Robert Hogg, who placed sixth in 16 minutes, 34 seconds.

Jacob Aune of Prairie claimed fifth place in the individual standings to help the Hawks finish in sixth place on their home course. Prairie won the Class 4A state cross country title last year, but was hit hard by graduation.

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Lucas Mees finished in seventh place to help the Marion Indians place seventh in the team standings.

Xavier placed eighth in the team standings and Kennedy was ninth.

PRAIRIE INVITATIONAL

Boys Team Standings

1. Linn-Mar 59, 2. Iowa City West 61, 3. Washington 115, 4. Monticello 118, 5. Mount Vernon 148, 6. Prairie 151, 7. Marion 198, 8. Xavier 205, 9. Kennedy 228, 10. Solon 281, 11. Columbus Community 322, 12. Anamosa 346, 13. Benton Community 350, 14. West Liberty 357, 15. Valley Lutheran 422, 16. Calamus Wheatland 489.

Top 10 Individuals

1. Josh Evans, Linn-Mar 16:00
2. Etienne Nzovisaba, Washington 16:18
3. Isaac Jensen, I.C. West 16:25
4. Conner Smock, Mount Vernon 16:27
5. Jacob Aune, Prairie 16:34
6. Robert Hogg, Washington 16:34
7. Lukas Mees, Marion 16:36
8. Daniel Gardarsson, I.C. West 16:36
9. Daniel Murphy, Linn-Mar 16:43
10. Bailey Wetherell, I.C. West 16:49

LINN-MAR

1. Josh Evans 16:00
9. Daniel Murphy 16:43
13. Tyler Chlystun 17:20
17. Keegan Cook 17:32
19. Matt Simon 17:32
20. Bryce Poellet 17:33
26. Duggan Trenary 17:50

WASHINGTON

2. Etienne Nzoyisaba 16:18
6. Robert Hogg 16:34
32. Joe Berry 18:07
35. Matt Wittman 18:08

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- 40. Trevor Luebe 18:22
- 43. Jon Rockwell 18:39
- 54. Devin Dills 19:06

PRAIRIE

- 5. Jacob Aune 16:34
- 27. Zach Waite 17:54
- 29. Walker Thompson 18:02
- 39. Christian Counts-Chopli 18:18
- 51. Jeremy Cline 18:57
- 60. Luke Galloway 19:22
- 76. Derek Wheatley 20:18

MARION

- 7. Lukas Mees 16:36
- 28. Cole Kuethe 17:55
- 38. Peter Rethwisch 18:13
- 47. Isaac Smith 18:49
- 78. Jordan Garthwaite 20:33
- 79. Sophoni Ndayimbaze 20:33
- 84. Colton Forster 20:54

XAVIER

- 24. Ben Schueler 17:41
- 36. Daniel Pape 18:09
- 41. Grant Hunt 18:22
- 45. Connor Marks 18:42
- 59. Brian Ropp 19:22
- 63. Hunter Wille 19:26
- 77. Zach Stovie 20:20

KENNEDY

- 11. Trevor Oates 17:12
- 25. Ryan Walker 17:45
- 53. Austin Trotter 19:03
- 68. Seth Kirkegaard 19:52
- 71. Chad Slaymaker 20:08
- 81. Ethan Williams 20:39
- 88. James Kern 21:27