

# Man vs. Nature

Team builds endurance during Colorado trip

The distance was four miles. The ascent was 3,000 feet. It had rained and made mud. And the horse got a head start, making it almost impossible for the men to win.

Coaches Matt Jaschen and Patrick Mattingley devised the Man vs. Horse challenge, along with six others to improve team unity and practice problem solving. Forty runners and 10 adults traveled to the Ute Lodge in Meeker, Colorado, the week of July 29 - Aug. 4.

For the Man vs. Horse challenge, the horse started up the mountain 15 minutes before the runners did. Runners had to reach the summit before the horse.

"The horses got a head start, and we had to try to catch up to them. It was challenging due to the fact that we had to run up mud as well," junior Karson Kleve said. The horse challenged runners more by leaving a few droppings along the way.

"Some of the switchbacks I started crawling because it hurt less to crawl than to run," senior Evan Newcomb said.

At the summit each runner added a rock to the rock pile that originated six years ago when the program first started travelling to Colorado. Only juniors and seniors attended. To be eligible for the trip, a runner had to run 90% of the days during the summer.

Another challenge called High Ropes involved crawling across a stream using a rope, the idea being not to touch the water. Junior Brad Vu experienced water. "As I got down on my stomach in the stream, I could feel the cold and chilling water rush through

my shirt," he said.

Runners earned points for each challenges. Senior Luke Perman won with 312. He also beat the horse up the mountain.

Two unanticipated challenges involved wind and fire. During the bus ride there, the team witnessed a tornado in Brush, Colorado. The charter bus shook back and forth, hail fell, and pieces of debris blew through the air. The team tried to make it to shelter in a Wendy's, but as the driver opened the bus door, the tornado struck. "The tornado was about three football fields away, and we just see the roof of a building going vertical," Jaschen said.

The storm caught some nappers off-guard. "I woke up and on the left (side of the bus) it was a perfect, sunny day, and on the right it was dark and scary," junior Charlie Pattinson said. "We were freaked." They huddled in the center of the bus covered with blankets.

A forest fire erupted 10 miles from their cabins. For the team's service project they cleared logs. "Out back behind the houses, we cleaned out some of the brush so the forest wouldn't burn down as easy," senior Michael Schmitz said.

Senior Joe Schaefer gave a rousing, 45-minute speech about team culture the night they voted for captains. He told the team, "I want to leave the jersey in a better place." He was voted a captain.

By the end of the trip, the team noticed an improvement. Junior Jacob Knox said, "The trip showed how hard you're willing to



1. Junior Nathan Tegeler races to the finish line at the Tom Karpen Invitational. Tegeler finished second in the team with a time of 17:42, coming in six seconds behind the team's top finisher junior Hunter Briggs. (Photo by Evan Newcomb)

2. At the Tom Karpen Invitational, junior Sam Schmitz finishes with a time of 17:49. Three of his fellow teammates also finished in under 17 minutes. (Photo by Evan Newcomb)

3. Staying with the pack and keeping his pace, senior Luke Perman runs at state. Perman finished with a time of 16:30.5. "The meets are fun because they create a competitive atmosphere and draw a lot of spectators," Perman said. (Photo by Evan Newcomb)

4. Running at districts, junior Paxson Picken ended with a time of 17:48.7, which was enough to qualify him for state. At state, his time was 17:36, helping the team finish in ninth place. (Photo by Evan Newcomb)

5. Rounding a corner, sophomore Carson Stanley runs at the Indianola Invitational. "This was my first varsity race," he said. "I was every anxious." It was a hot day with the temperature reaching 91 degrees. He ran a 18:57. (Photo by Evan Newcomb)



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