



**CROSS COUNTRY TEAM  
NVHS BOOSTER CLUB FEATURED ATHLETES OF THE WEEK  
CROSS COUNTRY PROGRAM**

*The NVHS Athletic Booster Club is proud to present the featured athletes of this week, cross country runners CONNOR HORN, MICHAEL WIDMANN, DANIEL WEISS, DOMINIC DINA, AUSTIN KINNE, CALEB FERGUSSON, AIDAN LIVINGSTON, JAKE MCENEANEY, PATRICK WOLAK, MATT HORSLEY, MATT MILOSTAN, and MAX RAINER. These athletes are part of the 140 men who make the cross country family. They led the pack. Seven of them represented the team at the IHSA State championship, but the others were vital to getting the team there. They were asked to talk about the team's values. Here is what they said:*

**SELF DISCIPLINE (By Caleb):** We do something truly extraordinary everyday to achieve a goal. Cross Country, despite how simple it may appear at first glance, is undeniably a thinking man's sport. The outsider may see a bunch of boys just running down their street everyday, but they have no idea the thought and work that goes into what we do every single day. It requires such a balance to really become your absolute best that each and every run has its purpose. That is why self-discipline is so important in understanding why you do what you do each and every day. As a runner you cannot just go out and hammer out miles assuming you will become better and better but you have to think and understand the reasoning behind each workout. As people in running always say, it is 90 percent mental and 10 percent physical.

**BALANCE (By Aidan):** Ultimately, all of us are students athletes; with the level at our team competes, others in our position would consider academics an afterthought. However, we achieve a striking equilibrium between both scholastics and athletics.

**GOAL SETTING (Pat):** In order to become a successful athlete physically and mentally, you need to assign yourself with a challenging and attainable goal. You must have an organized and spread out plan to attain this goal. If you set a goal that is too simple or too difficult, you will not have a real feeling of accomplishment. Our team had a very attainable goal going into the state meet. Luckily, our team is determined to carry the goals we had during the cross country season into the track season. When we have reached our goals, we will as a team feel a sense of accomplishment in ourselves because we lived up to the goals and challenges we assigned ourselves in the months before the season.

**POSITIVE OUTLOOK (Daniel):** Your outlook affects everything, and you have the power to change it. We choose to stay positive, not just for ourselves but for each other. We are a team, and that means staying hopeful in the face of overwhelming adversity. We love what we do, and that enthusiasm is all we need to succeed.

**SELF-CONFIDENCE (Matt M):** Everyone needs to have self-confidence in order to succeed. To win, you first have to believe that you can win. When we go to the line to race, I know that we all have confidence that we can win because of all the hours spent training and all of the miles put in preparing for that moment on the line. We have prepared for any scenario and know that when the time comes we will be ready. We have confidence that we will run as fast as humanly possible and never give in to the pain. We not only have confidence in ourselves to run our best, but we have confidence in our fellow teammates and our ability to push each other to reach our full potential.

**FAMILY (Connor and Jake):** What makes our team great is not only the fast runners we produce, but the team culture that is shared by every man on the team. Everyone understands their responsibility on our team and we all work to fulfill our duty to NVXC in different ways, whether that means running in the state meet, or being a part of the great mass of supportive Neuqua runners. We are so much deeper than just the seven that represent us at state; without the 100+ guys behind it all, we could not hope to find the success that we enjoy every year. At any point when you are racing with a Neuqua jersey on, you feel a sense of pride in that you are not racing for yourself. You are racing for everyone who is on the team or has been on the team and we are all happy to represent that.

**LEADERSHIP (Dominic):** Leadership ties a team together. It's a bond that tightens friendships, teamwork, and depth. It keeps the team disciplined and excited while providing the team with a sense of accomplishment and safety. A leader is someone who reminds you what the team is about and what it should be. Luckily, we have had a selfless, dedicated, and determined leader who would do anything for the good of the team.

**HUMBLENESS (Max):** - I think a major reason this team has worked, bonded, and succeeded so well is that there is a universal humility amongst each and every one of us. Not just the state team, but all 140 athletes, share the same common purpose and attitude regardless of ability level. The simple fact that we have the opportunity to be a part of such a great program is enough to keep us humble. We are empowered by failure, not

devastated by it. If there's one thing I have learned about this team, it's that it will do everything in its power to attain its goals, but not at the risk of sacrificing its humility.

**COURAGE (Mike):** The meaning of this value is very important to my teammates and I. The meaning of this value is one of the most important ones to us because it talks about race day, and how to be at your best when it really matters. This value is the "blueprint" to success in a race, and I know that if I can do what this value says on race day, there is no end to what my teammates and I can achieve.

**ROUNDEDNESS (Matt H.):** Every team works hard during practice, but what separates the great teams from the rest of the pack is the willingness to make smart decisions during the 22 hours a day outside of practice. To be the best team that we can be requires a great amount of sacrifice from every individual.

**SERVICE (Austin):** With a team that shares so much respect for one another, we constantly want to bring the best out of one another by helping each other, the community, and our coaches in anyway possible. Since they bring the best out of us come race day, we want to be there to give back in any way we can. Our acts of service are driven by the gratitude we feel for their positive influence in our lives.