



NICK BUSHELLE
NVHS BOOSTER CLUB FEATURED ATHLETE OF THE WEEK
BOYS CROSS COUNTRY PROGRAM

It is tempting to look at the track record of an athlete such as Nick Bushelle and think he was born ready (running long distance since 8th grade, Nick has helped his team place third and seventh at the State Meet in the past two seasons. He is currently the Upstate Eight Conference Champion and holds one of the fastest times for a District 204 runner).

Nick is here to tell us this is just not the case. "Cross country is very much a mental sport", he says, revealing that the pressure an athlete puts on himself to perform well can and usually does backfire, hindering good performance. "As a sophomore, I wasn't as good as everyone expected and it was difficult to stay optimistic." His turn around was when he realized that no one would look down on him if he were putting in all his effort. His perspective changed from focusing on the result to committing to doing the very best he could. Nick credits his coach for teaching him about consistency and moderation.

In Nick's words, "coach Vandersteen encourages all runners to enjoy the sport regardless of their talent". He adds, "the level of dedication to be successful in distance running is applicable to all other areas of interest. I have also learned how to manage my time and balance it with other parts of my life. I get as much homework done during school as I can and make sure to get to bed on time."

Speaking of life, Nick is excited about what the future holds in store for him (in a bitter sweet side note, he says he will miss the team atmosphere in Neuqua's cross country program). He has been visiting Princeton, Columbia, University of Illinois and University of Michigan to find out which college will be the best fit for him. He assures us that he plans on continuing his cross-country practice.

What is his advice for those who are thinking of joining the sport? "Even if you don't like running at first, you should give it a try. Most people don't like it when they start but really enjoy the team atmosphere and learn to like it." He also suggests putting in solid running mileage during the summer and winter to build up the aerobic base that will give the new athlete the consistency to be successful through the end of the season. As his favorite inspirational quote says: "by failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail."