



# Blue & White

A Weekly Production from the MHS Journalism Class

P.O. Box 580-Montezuma, IA 50171- www.montezuma-schools.org/BlueWhite.aspx

## Monte XC Reached the Finish

A reflection on the 2017 MHS Cross Country season.

**By Brayden Stockman**  
 Cross country is almost over, and this year has been huge for the Montezuma Cross Country team. It gained two new coaches in head coach Kevin Gartman and assistant coach Ally Fillmore, replacing Heather Schmidt and Kaurie Marinkovich, and grew in size from last year by 12 runners. Two runners from the girls team, freshman Elise Boulton and senior Olivia Krousie, also advanced to state and will run this Saturday at the Lakeside Golf Course in Fort Dodge.

The cross country team began practicing during the summer, and began running meets on August 30th at the Iowa Mennonite Invitational. They have since run 11 meets including the Montezuma home meet, the conference meet at Colfax-Mingo, and

the district meet hosted by Pekin in Ottumwa. This is Coach Gartman's first year as coach of the cross country team, and he said that he wanted to become a cross country coach despite the fact that he had never run cross country before.

"I saw it as a great chance to develop the program and really help to create a positive team culture that encourages one another for success. It's a sport that not a lot of people know about and have experience with. It's such a powerful state that you have to battle so many obstacles. It is a sport that is so mentally and emotionally demanding and I looked forward to the chance to help each athlete better themselves," Gartman said.

Coach Fillmore volunteered-coached during

the 2016 cross country season, and participated in cross country from her 8th grade year in Ogden High School to her senior year at Luther College. She believed that she could be an asset to the team due to her knowledge of the sport.

The cross country team has also grown exponentially this year. 7 new junior high runners joined the team for the first year, as well as 10 new high school runners along with 2 high school runners who chose not to run last year but participated previously.

Fillmore stated that, "It has changed into a team. The comradery is definitely there. I think as a whole there's not one person that leaves practice not liking the sport. We're all there for each other. There's no politics or drama. We're all here for the same goal."

One of the major ways that the team has changed since last year was the inclusion of new awards given the day after the race. These awards included various items, such as a baby doll and gold spray-painted running shoes given to runners as a variety of merits, such as pushing through the toughest or having the most team spirit.

Coach Fillmore stated that she included the awards because it was something that her team did in college, and she believed it gave something for everybody, not only the fastest, to look forward to after a meet.

Many of the runners themselves have changed since the beginning of the season, as many are new and are just experiencing cross

country for the first time. "I think as a whole everyone has changed, they all know and believe in their abilities. They've found more ways to be positive on the course and at practice. I mean, people's times have gone down; that's a big change, too," said Coach Fillmore.

Though it's been something new, Gartman says he enjoys cross country, stating, "Watching individuals meet their goals, whether it be a new time crossing the finish line for the first time, or finishing a race only running instead of walking." He would also like to tell the team that he is proud of them, saying, "I am so proud of them, and I mean that. For everything they've gone through this year, we've made so much progress. I can not

be more proud of the athletes and who they are."

Gartman would like to thank the community for all of their continuous support, saying, "Thanks for your support. It was awesome having really great attendants at our home meet, and seeing them at the other meets. Our athletes really appreciate the support they have each and every day."

Fillmore would also like to inspire more community members to watch a cross country meet, saying, "If you haven't witnessed XC or this XC program, you really should get out to a meet sometime and see it for yourself because it's the most unique sport in the way that everyone supports everyone, even the spectators. Thanks community! for being a community!"



ABOVE: The cross country team flashes big smiles after a season of hard work and many accomplishments.

Photo credit: Carrie Stockman



ABOVE: Cheering on the Montezuma Braves, the MHS cheer team has the best school spirit.

Photo credit: Maddy McKeag

## Wrap up to Football Cheer 2017

**By Carrie Jennings**  
 The Montezuma football season is drawing to a close, leaving many community members sad yet excited for next year's season. Few acknowledge, however, that varsity football cheerleading is also coming to a halt for the season as well.

The girls this year included Jolene Lechtenberg (senior), Amber Lechtenberg (junior), Jesse Moyer (junior), Breck Goodman (senior), Haley Anderson (senior), Chiane Hartman (sophomore), and Makaela Meyer (sophomore).

For Anderson and Goodman, this is their first and last year for high school cheerleading.

"I've always liked cheerleading," Anderson states enthusiastically. "I did it in Grinnell when I was little, and I fell in love with it."

She held off on trying out for cheerleading until this year. She participated this year because it was her senior year, and she wanted to try something new.

To those who are considering trying out for cheerleading in the future, though, Anderson urges not to do what she did. "If you want to do anything, don't wait until your senior year, or you might just fall in love with it and maybe not be able to do it again."

Cheerleading is a sport

that means a lot of different things to a lot of different people. When asked what cheerleading was to her, Hartman responded that it is quite the mental sport in that even when not cheering, one must still think like a cheerleader.

Anderson agrees with that as well. "It's our top priority to be a good role model for the kids that look up to us, both on and off the field."

Jolene Lechtenberg also believes that being a role model and a leader is important for cheerleaders. "Leadership and getting to carry the school spirit to the rest of the school and the community."

When asked what her favorite part of cheerleading was, Lechtenberg said it was "getting to teach... the cheers and share my love of cheer."

Hartman would like to tell anyone interested in becoming a cheerleader not to listen to cheer stereotypes. Lechtenberg urges kids to "start young, and if you enjoy it, don't let anyone stop you from doing what you love."

Overall, the girls agree that this has been an amazing season, and while they will be losing some girls after this season, they are still looking forward to seeing what next year has in store for them.

## The Blue and White Staff



## Calendar of Events

Thursday	Friday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Varsity Volleyball Regional Semi-Finals @ TBA - 7:00 pm	No Activities	No Activities	Volleyball Regional Finals @ TBA - 7:00 pm	No Activities	No Activities