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First One There Campo's Goltra Secures First Male XC State Title

By Rebecca Eckland



Aidan Goltra #578 Photo provided

The finish was humbling. "Although I had won state a few weeks ago, there is still another tier of competition to master," he said.

Goltra has been running for most of his life. "[But] it wasn't until the sixth grade that I actually began to take running seriously," he said. That was the year Goltra, as a member of team Pleasanton Heat, competed in a cross country race for the Junior Olympics in Raleigh. He placed fourth in the 3 km race.

Afterward, even though his junior high didn't offer cross country or track, he kept running on his own.

He joined the cross country team at Los Lomas for his freshman and sophomore years before transferring to Campolindo. "Campo has a different atmosphere. They have a great team and I wanted to be the best I could be at this time in my life," he said.

Woodrich noted the program has a different approach to practice. "We do a lot more than just run, and our practice sessions take up considerable time," he explained, "[yet] he did not miss a single practice session over the course of the entire season. He truly identifies himself as a runner and has completely embraced the lifestyle."

Due to CIF rules, Goltra had to sit out the first half of the season, a decision that contributed to his success at the state meet by saving his strongest race efforts for later in the season.

Looking ahead, Goltra plans to compete in track and field this spring and looks forward to his senior season. He's thought about running in college, but hasn't made any definite plans.

Running cross country requires personal integrity and endurance. It "takes a great deal of character," said Campolindo cross country coach Chuck Woodrich, "and Aidan [Goltra] is a fine example of this."

Though only a junior at Campo, Goltra took the Division III state title in cross country on the Woodward Park 5k course Nov. 24. He finished with a time of 15:18, a Campolindo record on the state meet course. He is the first Campo male runner to take the State Title.

Goltra remembers the race starting with a first fast mile. "By the second mile, a lead pack had broken away from the field, and with about 1000 meters to go I made my move," he explained.

And though Goltra held his position in the lead pack, he admitted he was nervous. "[It was] daunting at first. I believed that I belonged there, and that I could win," he said.

The win moved him onto the Regional meet in LA the following week. He decided at the last minute to compete and finished 20th overall and was the 10th best non-senior in the race.

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