

# GOLD RUSH: Grant Union cross country hosts home meet

By Angel Carpenter  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Thursday, Oct. 24, was a great day for a “Gold Rush.”

One hundred high school cross country runners hoped to “strike it rich” at the Grant Union Prospector home meet, held at the Seventh Street Complex in John Day.

The race, which started near the Jimmy Allen Memorial Trail and Trafton Pond, was the first the Prospectors had hosted in three years, and the largest gathering of teams for a Grant Union cross country meet since 1997 or 1998, said Grant Union head coach Sonna Smith.

“I had so much help that it literally flowed smoothly,” Smith said. “We had eight high school teams, including GU, and five middle school teams.”

Visiting high schools included Burns, Ontario, Four Rivers (Ontario), Baker, Vale, Heppner and Condon.

She said her runners were excited to have a home meet because most of them were eighth-graders at the time of their last Gold Rush.

Smith said the course is a good practice run for the district meet, because it’s similar with not many hills but a lot of rolling ups and downs.

“I had my girls run in a tighter pack, which is what you always want in cross country because it raises your team score,” she said.

All six Grant Union girls, except one, set personal records on the course.

“All of the athletes are peaking at the right time,” Smith said.

On the boys side, Gage Brandon and Donovan Smith had season bests and Jesse Randleas, Gavin Lopez and Cole Ashley set personal records.

“We had great weather and great competition, with many of my athletes running their best races of the season,” coach Smith said “We are right on schedule for the



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

Grant Union Prospector Quinn Larson, right, competes in Thursday’s Gold Rush Run at the Seventh Street Complex in John Day.



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Grant Union Prospector cross country runner Riley Robertson (172), a sophomore, settles in at the start of the Thursday, Oct. 24, Gold Rush at the Seventh Street Complex in John Day.



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Grant Union Prospector Erica Dickens, right, runs in the Gold Rush, her team’s home meet held at the Seventh Street Complex in John Day.

**BOYS RESULTS**

- Brady Dole, 14, 18:51.78
- Quinn Larson, 30, 20:03.81
- Jesse Randleas, 37, 20:42.14 PR
- Gage Brandon, 38, 20:56.45 SR
- Max Bailey, 40, 21:40.73
- Gavin Lopez, 44, 22:19.36 PR
- Cole Ashley, 48, 23:16.33 PR
- Donavan Smith, 50, 23:23.79 SR

**GIRLS RESULTS**

- Erika Dickens, 12, 22:22.52
- Rylee Browning, 15, 23:01.63 PR
- Katelyn Hughes, 22, 24:54.82 PR
- Tiler Voigt, 33, 26:35.19 PR
- Riley Robertson, 39, 27:29.47 PR
- Mikiah Kimble, 41, 28:34.82 PR

who had never experienced a home meet, said she liked the familiarity of the course.

“I liked it the best out of all the races I’ve done,” she said.

For the Grant Union middle school racers, seventh-grade Madelyn Bailey placed second out of 23 runners in the 3,000-meter race.

final sharpening for district this week.”

“I would like to give a big thanks to the city of John

Day and Parks and Rec for making our race possible and assisting us in having it come off a great success,” she said.

“I had tons of volunteers that helped me during the races, and I would like to give them a shout-out of appreciation

from myself and the team. We could not have done it without all of the help.”  
Senior Rylee Browning,

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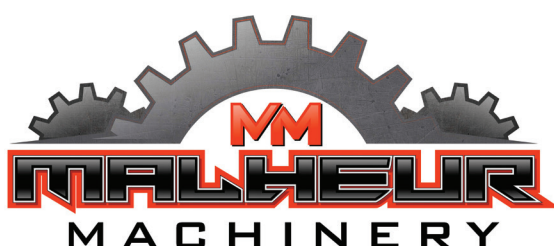
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