

Clovis Invitational

Conditions: Hot, and dusty. Race times 12:40 and 1:25 pm.

Varsity: 27th out of 33 teams

Blake Harris 16:32 → 15:55

Noah Freeman 18:13 → 17:32

Hayden Ritchie 18:18 → 17:37

Steven Fick 18:32 → 17:51

Devin Gibbons 19:09 → 18:26

Andrew Chapin 19:44 → 19:00

The purpose of Clovis Invitational this year was to go up and have a good time. Every single person who ran at this meet has the potential to come back again next year to represent Esperanza and improve upon this year's performances. Chances are high that next year, our teams will have the luxury of running in the morning as well. While these 5k times aren't necessarily blazing fast, we competed well. Keep in mind that the conditions were less than ideal for running fast times, and I imagine that sucking in exhaust and ramming go karts with teammates the night before the race isn't conducive to running fast times anyway.

Lesson to learn from: ALWAYS pack a uniform. ALWAYS bring the school issued uniform, even if you've been running varsity and haven't used the school issued uniform. Always. Always. Always.

Blake Harris ran arguably the best race of the day for the Aztecs as he bumped off Josh Park from the Junior All-Time List. Harris ran 16:32 for the 5k, which converts to just under 16 minutes for 3 miles.

<http://finishedresults.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Race-14.pdf>

If you look at the splits for the Varsity race, you'll see that Harris was in 9th place with a mile to go. He looked comfortable and relaxed through the mile in 4:57, and hung in well with that front pack. **You can't teach front-running.** Harris has made the leap from running in the front of F/S races last year, to running in the front of varsity races this year. Although he faded over the last mile or so, dropping 10 spots to finish 19th overall, the good news is that he is a junior. Next year, he'll be another year older, and a whole heck-uova lot stronger. Trust in your training, and believe that you'll have more in the tank when it matters most in the season. Good work kid.

F/S: 11th out of 29 teams

Hunter Talbott 18:25 → 17:44

Mike Lima-Sabatini 19:14 → 18:31

Ian Ron 19:35 → 18:51

Craig Garza 19:51 → 19:07

Jesse Wilch 20:14 → 19:29

Nathan Wilch DNF

Parker Wallace DNR

I was super pleased with how this team ran on the day. There are a lot of positives that we can take away from this meet. It's hard playing the "Coulda-shoulda-woulda" game, but here it goes. We only had 5 runners cross the finish line for this f/s team, and with these 5 runners, we finished 11th out of 29 teams. This is great. Heading into the race, I was asked where I thought this team would finish, and what should we shoot for as a squad. I stated that top-10 would be a great goal, and that it is completely possible. Coming through the first

mile, we looked very strong. Our first 5 runners came through in a nice, tight pack running 5:33 to 5:36. We were in a great position team wise, and I thought for sure we could have finished top 5 at that point in the race. <http://finishedresults.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Race-16.pdf>

Parker Wallace did not race, and he could have helped this team a lot, as he *could* have been #1 man, as he's beaten all of these guys before. Unfortunately, Wallace has a muscle-related chest issue that he's working on, and he opted not to race.

Nathan Wilch passed out during the race with a little more than half a mile left to go in the race. This marks the 2nd time that Wilch has gone into another world while racing. This is not normal, and because this is the 2nd time it has happened this season, we must ask ourselves two questions: Why is this happening? And how do we prevent it from happening again?

We'll figure it out, but it might have been dehydration. It might have been heat-related. The goal was to keep the team in the shade as long as possible, and we brought water to the starting line to pour on their heads/necks/uniforms to keep you cool. Nathan turned it down, and I'm not saying that it could have prevented him from passing out, but it *might* have helped.

Noah Freeman, Hayden Ritchie, and Devin Gibbons all ran up at the varsity level, and they would have certainly helped this f/s squad to a better finish, as Freeman and Ritchie would have finished as 1st and 2nd man, with Gibbons finishing as 4th man behind Talbott, and Lima-Sabatini rounding out the scoring five. It's tough to say where we could have finished had everything gone according to plan...seeing as how you all ran in two separate races, but the future looks bright.

Hunter Talbott- This kid shows glimpses of greatness every now and then. Hunter is a little bit of a goof ball, but when the gun goes off, it's serious business until he crosses the line. Talbott seems to do better on tougher courses. The tougher it is, the better he performs compared to his peers. This is important, because the courses that matter the most (Mt. SAC and Woodward Park [CIF & State]), are pretty tough courses. Talbott moved up throughout the race, he was #1 man through the mile mark and he kept on pushing. Coming down the homestretch, those who were watching saw a determined, hard-working kid grinding out every last bit of energy he had with a blistering fast kick. Talbott kept checking behind him, worried that he would be outkicked, but there was no one there. Talbott looked strong and determined, and for a brief moment, I pictured him a foot taller, with two more years of running under his belt, kicking it home as a scoring member of the varsity team his senior year at the state meet. The choice is his, whether or not he wants that vision to come true. You could be #1 man if you wanted to be. The choice is yours.

Mike Lima-Sabatini- Week in and week out, Lima is the most consistent improver on the team. Pay attention, because he's doing everything right. He hasn't missed a day of practice since the summer time. His Personal Record has him listed as the 7th f/s runner on the squad we took to Clovis, and he is the 3rd fastest 9th grader on the team. That didn't stop him from running a great race, putting himself in the mix at the mile mark, and hanging on to finish as the 2nd man, and 5th f/s runner on the day for the Aztecs. Lima soaks in and absorbs all advice, and he's a dedicated, consistent hard worker. I would not be surprised if he finds himself in the top 7 by summer time next year. Keep up the good work.

Athletes of the Meet-

Blake Harris, Hunter Talbott, and Mike Lima-Sabatini.