

The Warsaw Lady Tigers raced NLC #2 on their home course, using the meet as a planned attack and an opportunity to tempo run with purpose while testing different race tactics. Warsaw finished 2nd as a team with a score of 70, continuing to build momentum through the middle of the season.

Isadora Vega led the Tigers across the finish line, followed by Dani Rastrelli. Matilda Granger, Savannah Purdy, and Eden Gackenhaimer rounded out the Tiger scoring five. The focus was not simply on chasing the clock, but on executing the race plan, testing different strategies, and gaining valuable experience that can be carried into the upcoming races.

The Warsaw boys cross country team finished fifth at the NLC Super Dual #2 on Tuesday evening.

Northridge won the meet with 48 points, followed by Wawasee with 70, Mishawaka with 73, NorthWood with 91, Warsaw with 100, Goshen with 144, Plymouth with 196, and Concord with 222.

Leading the way for the Tigers was sophomore Eli Swinehart, who finished 14th. Junior Keenan Lyons followed in 15th, senior Nolan Stump placed 20th, senior Jaxon Lehman was 25th, freshman Brady Dewey finished 26th, sophomore Luke Vander Bie placed 30th, and freshman Alek Lantz rounded out Warsaw's top seven in 33rd.

"The NLC is really deep on the boys side this year, so our fifth-place finish doesn't look super flashy," Warsaw head coach Matt Campbell said. "We had some nice races from about half of our varsity squad, but the other half hurt us a little bit tonight. We believe we should have seven guys right around where Eli and Keenan were tonight, and that changes the race dramatically."

Campbell felt the Tigers were unable to match the performance they had just a little over a week earlier at the Marion Invitational.

"We are coming off a big performance at Marion, and I just didn't think a lot of the boys matched the energy we had at Marion," Campbell said. "We are young and inexperienced, but we certainly need to work on putting together more consistent performances. It's one thing to be 15 or 20 seconds off your time, but when you're 60-plus seconds off, that really hurts."

The strength of the conference leaves little room for an off night. Northridge, Wawasee, Mishawaka, and NorthWood are all ranked among the top 10 teams in the New Prairie Regional.

"With the depth of our conference and this being a smaller field compared to an invitational, we just don't have as much room for error," Campbell said. "Northridge, Wawasee, Mishawaka, and NorthWood are all ranked in the top 10 in the New Prairie Regional. Fortunately for us, we'll be heading to the Manchester Regional, so after the NLC we won't see those teams again unless we're fortunate enough to meet back up on October 31st."

Campbell emphasized that Tuesday's result should not change what the Tigers believe they can accomplish this season.

"We have goals, and we shouldn't let one performance hurt our confidence," Campbell said. "We know what this group is capable of when we race well. I feel very confident you will see a different Tiger squad this weekend at Flashrock. We seem to be a Saturday team, and I'd much rather be a Saturday team than a Tuesday team. We are four-for-four on warm meets this season, so hopefully we catch a little bit of a break with the weather over these last few weeks of the regular season."

Warsaw's depth was a bright spot Tuesday. If the meet were rescored after removing each team's top seven runners, Warsaw would win the JV scoring with 34 points, followed by Northridge with 40 and Mishawaka with 124.

Freshman Jadon Flamm led Warsaw's second group with an 18:22.4 finish in 38th place overall, followed closely by senior Jack Boggs in 39th at 18:23.2. Sophomore Logan Martin finished 46th, senior Ben Mort was 62nd, senior Owen Meerzo was 63rd, sophomore Rushabh Gorhe finished 64th, and freshman Henry Schotter was 65th.

Senior Kevin Gough, junior Jitheash Sivakumar Nithyanandhi, and freshman Henry Schotter each established new personal records for the Tigers.