

Local Fifth Grader Takes First Place in Shore AC Cross Country Series at Holmdel Park

On October 27th, Landon Whitehead, a determined fifth grader, claimed first place in the prestigious Shore AC Cross Country Series at Holmdel Park. This remarkable achievement came after months of rigorous training, and Landon's victory was especially impressive considering he faced competitors who traveled from as far as Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

According to Landon's mother, "Landon likes to fly under the radar, so to speak," but his success in this race marked a significant milestone in his young running career. Landon's dedication and commitment to the sport have already made him an inspiration to others, even at the tender age of 10.

In an exclusive interview, Landon shared insights into his passion for running, his training regimen, and the people who support him along the way.

Q: What do you love most about running?

A: "I love the idea of pushing myself to improve. With running, you are often out of your comfort zone, and that is what makes the sport exciting. You learn that the bad days are just as important as the good days."

Q: How did you become interested in running?

A: "When I was 4 years old, my parents took me to the track up the road from my old house in Ocean Township. They watched as I ran and ran one lap after another. It was at that moment that we all realized that I loved distance running."

Q: What was your favorite race?

A: "My favorite race was actually a 6-week program. I ran a 2k race with my team every Sunday. This team helped prepare me for my current position in the junior Olympics. This race went very well for me and resulted in getting first place in my race."

Q: Do you have a running hero?

A: "My running hero is my mother. She is always so supportive in terms of driving me around and sitting through miserable weather during practice. She also started a youth running club for ages 9 to 12, and the club also helped me become the runner I am today."

Q: What is your training routine?

A: "Usually, I run 2-3 miles to start. Then I do weight-lifting starting with 5 pounds and transitioning into 7 pounds. After weight-lifting, I move to sit-ups. I practice increments of 25 until I get to a total of 100 sit-ups. Finally, I stretch to prevent any pulled muscles."

Q: Have you had any funny moments during races?

A: "I decided not to listen to my mother and double knot my sneakers. My sneaker slipped off my foot mid-race, and I crossed the finish line in a sock."

Landon's commitment to his sport and his positive outlook on the challenges of running have already set him on a path toward future success. His mom's unwavering support, coupled with Landon's own passion and drive, are sure to continue propelling him toward even greater achievements.

As Landon continues to improve and break records, his story is sure to inspire young athletes across the region. And for now, as he heads into the junior Olympics, it's clear that Landon Whitehead is a name to watch in the world of youth running.

