While his race began with nearly 300 juniors, Frederick Huxham was all alone as he crossed the finish line.

Huxham, a junior, placed first in the Early Bird Cross Country Invitational for the junior boys’ group by 18 seconds with a time of 15:44, which was good enough for fourth place overall out of over 1,100 runners.

Huxham is entering his third year running for the cross country team. Last year, the team was the MCAL champion, and Huxham is consistently one of the team’s top finishers. For these reasons, Huxham has been chosen as this month’s sports spotlight.

This year, Huxham expects the team to do even better, and has high personal goals as well.

“I’d like to place high past MCALs, and NCS at state. But really, it’d just be good to get through the season without any injuries,” Huxham said. “I just want to have fun.”

As of press time, Huxham has only participated in one race. He missed the Stinson Beach relay due to an illness.

According to Huxham, this is the strongest team he has been on in his entire high school career.

“A lot of guys have been super dedicated and have been showing up every day to practice. That’s something that we’ve never had before,” Huxham said. “Everybody showed up this summer to practice as a team.”

Freshman Kendra Loo said that Huxham has been a motivational captain. This is Loo’s first year ever running cross country.

“I see him running and he’s doing so much more than I am. It makes me want to run as fast as him, and as much as him,” Loo said. “And I know that I’m just a freshman and I can’t, but it makes me want to be faster and a better runner.”

Last year, Huxham placed fifth in MCAL, behind two students from Drake and one from Tam. Huxham placed second for the team behind Tommy Warfel, who placed second for the team and graduated last year.

Huxham said he has been running competitively since he was five, when he ran a half-mile race and placed second.

According to Huxham, the last two years hasn’t been going as planned.

“The previous two years have sort of been on and off for me. The past two years I wasn’t training as hard as I could every day. I wasn’t doing the optimal thing,” Huxham said. “This year I haven’t messed around a single practice. I really strapped down.”

The next race for the cross country team is on Sept. 27 at Tennessee Valley.