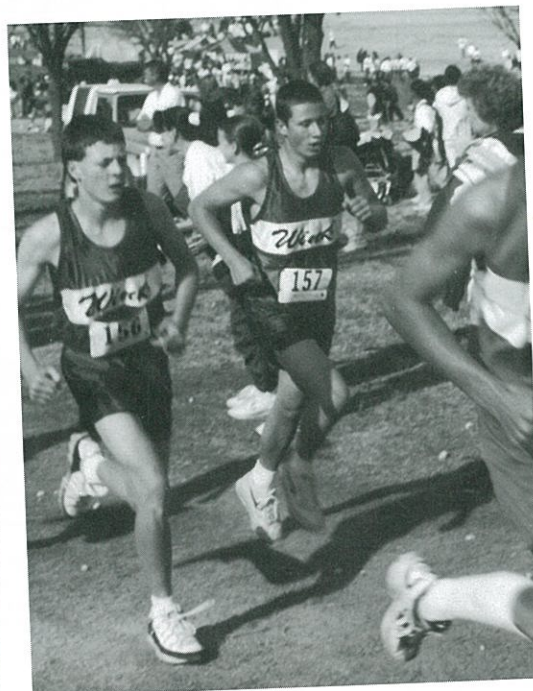
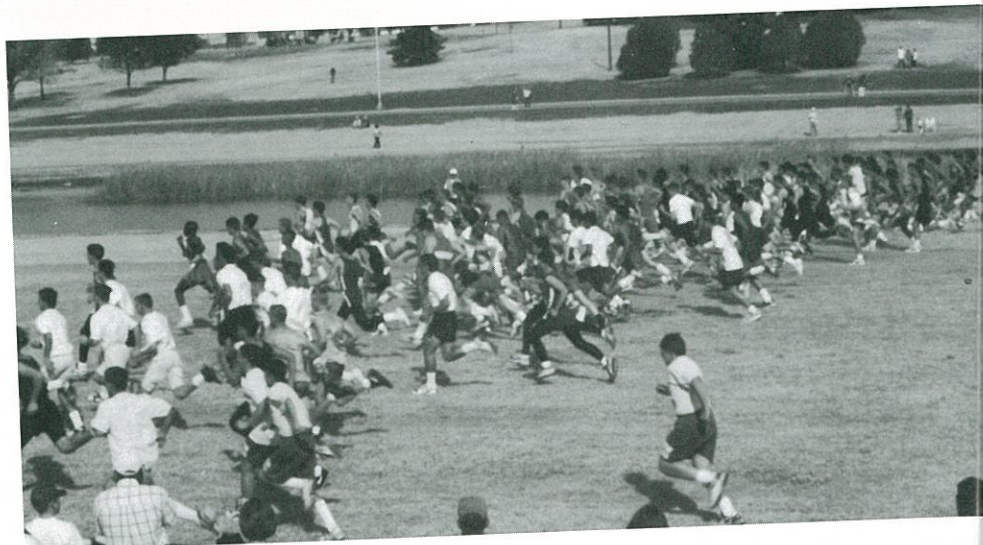


And they're off! A large field of runners, including the Wink boys team, bolt from the starting line at the Region I Cross Country Meet in Lubbock.

Freshman Kevin Benham struggles to keep a steady pace so he will have energy for a strong finish.

Freshmen Ben McGehee and Glen Milligan are neck-and-neck at one point during the regional meet.

Sophomore Jennifer Hawkins made steady progress throughout the cross country season and finished first among the Wink girls at the regional meet.



The gruelling three mile course does not deter the effort Weldon Thompson puts into his race.



A 5 o'clock a.m. departure from Wink kept team members from getting much sleep, but they are ready to listen to last minute instructions from Coach Phil Swenson. Of the teams, Coach Swenson said, "I was thrilled that in our first year of competition, we were able to advance to the regional level. This says a lot for our students and their work habits and dedication."

Angela Milligan made a strong showing at a cross country practice meet in Odessa.

Cross Country: A true test of endurance

For the first time, cross country track became an option for students wanting to compete in athletics during the fall semester, and several students took advantage of the program and found great success. Both the girls and boys teams advanced to the regional meet in Lubbock.

These distance races (two mile for the girls and three miles for boys) prompt competitors to say, "Cross country is a test of how long and how far the body can endure. Everything else is just a game someone made up!"

"I hope that the student body finds that there is a place for everyone to compete if they choose to do so," said Coach Phil Swenson. "This is one of the better competitive sports going today."



Sophomores Shannon Garratt and Gary McKee choose not to compete in volleyball or football, but cross country gives them the opportunity to take part in the WHS tradition of strong athletic competition.



1997 Boys Cross Country Team: Ben McGehee, Weldon Thompson, Glen Milligan, Sam Haring, Kevin Benham and Gary McKee



1997 Girls Cross Country: back - Crystal Smith, Coach Phil Swenson and Shannon Garratt; front - Angela Milligan, Jennifer Hawkins and April Underwood