

## SPORTS

# Emotional rescue

■ Tamburro savors memorable opening day on trails

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Everyone wants to start on the proverbial right foot. For cross country runners, starting on the right foot literally is important, too.

Reese Tamburro's victory lap began with a big first step.

The Agoura High junior overcame a sluggish start to secure first place among 288 girls at the season opening Cool Breeze Invitational on Aug. 31 in Pomona.

"I didn't get the start I wanted, but I settled in," Tamburro said. "I gave it everything I had the last 200 meters for my kick."

The Charger won gold by crossing the finish line in 18 minutes, 42 seconds.

"I was a little bit in shock," Tamburro said. "I was really emotional, especially when I saw my parents and sister. To come back and win was really amazing."

Her parents Samantha and Derek, and her twin sister, Quinn, greeted Reese after the comeback victory.

The Tamburro family watched the race from different spots along the Cool Breeze course.

"Me and my mom were texting. 'She's doing great.' We were both very nervous," Quinn said. "I always scream pretty loud for her."

Quinn Tamburro, a softball standout at catcher/third base and the first flag football starting quarterback in school history, watched Reese turn the last corner and pass Calabasas senior Sofia Francini, who settled for silver in 18:45.

"She passed the girl in front of her—I knew right there that Reese was going to win the race," Quinn said. "I was the first to give her a hug and tell her, 'You deserve this. You have worked so hard.' That's when I would say we both got pretty emotional."

"Having that moment with her was pretty cool."

Reese Tamburro, a 4.16 GPA scholar-athlete who lives in Thousand Oaks, did not know anything about cross country until her eighth-grade P.E. coach told her about the sport.

The 16-year-old has competed in four varsity sports at Agoura: cross country, track and field, soccer and softball. The Charger now focuses exclusively on distance running for a chance at racing



Photo courtesy of Quinn Tamburro

**FAMILY FIRST**—Quinn Tamburro, left, celebrates her twin sister Reese Tamburro's comeback win at the Cool Breeze Invitational last month. Quinn is a standout softball player at Agoura.

in college.

"Running is probably the hardest sport I've ever done," Tamburro said. "It's so rewarding. . . . My freshman year helped me realize that I love running."

Tamburro was Agoura's fastest cross country runner her rookie season, notching a career-best 18:30 at Woodbridge. She was bogged down by injuries last year, and she'll make an anticipated return to Woodbridge on Sept. 21.

The junior is beloved by the Chargers.

"Reese is the most compassionate and caring teammate I've ever had," said Sydney Maunu, a senior three-sport scholar-athlete in cross country, track and basketball with a 4.2 GPA.

Quinn and Reese Tamburro played 11 years of softball together, but family time together is more important than anything else.

"I would say the best thing about her is how hard she works," said Quinn, a 4.0 GPA student who wants to play college softball. "A lot of people don't see how genuinely she is a really funny person. She makes jokes all the time at home, and she is very, very, very strict on her homework. She always wants to do well in the classroom. . . . She's incredibly caring and looks out for people that she loves."

Joe Byrd, who started coaching the Charger girls in 2017 and has been coaching at the school for 14 years, called the captain a great role model.

"She's found a love of running and has



ELIAV APPELBAUM/Acorn Newspapers

**MULTI-TALENTED**—Reese Tamburro, a junior on the Agoura High School girls' cross country team, took first place overall among 288 racers at the Cool Breeze Invitational Aug. 31 in Pomona. She's a four-sport athlete at Agoura.

become a student of running. She makes me a better coach by asking questions about our workouts," Byrd said. "She's been so driven and done so much work—and she's only going to get better."

Paige Piedmont, a junior, and Gwen Carpenter, a senior, are also captains. Jenna Johnson, a junior, solidifies the No. 2 spot in the starting varsity lineup; Johnson placed third at Cool Breeze in 2023 in a crisp 18:38. Maunu, sophomore Cora Rossitto and freshman Sloane McGinnis contribute for Agoura.

Tamburro takes AP classes in pre-calculus, chemistry, English and U.S. history. The Tamburro twins are both campus captains for the Hidden Opponent, a club that focuses on mental health. Agoura athletic director Clint Cummings is the club advisor.

The running star is an avid reader, and she's picked up the nickname "CandyLand" for her sweet tooth. Her parents both attended Westlake: Samantha, a therapist, was a prep track hurdler and sprinter; and Derek, a UCLA baseball catcher in the early 1990s, is a firefighter at Glendale Fire Station 21. Her older sister, Kaci, 20, a nursing student at Belmont University, played two years of softball

at Chaminade of West Hills.

Reese Tamburro is locked in, but the first step started a long time ago.

"I trained a lot harder than ever before. I worked really hard over the summer," she said. "Every single day is a day I can get better. Having a positive mindset is the best."

She now wants a finish to remember.

"I'm hoping this year I go to state, just to go and experience it," Tamburro said. "I'm very hardworking. Everything I do is 110%. My mindset is if I don't do as well as I want to do, it always pushes me to do better, to keep pushing, to keep working."

## IN A NUTSHELL

Reese Tamburro, 16, is a junior standout for the Agoura High girls' cross country team.

The Charger took first place at the season-opening Cool Breeze Invitational in 18:42 in a field of 288 competitors Aug. 31 in Pomona.

Tamburro, a 4.16 GPA scholar athlete, has competed in four varsity sports at Agoura: cross country, track and field, soccer and softball.