

# Keeble Keys Mahomet boys to 2nd place in 2A

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PEORIA — The Mahomet-Seymour High School boys cross country team proved it has the most depth in Class 2A on Saturday, but it wasn't enough to upset No. 1-ranked Yorkville in the 69th state meet.

While scoring five men, Yorkville defended its title with 105 points to 134 for the No. 2-ranked Bulldogs in second. If scoring seven, Mahomet-Seymour would have won, 238-260.

"I'm super pleased," said Bulldog coach Neal Garrison after earning his school's first state cross country trophy. "Honestly, we just wanted to be in the top three."

Junior Alex Keeble led the way in fourth, clocking 14 minutes, 49 seconds for 3 miles. Also earning all-state honors was teammate William Wolf in 18th (15:01).

In 1A, the area all-staters were Tri-Point's Brandon Wilkerson (14th, 15:20) and El Paso-Gridley's Hunter Cobbley (16th, 15:23). Both set school records for state place and time.

Wind kept Keeble from approaching his Detweiller Park best of 14:41. Yorkville's Jake Hoffert won in 14:30.

"I felt the brunt of the wind," Keeble said, "so I let some guys pass me, drafted off them and kicked them down the last 100. I'm happy."

Fifth in last spring's state 3,200-meter run, Keeble's finish was the best in school history.

"He beat a lot of great runners," Garrison said.

Among them was Wolf, the lone senior in the lineup, who sped a lifetime best.

"I saw this team grow from fifth place my freshman year, to 11th my sophomore year, to 15th last year," he said. "It's



RANDY SHARER, The Pantagraph

A fast finish helped Mahomet-Seymour High School's Alex Keeble (1300) grab fourth in the Class 2A state cross country meet Saturday at Peoria where his team finished a school-record second.

definitely been a lot of fun."

As a freshman, Wolf dropped out of four of his six races.

"It just kind of shows you, 'don't give up and keep with it,'" Garrison said.

The Bulldogs' other scorers were Andrew Walmer (41st, 15:28), Jack Hyde (60th, 15:37) and Ben Crow (67th, 15:41). Mahomet-Seymour's only losses this fall were to Yorkville and 2A runner-up Sandburg.

University High topped its No. 18 ranking by taking 10th (249). Leading the way were Alexander Bruno (31st, 15:17), Eli Hill (42nd, 15:28) and Jack Franklin (44th, 15:28).

"The top two weren't where we hoped they'd be, but it was all about the effort," said Pioneer coach Lester Hampton. "They gave great effort."

In 1A, Wilkerson surpassed Tri-Point records set in 1985 by Jon Gardner (16th, 15:36). The senior, 79th last year in 16:22, lowered his career best by three seconds.

"I had a really good coach (Daniel Graham) this year," Wilkerson said. "He really helped me train the way I needed to to drop some time."

Cobbley, a junior, helped

unranked EPG finish 13th (364) ahead of four ranked teams. He's been on a tear of late.

"I started running some good races, got my confidence up and it paid off today," he said.

EPG coach Michael Melick was happy.

"My guys are awesome, a bunch of nerds," he quipped. "They study the sport. They research it."

No. 24-ranked Olympia placed 15th (382) as four-time qualifier Connor Stine ran 37th (15:46).

"I knew if I wanted the school record (of 14th), I had to push through the two mile," Stine said. "I don't know if the wind caught up with me or what, but the last quarter was rough."

The 1A winners were Monticello (91) and defending champion Jon Davis of Fithian Oakwood, who sped a 1A record 14:19.

In 3A, the Peters twins of Normal Community, Jared and Austin, placed 122nd (15:30) and 152nd (15:44), respectively.

"We're proud of what the Peters have accomplished," said Coach Tom Patten.

The 3A winners were Hinsdale Central (104) and McHenry's Jesse Reiser (14:11).