

Sports

MSHS girls' cross country captures first IHSA 2A Sectional title



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By FRED KRONER

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School history was made on Saturday at the Class 2A East Peoria girls' cross-country sectional meet.

A Mahomet-Seymour girls' cross-country program — which has now qualified teams for state 14 times this century — captured a sectional championship in the sport for the first time.

Under the direction of first-year head coach Kristin Allen, the Bulldogs edged Normal University High, 74-79, for team supremacy.

A week earlier, at the regional meet, the same two schools swept the top spots with M-S prevailing by two points.

At sectionals, Bulldog Elizabeth Sims was the runner-up in a field of 139 finishers. She covered the 3-mile course in 18 minutes and 16 seconds.

Brisa McGrath was also a top 10 performer, placing sixth in 18:29.

Three other Bulldogs secured top 25 finishes.

Grace Lietz was 19th in 19:05, Olivia Bunting was 23rd in 19:26 and Madi Balbach was 24th in 19:27.

Lietz ran her fastest time of the season at the sectional.

The team's other sectional performers were Klein Powell, 41st in 20:00, and Delaney King, 58th in 20:40.

Both M-S and U-High have just one senior among their top six runners.

M-S will be one of 26 full teams at Saturday's state meet at Detweiller Park, in Peoria. The girls' state race will start at 11 a.m.

Boys' cross-country

Mathias Powell continued his stellar senior season on Saturday, winning individual honors in the 12-school East Peoria Sectional by 12 seconds.

Powell's 3-mile time was 15 minutes and 16 seconds.

Entering state, Powell has run in eight races this fall, winning seven and placing third in the other.

He will be joined at state by one other senior teammate, Bryson Keeble.

Keeble placed 14th at sectional in 16:11.

The top seven runners not on qualifying teams earned a berth at state.

Freshman Kyle Nofziger was a near-miss for state, placing 20th in 16:21. He was five seconds beyond the cutoff needed to continue his season.

At state, Powell will be trying to become the first M-S athlete to earn all-state honors in the sport three times and will be seeking the school's highest individual finish.

He was fourth last year, tying the top M-S state placement with Alex Keeble (2014).

Three other Bulldogs competed at sectionals.

Joe Taylor was 66th in 17:18, Joseph Scheele was 73rd in 17:21 and Josh Wilcoski was 109th in 18:41.

Saturday's Class 2A boys' state race will start at noon.

Girls' swimming

M-S won nine of 10 events and sunk St. Thomas More, 193-56, in a dual meet on Friday at LeRoy.

Olivia McMurry and Natalie Heaton were each double winners for the Bulldogs.

McMurry captured the 200-yard individual medley and the 100 freestyle.

Heaton was victorious in the 200 freestyle and the 100 backstroke.

They each anchored one triumphant relay.

McMurry swam the final leg of the 200 freestyle relay with Rebekah Gonzalez, Olivia Ross and Lydia Schable.

Heaton was joined on the 400 freestyle relay by Gonzalez, Isabella Davenport and Grace Larson.

Other individual event winners for M-S were Gonzalez in the 50 freestyle. Ross in the 100 breaststroke and Anna Shimkus in the 500 freestyle.