

Boys extend sectional streak to 17 seasons

By ISAAC TROTTER
For The Mahomet Citizen

MAHOMET — For the 17th straight season, the Mahomet-Seymour boys' cross-country team will head to sectionals. M-S finished third at the Class 2A Metamora Regional on Oct. 26 thanks to outstanding races from all seven runners.

The regional was loaded with outstanding talent, so M-S knew it had to run at an elite level to qualify for sectionals. No. 5 Metamora took first. No. 7 Bloomington was second. The Bulldogs edged out No. 10 Normal U-High and No. 19 Champaign Centennial for third place.

"Our regional had the most amount of state-ranked teams in it," head coach Neal Garrison said. "Many of the teams were very comparable to our team which made it a real possibility that we might not qualify for the Sectional meet despite having a solid team. This put a lot of emotional pressure on the runners."

Under intense pressure, the Bulldogs came through in the clutch. Sophomore Kyle Nofziger finished fourth overall with a time of 15 minutes, 19 seconds.

"Kyle ran right at his lifetime best, and this earned him All-Regional honors," Garrison said. "His time was the fastest time any Mahomet sophomore has run in the regional meet in 50 years."

Nick Mies continued to run at an especially strong clip. The junior placed eighth overall with a great time of 15:45.

"Nick Mies had an amazing race," Garrison said. "He felt great and was able to run in the 15s for the first time. His time of 15:45 is one of the strongest times we have had at the regional meet in almost 50 years. He improved 18 seconds from his previous lifetime best. His time was the 10th fastest time any Mahomet junior has run at the regional meet. We have had some tremendous juniors over the years so this was quite an accomplishment."

Joseph Scheele placed 11th, giving the Bulldogs three of the top-11 finish-

Bulldogs' girls' team advances

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MAHOMET — Kristin Allen and the Mahomet-Seymour girls' cross-country team are headed to sectionals. Elizabeth Sims, Klein Powell, Grace Lietz and Olivia Bunting all finished in the top-15 to help the Bulldogs place second overall at the Class 2A Metamora Regional on Oct. 26.

M-S finished with 59 team points. Bloomington High School was crowned regional champs after a 48-point outing. Urbana, Washington, Metamora and Champaign Central all qualified for the sectional.

Sims continued to tear it up. The sophomore placed third with a time of 18 minutes, 12 seconds. Powell was seventh at 18:58. Only seven girls finished the 3-mile course in under 19 minutes, and the Bulldogs were one of two teams to have two top-seven finishers.

Lietz and Bunting were separated by just one second. Lietz placed 13th at 19:20. Bunting was right on her heels to finish 15th.

ers. Scheele's time of 15:53 was the fourth-fastest time that any M-S sophomore has run in 50 years at the regional meet.

"Jonah Singer finished fourth for our team (24th overall) and showed just how strong the sophomore class is," Garrison said. "He ran a 16:26 which was the 16th fastest time any Mahomet sophomore has run in our 50-year history at the regional meet."

Nofziger, Mies, Scheele and Singer may have been the top-four finishers for the Bulldogs, but Garrison believes the reason M-S is advancing is because of the gritty runs from Josh Wilcoski, Caleb Dowers

Overall, 57 runners competed, and M-S had seven of the top-30 finishers. Freshman Callie Jansen was fifth for the Bulldogs and 21st overall with a time of 19:31. Bednar took 27th at 19:56. Freshman Ella Scott was 30th with a rock-solid finish of 20:04.

It's truly remarkable to look at the youth that litters the M-S lineup. Sims, Powell, Lietz and Bednar are all sophomores. Scott and Jansen both played key roles as just freshmen. Bunting is the eldest of the bunch, and she's just a junior. With six underclassmen, M-S was one of the youngest teams in all of the meet.

Champaign Central also qualified for sectionals with six underclassmen in the starting lineup.

The Bulldogs have proven that they will be worthy competitors at the state meet in a couple weeks. Of course, they're trying not to look too far ahead as they will have to advance out of a tough sectional.

The Bulldogs will race at 9 a.m. Saturday at Maxwell Park in Bloomington.

and David Wilcoski.

"All three of them ran their best times," Garrison said. "I was super pleased with their performances. They gave everything they had to their teammates. Caleb had a big breakthrough at the right time. Caleb improved 27 seconds from his best time. He helped pull his teammates to the places we needed at the right times in the race. He showed a lot of team spirit by running with such intensity under such high pressure."

David Wilcoski shaved 49 seconds off his time from last year's regional. Nofziger improved 57 seconds, and Josh Wilcoski improved a whopping 94 seconds from last season.

Overall, four of the seven Bulldogs ran their lifetime bests to help M-S advance.

The Bulldogs will run in the Class 2A Bloomington Sectional at 10 a.m. Saturday.

"The boys represented our team and alumni well," Garrison said. "I was super proud of them."