

# Youngsters help Bulldogs punch ticket to Peoria

## State meet gets underway at noon Saturday

**By ISAAC TROTTER**  
**For The Mahomet Citizen**  
MAHOMET — The Mahomet-Seymour boys' cross-country team booked their trip to state with a strong performance Saturday at the Bloomington High Class 2A sectional.

The Bulldogs finished with 126 team points to finish third. Morton was first, Peoria Notre Dame took second. The

top five teams advanced, so Bloomington and Metamora will also be heading to state.

"Our runners really handled the high pressure beyond where most teams would," head coach Neal Garrison said. "The course was incredibly wet so the times from all teams were slow. Yet four of our runners ran their best three-mile time when the team needed them to."

The sectional was filled with 18 talented teams, including nine state-ranked teams, but the



Provided

The Mahomet-Seymour High School boys' cross-country team is ready to compete at Saturday's state meet at Detweiller Park in Peoria.

Bulldogs continued to get standout performances from their youngsters.

"Going into the sectional meet we were ranked anywhere from fourth to seventh in the meet," Garrison said. "Our runners knew they had to run especially well in

order to be in the top-five teams so they could qualify for the State meet."

Sophomore Kyle Nofziger led the way, finishing 10th overall with a time of 16 minutes, 3 seconds. Nofziger earned All-Sectional honors for his time.

"He ran 18 seconds faster than he did last Sectional meet," Garrison said. "He ran the 11th-fastest time of any Mahomet sophomore at the Sectional meet in the past 50 years."

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Nick Mies continued to exceed every expectation. The junior placed 11th with a time of 16:04. He shaved off 41 seconds from his lifetime three-mile best.

Jonah Singer placed 27th at 16:36.

"He really had a major impact on the success of our team for the day," Garrison said.

Joseph Scheele was 37th at 16:45 and Joe Taylor also

stayed under the 17-minute benchmark with a 51st-place finish.

"Joe's race was incredibly important," Garrison said. "He knew he had to beat many of the other state-ranked No. 5 runners in order for our team to make it to state. Joe had to improve about 15-30 seconds faster than his tough competitors did. This would have mentally crushed most high school runners, but Joe ran with such determination that he did exactly what his teammates needed out of him."

Freshman Hayden Gro-

telueschen and sophomore Josh Wilcoski both had strong finishes too. Grotelueschen placed 58th overall with a time of 17:07. Wilcoski was 91st at 17:41.

"Grotelueschen ran a lifetime three-mile best," Garrison said. "It is rare that a freshman races in the boys' sectional meet. It is even more rare that a freshman will run their lifetime best in this stressful meet."

Grotelueschen's time was the 12th-fastest time of any M-S freshmen at the sectional meet in the last 50 years, and he will become just the 10th freshmen to race for the Bulldogs at state.

"I think what isn't seen in the team score is how much support our runners got from their teammates, their families, our alumni, and our alumni parents that showed up to encourage them during the race," Garrison said.

The Bulldogs will compete for a state title on noon Saturday at Detweiler Park in Peoria.

"The success of our team and program is not based off talent as much as it is based off how much our runners have cared about each other and how much support they have gotten from their families," Garrison said. "I am so grateful for this as a coach both this year and in past years."