

Wave After Sectional Run Title

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Mattoon, upset by Bloomington in the Big 12 Conference meet last weekend, will try to turn back challenges from Charleston and Danville for its third sectional cross-country title in four years when qualifiers from the Paris, Decatur, and Kankakee districts compete for honors Saturday at Centennial Park.

The meet is scheduled to begin at 11 a.m.

The first three teams and top 10 individuals from the sectional will advance to the 27th annual ISHA State meet in Peoria Nov. 4 along with qualifiers from seven other sectionals and the Chicago Public League.

Danville's Jerry George rates as the individual favorite, although Rantoul's Ken Bilek is the defending sectional champion. George has not lost to Bilek this year and beat him at Paris in the district Tuesday.

George finished first in the Paris and Springfield Lanphier invitationals and won the Big 12 crown last Saturday. In three of the state's most rugged invitationals, he finished second at Chicago Heights Bloom, third at Mattoon, and fourth at Peoria.

Mattoon edged Charleston 38-44 to win the Decatur district and was ahead of third place Danville in the Big 12 by a 52-73 margin. The Vikings placed all seven men in the top 14 to capture the Paris district with 35 points while Rantoul was second with 34. Hoopston won the Kankakee district with 72 points.

Also entered Saturday are Urbana, Champaign Centennial, Paris, Stephen Decatur, Decatur MacArthur, Decatur Lakeview, St. Anne, Watseka, Manteno and Kankakee Westview.

Besides George and Bilek, other standout individuals entered are Eisenhower's Bob Liddell, Decatur district champion; Mattoon's Dave Hooper, runnerup in both the Big 12 Conference and Decatur district; St. Anne's Mike Lehman, champion in the Kankakee district and St. Joseph-Ogden's Spartan Classic; Lakeview's Alan Larson, third at Decatur; Rantoul's Ernie Strange, third at Paris; and Urbana's Tim Pittman, fourth at Paris.

Although their teams did not qualify, Champaign Central's Pat Carter and Paxton's Don Frichtl, each advanced by placing seventh in their respective districts.

Urbana's Dave Skadden, Hoopston's Don Hasler and Ernie Linares, Watseka's John Apgar, and Mattoon's Kent Davis, Richland's Steve Cooney placed in the top 10 of their districts, but their teams qualified anyway.