

# NCHS, Pontiac favored for league cross country titles

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Defending champions will face strong tests in Saturday's Big 12 and Corn Belt conference cross country meets.

Bloomington High School, which has won four straight Big 12 titles, is among the challengers to favored Normal Community.

In the Corn Belt, Pontiac is favored to win its seventh straight crown, but will have to hold off University High and Mahomet-Seymour.

## Big 12 Conference

Action begins at Illini Meadows in Urbana with a 2-mile girls race at 9:30 a.m. Following will be a freshmen-sophomore boys race at 10:15 a.m., an open race at 10:45 a.m. and the varsity boys at 11:15 a.m. All the boys races are 3 miles.

The Ironmen boys have a 3-1 edge over BHS this season. Other contenders are Decatur MacArthur and Champaign Central. Tim Bass of NCHS is the individual favorite.

"We feel like we're in the hunt," said NCHS coach Tom Patten. "A lot depends on what the Nos. 2-5 men do for us."

BHS coach John Szabo, recalling the day his team beat NCHS, said, "We had a real good race at Peoria. We want to continue that."

In the girls race, Decatur Eisenhower will seek its second straight title. Rantoul's Amy Bersig is the defending champion, but will be challenged by 1986 champ Suzanne Hurst of BHS.

## Corn Belt Conference

Action begins at the Pontiac Elks Golf Course with a 2-mile girls race

at 9 a.m. Following will be a 3-mile junior varsity boys race at 9:30 a.m. and the varsity at 10 a.m.

"I think it will be a wide open team race, but I do give a slight edge to Pontiac," said U High coach Lester Hampton.

"I'm concerned about U High," admitted Pontiac coach Keven Forney. "This should be the year Mahomet wins it, but they don't appear to be running that well lately."

Pontiac's Craig Black and Britton Roth will battle U High's Brian Nourie and Mahomet-Seymour's Dan Nielsen for the individual crown.

Olympia is favored in the girls race where Mahomet-Seymour's Laura Batsie is the defending champion.