

Chrisman coach holds his horses

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The Chrisman High School cross-country teams do things differently from a lot of others. First, the Cardinals cut back on their mileage earlier and more drastically.

And while most coaches keep tired splits for their runners after each mile, Chrisman coach Roger Beals keeps his after the last 400 meters.

"That's the only one I keep," he said.

And there's a reason. Beals wants his troops to remember one

AA sectional bests

Runner, School	Time
Doug Nelson, Stagg.....	14:33
Mason Rush, Stagg.....	14:33
Joe DeLeon, Chi. Hts. Bloom....	14:40
Dave Walko, Bremen.....	14:40
Darien Pedota, Summit Argo....	14:45
Ray Raparelli, Lincoln-Way.....	14:47

A sectional bests

Runner, School	Time
Phil Swenson, Leland.....	14:58
David Lewis, Fairfield.....	15:12
Justin Weiss, Lisle.....	15:16
Dave Eckburg, Winnebago.....	15:18
Dan Schisler, Avon.....	15:18
Jeremy Skinner, Shelbyville.....	15:22

son as his boys' team tries to defend its 1988 title at Saturday's state meet: restraint.

The revved up field tends to crash in a near-sprint from the starting line, sometimes demolishing the first 400 in 66 seconds or less.

"We like to have them around," Beals said. "You try to keep them from going out too fast. They can't keep that pace all the way. I don't know how to get it tough to them."

Whether it's been getting tough or not, the Cardinals have proven perennially that they are one of the best teams in the state.

But Chrisman will be tested Saturday at Detweiller Park outside Springfield. Last weekend at the Paxton Sectional, the Cards were beaten by Normal University 11-14.

Bouncing back at state will not be easy for Chrisman, especially with No. 1 runner Brent Jenness still recovering from bronchitis.

"He's getting a lot stronger," Beals said of Jenness. "We'll have to keep him out of the night air."

Trying to keep the Cardinals in the hunt will be sophomores Chad Beals, sixth at sectionals, and Dusty Michaels, 24th; senior Brian Spicer, 28th; and freshman Don Griffith, 38th.

The only area team joining Chrisman in the Class A boys' team competition will be Mahomet-Seymour, which was third at Paxton.

"Our attitude," M-S coach John King said, "is 'Let's not worry about the top five, or we have to (do) this or that.' We'd just like to go out and run and finish in the top 10."

The Bulldogs are led by Dan Nielsen, who took second overall at Paxton.

Nielsen said he was thinking before the sectional race about challenging Herscher's John Eggenberger for the title, but Eggenberger opened up a 30-yard lead midway through the 3-mile race and never looked back.

Eggenberger crossed in 15 minutes, 32.4 seconds and Nielsen in 15:48.0.

"I wanted to go out fast," said Nielsen, "but I think it turned out too fast for my liking. I also got really nervous before the race. I was nervous all day."

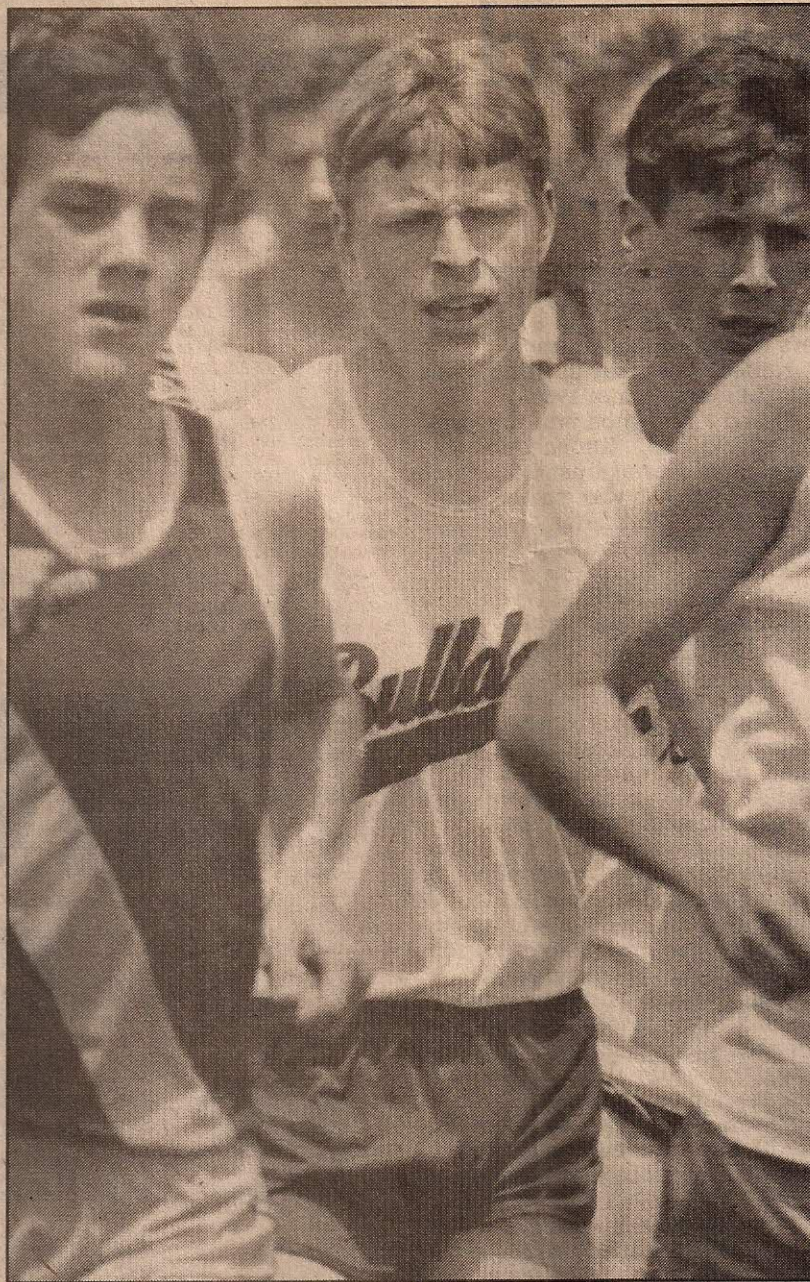
Nielsen wasn't helped by a knee that has acting up the last three weeks and has caused him to miss some practice time.

"Physically he's OK," King said of Nielsen, "but he's missed so much training. I still feel Dan can run with Eggenberger, but John's got the psychological edge on him."

The knee problem is apparently behind him, and Nielsen says he can think of just one thing he may do differently on Saturday.

"The only thing I can think of is to be more mentally tough — get to that third mile and give it all I've got," he said.

Five area runners will compete as individuals: Jeff Trask of Oak-



News-Gazette file photo by Delfina Colby

Mahomet-Seymour cross-country runner Dan Nielsen will lead the Bulldogs into Saturday's state meet. Chrisman's boys' and girls' teams are hoping to successfully defend their 1988 titles.

wood, Joe Alexander of Clinton, Joshua Folk and Frank Winter of Urbana University and Frank Roberts of St. Joseph-Ogden.

In the boys' Class AA race, Rantoul's Enos Ross will be the lone area representative. Ross was fifth overall at the Springfield Lanphier Sectional last Saturday.

That meet was run on a hilly course, not ideally suited to Ross' smooth stride like the flat Detweiller course.

"We're looking forward to Saturday," Rantoul coach Al Taylor said.

"That was his first time on that (Springfield) course. It's a hilly course, and I told him that he took fifth at sectionals and he could easily come back and get fifth in state."

The Class A boys' race starts at 9:30 a.m. and will be followed by the two girls' races. The Class AA boys' race is at 12:45 p.m.