

STATE CROSS COUNTRY

U High runners
4th in Class A

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PEORIA — In his pre-state meet speech Friday, University High School cross country coach Lester Hampton tried to impress upon his team the importance of the race's last half mile.

"You wouldn't believe how many people you can pass in the last half mile," Hampton told his runners. "One team is going to be very disappointed because they are going to lose out on third place by five or six points."

Little did Hampton realize it was his team that would be disappointed.

The No. 6-ranked Pioneers came within seven points of landing a trophy as they placed a school-record fourth in the Class A state meet at Peoria's Detweiller Park yesterday.

No. 5-ranked Seneca was the surprise winner, placing four runners in the top 21 en route to 131 points. No. 10-ranked West Frankfort was second (140) and top-ranked Chrisman third (162). The Pioneers, who placed ninth last year, scored 169.

"It's highly ironic it happened to be us," said Hampton, who was still pleased with his team's performance. "With a half mile to go, we were ahead. I guess Coach (Roger) Beals (of Chrisman) had them ready to kick it in.

"I'm hurting now for them (the Pioneers) because they wanted it so bad."

No. 2-ranked Tremont also wanted it badly, but it wasn't meant to be as the Turks placed a frustrated 12th (260). No. 8-ranked Mahomet-Seymour also ended its season on a solemn note, placing 14th (314). Bulldog leader Dan Nielsen, a top five contender, placed 54th.

Lowpoint-Washburn senior Kenric Bond was one of the few Pantagraph area runners who dramatically exceeded expectations as he led area entrants in 15th place. Bond, 36th last year, clocked 15 minutes, 52 seconds on



Chad
Gingrich



1987
Charles
Alsberry

the 3-mile course.

"I felt better than last Friday," said Bond, who placed seventh in the Rushville Sectional. "I was third in that race until a quarter mile to go."

Bond topped everyone who beat him in the sectional except one.

Tremont's Brad Kaufmann, who had hoped for a top-10 finish, placed 17th (15:53) as the second sophomore finisher. Lisle sophomore Justin Weiss was ninth.

"We went out too fast," said Kaufmann, who passed one mile in 4:57 instead of his usual 5:01. "I don't want to go out under 5:00. When I did, it let my confidence down."

Tremont junior Chad Gingrich, fifth last year, placed 24th in 15:59, 35 seconds slower than last year.

"I'm not sure why they didn't run well," said Tremont coach Mike Lynn of his runners. "We'll have to sit down and contemplate this. One nice thing is we only lose one (No. 6 man Scott Dahlem to graduation)."

U High, which has no seniors, was led by junior Charles Alsberry, who gained all-state honors with a 22nd-place finish (15:56).

Alsberry, 91st last year, was the 44th best returner from a year ago. He'll be the No. 9 returner next year.

"That shows how much he's improved to get all-state," Hampton said. "From Day One he worked hard and he deserves it."



The Pantagraph/RANDY SHARER

Tremont High School's Brad Kaufmann, left, and Lowpoint-Washburn's Kenric Bond motored to all-state performances in the Class A state cross country yesterday. Bond led Pantagraph area runners in 15th place. Kaufmann placed 17th.

U High's Barrett Moore placed 32nd and was the second freshman finisher. Carmi freshman Jason Zieren ran 27th.

"Barrett was a little off today," Hampton said. "For him to get 32nd shows he's a fighter. A lot of guys would have given up and dropped into the 50s."

Also figuring in U High's score were Kevin Eggan (51st, 16:20), Mike Sams (57th, 16:23) and Todd Foldesi (90th, 17:05).

Herscher senior John Eggenberger strung together consecutive miles of 4:47, 5:06 and 5:12 for a winning time of 15:05, which tied the slowest winning time in 14 years of Class A competition. Runner-up David Lewis of Fair-

field was 14 seconds back.

Mahomet-Seymour's Nielsen w with the leaders until he slow dramatically at the midway point

"I snapped the last mile and half," the junior said. "What can't understand is that I tried and I couldn't move."

Mahomet-Seymour's day w summed up by the fact No. 5 m Derrick Short, a sophomore, l the team in 49th (16:20).

"I don't have any explanation said Bulldog coach John King his team's showing. "The bad thi is these kids go away feeling th had a bad year. I'm disappointe like they're disappointed. Th had a good year."