

# Surprise awaiting runners at M-S Invitational

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This year's entrants in the Mahomet-Seymour Invitational boys' cross-country meet will see something a little different than they did at last year's race.

The redesigned 3.1-mile course on the opposite side of Interstate 74 from the M-S High School track features a last mile that could cause some problems for even the best runners in the 22-team meet.

"The way this course is now, it's an absolute bear," said M-S coach John King. "On our course now, the last mile is tough. You never have a chance to gather yourself up and catch some wind."

That may give a slight advantage to Bulldogs senior Dan Nielsen, who is familiar with the course and has the record of 15 minutes, 54 seconds that he set this year. Nielsen is the defending champion of the meet, now in its 15th year.

But Nielsen won't be without competition. Four of the state's top Class A teams will be in attendance: No. 6 St. Joseph-Ogden, No. 8 (tie) Kankakee Bishop McNamara, and Chrisman and Clinton, which received votes but did not place in the top 15.

St. Joseph-Ogden appears to be the favor-

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## Cross-country notes

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ite, although it doesn't have one standout runner who figures to compete for the individual title.

"They just pack four or five guys where most teams are putting their second," King said. "I look forward to some pretty good team competition."

The high school girls' race will kick off the action at 9 a.m. and will be followed by a junior high girls' race at 9:30 a.m.

The boys' starting gun is scheduled to fire off at 10 a.m., with a 10:30 junior high boys' race to follow.

Those wishing to attend the meet are asked to park at Mahomet-Seymour High School, where shuttle buses will be provided to the race site.

From the looks of this week's rankings, it appears that it takes results about a week to get to the coaches voting in the poll.

St. Joseph-Ogden, which took second to Normal University High on Sept. 22 at SJ-O's Spartan Classic, stayed at No. 15 in last week's poll.

This week, the Spartans made their jump to No. 6. West Frankfort is on top, followed by Tremont, No. 3 (tie) Liberty and Normal U-High, Elmwood and SJ-O.

In Class AA, Decatur MacArthur finished seventh at last week's Peoria Invitational, but dropped three places in the rankings to 10th. Champaign Centennial, 17th at Peoria, received votes last week but did not this week.

Elmhurst York, which won seven Class AA boys' titles in the 1980s, looks like it's planning to continue its dominance in the '90s.

The Dukes were runaway winners at Peoria, outdistancing second-place Hoffman Estates 48-95. York is No. 1 and earned all 11 first-place votes in this week's poll.

On Oct. 12, the Blue Ridge cross-country team will carry a football for more yardage than the school's football team as it does its part for school homecoming spirit.

The Knights will be running the homecoming game ball from Gibson City to Kenneth Rittenhouse Memorial Field in Farmer City, where Blue Ridge's football team will battle Gibson City at 7 p.m.

The run will start at 4 p.m. and travel along Route 54 to Farmer City, arriving at

the football field shortly before 7 p.m. The distance of the run is about 20 miles — or 35,200 yards.

Centennial is hoping to give MacArthur a run for its money at the Big 12 Conference meet on Oct. 13. But the Chargers will probably have to do it without one of their top runners, Iren White.

"He's got a hot spot on his leg and he'll be out for about two weeks," said Centennial coach Greg Walters. "They (doctors) said it will be two weeks before they even look at him again.

"I doubt he'll run at conference. We hope to get him back in time for sectional and maybe have him run a bit before that. We'll need him more when we run at sectional."

Rantoul's Jason Gass ran his best time ever on Saturday at Peoria, taking 20th in 15:25.

The junior set a personal record by 23 seconds.

"He ran a real smart race," said Rantoul coach Al Taylor. "He was out right at five minutes (for the first mile) and at 10:16 for two (miles). He ran like I thought he could."