

# U High runs to regional title despite injury to No. 3 man

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The University High School boys cross country team did what it was supposed to do yesterday, but paid a price in the process.

The Pioneers, the No. 3 ranked Class A team in the state, won their fifth straight regional title on their home course at Normal's Maxwell Park.

Led by the 1-2 sweep of sophomore Barrett Moore and senior Charles Alsberry, U High was among five teams advancing from yesterday's six-team meet to Friday's 4 p.m. PBL Sectional at Paxton.

But the Pioneers may have to run without No. 3 man Kevin Eggan, who was in eighth place when a hip injury forced him to drop out with a half mile left in the 3-mile race.

"I don't know what this means for the rest of his year," said U High coach Lester Hampton. "We might have to go without him."

Hampton expected U High to score in the 30s, but had to settle for 44 points. Other sectional qualifiers were Clinton (58), Tri-Valley (67), Olympia (71) and Argenta-Oreana (145).

Only six of the race's 44 finishers failed to advance. Among the five individual qualifiers not on advancing teams were Blue Ridge's Wade Bernard (11th), Kyle Schroeder (29th) and Aaron Martin (34th), Gridley's David Johnson (15th) and Buffalo Tri-City's Matt Febus (23rd).

Moore posted the fourth best time in course history with a 16-minute, 7-second clocking, which was well off his own course record of 15:55.

"I was disappointed I didn't get it," Moore said. "I'll bury it next year."

Moore buried the upset hopes of defending champion Joe Alexander of Clinton early on, opening up a seven-second lead after one mile and maintaining the gap with a 5:34 second mile.

"This was something special because I didn't win it last year," said Moore, who's hoping for a top-five state meet finish.

A 5:31 final mile gave Moore a 17-second cushion over Alsberry, who passed Alexander in the final half mile.

"When I went by, he glanced back to see if anybody else was coming," said Alsberry, who lost to Alexander 11 days earlier. "That told me he gave up and quit try-

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ing."

The race was a significant improvement for Alsberry — 22nd in last year's state meet — over his fifth-place Corn Belt Conference showing.

"We had a little talk this week," Hampton said. "He's still been running pretty good, but not as well the past couple of races. I joked with him, 'Isn't it about time you get back where you belong?' He said, 'Yes.'"

Olympia's Chad Cremeens, who edged Alsberry in the Corn Belt Meet, was 14 seconds behind him yesterday in fourth.

Clinton's Josh Turney nipped teammate Brett Carter for the fifth and final medal awarded, 16:47-16:48.

"I think we've got a good shot at qualifying for state," said Clinton coach Mike Clark eyeing the sectional which will have No. 3 U High, No. 6 St. Joseph-Ogden, No. 9 Chrisman, No. 10 Kankakee McNamara and No. 15 Herscher, among others, battling for five state berths.

"We competed real well with those teams at Amboy (Oct. 8)," Clark said.

U High's other scorers were Kyle Anderson (12th, 17:25), Mike Sams (13th, 17:29) and Chris Dixon (17th, 17:45). The Pioneers' top five finished within 1:38 of each other.

### At Delavan

Tremont ran like the No. 1-ranked team it is to win the Delavan Regional.

The Turks, even without injured No. 3 man Ty Petro, packed six runners in the top seven and had a five-man split of 35 seconds to score just 16 points.

Only the fifth-place finish of Lowpoint-Washburn's Dan Jassman kept Tremont from a perfect score of 15.

Leading the charge was defending champion Brad Kaufmann, who clocked 15:32 on the 2.9-mile course. The junior's course record is 14:38. Trailing Kaufmann by two seconds was senior Chad Gingrich.

Tremont's Mike Jay ran 15:46 in third and Scott Shafer sped 15:47 in fourth. Brad Horton and Scott Penning placed sixth (16:07) and seventh (16:21) for the Turks.

Tremont advanced to Friday's 4

p.m. Rushville Sectional along with Delavan (70), Lowpoint-Washburn (73), Mid-County (127) and Hartsburg-Emden (136).

### At Mahomet

Dan Nielsen won his third straight regional title to help Mahomet-Seymour place second in its own regional.

The Bulldog senior, who placed third in the regional as a freshman, clocked 15:11.1 on the 3-mile course to win by 29 seconds over St. Joseph-Ogden's Rick Walden.

St. Joseph-Ogden placed five runners within 55 seconds of each other in the top nine to post a winning total of 27 points.

Joining St. Joseph-Ogden at Friday's PBL Sectional will be Mahomet-Seymour (64), Urbana Uni High (94), Tolono Unity (103) and Monticello (110).

Sixth-place PBL missed advancing by 39 points, but did qualify 15th-placer Shawn Cahill (17:07.5) individually. Prairie Central placed seventh with 175, but had Ron Jankun (23rd, 17:32.2) and Kyle Wenger (24th, 17:32.7) advance individually.

### At Kankakee

Gardner sophomore Ryan Meece held off Herscher's John Clausen to win the Herscher Regional by two seconds on Kankakee Community College's 3-mile course.

Meece clocked 16:16 to Clausen's 16:18 as Gardner advanced to the PBL Sectional by virtue of its third-place finish.

Kankakee McNamara nipped Herscher for the title, 40-42. Gardner tallied 65 points. Other qualifiers were Coal City (89) and Illiana Christian (117).

### At Franklin

Illini Central, led by fourth-place finisher Mamo Rivera, placed second at the Franklin Regional to advance to the Rushville Sectional.

The defending champion Cougars scored 63 points, 13 behind team champion Franklin. Hillsboro qualified third (73) followed by Piasa Southwestern (84) and A.C. Central (137).

Franklin's Matt Allen ran the hilly 3-mile course in 16:47, to win by 11 seconds over Staunton's Tim Straub. Two-time regional champion Jed Brown of Piasa Southwestern, who placed 20th in last year's state meet, finished third.

Rivera clocked 17:40.

*Pantagraph*

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