

Boys cross country team advances to Saturday's state meet

By DOUG OLSEN
Sports writer

The Mahomet-Seymour boys cross country team will be running at the State meet this Saturday in Peoria. The team won the right to advance by finishing third at the M-S sectional last Saturday. The top five finishers will run at State.

Scott DeWitt was the top Bulldog runner, as he finished in 11th place with a time of 16:16. Chad Avery took 24th in 16:50, and Grant Iles 25th in 16:50. Phillip Alexander crossed the line in 27th place, Neil Banwart 33rd, Josh Smith 40th and Jesse Schweig finished 117th.

Coach John King was very satisfied on how his team performed. "We had some really solid races," he remarked. "Even though Josh Smith did not have his best day, everyone else picked it up. Chad Avery espe-

cially had a good race, as he's been our sixth man but finished second for us at the sectional meet."

Even though Coach King and all the Bulldog runners would love to win the State meet, a little realism says something else. "I would like to see our team finish in the top ten," commented King. "DeWitt was the only runner for us at State last year, so he's the only one for us with experience. The pressure of running at State is different. Either the runners do better than they usually do or worse. We've been consistent all year, which is what we need."

Unfortunately, the girls team did not enjoy the same success as the boys. The Lady Bulldogs finished in 10th place out of 20, to bring an end to their season. Jessica Rayburn was the top finishing M-S runner, as she

crossed the line in 34th place. Stacey Elkins finished 51st, Kerrie Green 67th, Abbey Haag 88th, Jamie Leverich 93rd, Christy Heinold 98th and Amy Slawter finished 102nd.

"We had some physical problems at the end that cost us a lot of points," King emphasized. "That's a shame, because the girls really had a good year."

King had praise for Elkins and Green, who as seniors ran their last race on Saturday. "They will be tough to replace," said King. "They were both top contributors this year, and losing them will hurt."

King also garnered praise for Abbey Haag, who showed great improvement over the course of the season. "The sophomore girls will be a year older and hopefully they will take up some of the slack," remarked King.