

Lutkehaus' win powers Pioneers to championship

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John Lutkehaus became the second boys sectional champion in University High School history Saturday at Oregon as he led the Pioneers to their fourth straight Class A sectional crown.

U High, ranked second in the state, tallied 59 points to advance for the ninth straight year to next Saturday's 10:30 a.m. state meet at Peoria's Detweiller Prak.

"We had some outstanding races from a couple individuals," said Coach Lester Hampton of his two-time defending state champions.

Lutkehaus covered the 3-mile course in 15 minutes, 8 seconds to win by 16 seconds.

Other U High scorers were Rinsola Adelekan in seventh (15:44), Nick Barrows in eighth (15:46), Brandon Fifer in 16th (15:58) and Mike Perillo in 29th (16:16).

"Nick Barrows did an outstanding job after being slowed by a leg injury," Hampton said. "We got a career race from sophomore Brandon Fifer. Another key was Mike Perillo being our fifth man."

Eureka, led by junior Matt Kaufman in third (15:29), advanced for the second time in its history by placing fourth with 129 points.

"We're excited," said Eureka coach Ron Eeten. "Matt fell flat on his back. He bounced right back in the race. I was so proud of him that he didn't give up."

Other Eureka scorers were Jeremy Zacha in 20th (16:07), Jared Hart in 25th (16:13), Chris Hood in 44th (16:36) and Jim Taylor in 45th (16:37).

Qualifying individually was Prairie Central freshman Ryan Young, who ran 15:37 in fourth. The Hawks placed 10th with 281 points.

Other advancing teams were No. 5-ranked Kewanee (109), No. 12 Winnebago (126) and No. 9 Sandwich (145).

At Mahomet

Most cross country teams develop a pecking order under which runners finish in relatively the same order meet to meet.

No such order exists on Mahomet-Seymour's team and that may have been a benefit Saturday.

The Bulldogs, the state's No. 6-ranked Class A squad, placed third in their own sectional to advance for the second straight year.

Mahomet-Seymour scored 118 points without the services of No. 1 man Grant Iles, who is out recovering from hypoglycemia. Also, Jesse Schweig, who was the team's fifth man in the regional, was its seventh man Saturday, but it didn't matter because Chad Avery went from seventh last week to third Saturday.

"That's the thing about this team," said Mahomet-Seymour coach John King. "If one has a bad race, another picks it up. I haven't had that luxury before. We've usually had a pecking order."

Saturday's order began with junior Phillip Alexander, who covered the 3-mile course in 16:41 for 17th.

"Phillip ran about as I expected," King said. "He hasn't had a bad race all year."

Other Bulldog scorers were Neil Banwart in 22nd (16:55), Avery in 25th (17:02), Scott DeWitt in 29th (17:09) and Josh Smith in 36th (17:17).

"This is probably Neil's best race of the year," King said.

Petersburg Porta lived up to its No. 1-state ranking by scoring 80 points. Other qualifiers were No. 3-ranked Urbana Uni High (154), No. 13 St. Joseph-Ogden (163) and Franklin (176).

Rushville senior Matt McClelland, second in last year's state meet, won in 15:43, three seconds ahead of Havana's Nate Montgomery.

At Lisle

Gardner's David Wilkey grabbed a state meet berth with an 11th-place finish in the Lisle Sectional.

The sophomore tied his career-best time for a 3-mile course, clocking 16:45 in windy, rainy conditions.

"To me, it was worth a 16:20 effort," said Gardner coach Larry Lane. "David ran outstanding today. He was in sixth, seventh or eighth most of the race after the mile mark."

Gardner finished 11th with 277 points. The advancing teams were No. 4-ranked Aurora Central Catholic (81), No. 14-ranked Archbishop Quigley (123), Westmont (157), Luther North (166) and Wheaton St. Francis (175).

The individual title went to Peter Muller of Chicago University High in 15:40.

