

Bulldog cross country might have reached its peak

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Sidelines



John King, Mahomet-Seymour High School's cross country-track coach, rates at least a couple high fives at this juncture.

For two years running now (pun intended), he has fielded the fourth best Class A boys cross country team in the state.

Two Saturdays ago, posting a score of 154, his entry chased Kewanee (with 85 points), Breese Mater Dei (104), and Petersburg Porta (128) across the finish line. Last year his Bulldogs, with 173 points, were

runners up only to Petersberg Porta (86), Normal U-High (105), and Urbana Uni High (135).

Pacing this year's M-S contingent was sophomore Josh Mock, who placed 22nd with a time of 15:53 over the three-mile course. Senior teammate Phil Alexander was on Mock's heels with 23rd place in 15:54. Other Bulldog scorers were Grant Iles, 56th place in 16:25; Scott DeWitt, 66th in 16:33; and Jesse Schweig, 89th in 16:51; all seniors.

It's interesting to note how these five Bulldogs fared a year

ago. As a freshman, Mock ran 116th in 17:04. As juniors, Alexander placed 17th in 15:55, Iles was unable to compete, DeWitt finished 86th in 16:43, and Schweig was 107th in 16:53.

Mahomet-Seymour's successive fourth places as a team are the best Bulldog showings ever, though King's boys earned 10ths in 1987 and 1994, an 11th in 1988, and a 14th in 1989. King, incidentally, has been the school's cross country coach since Class A competition was created in 1976.

How might the Bulldogs do

next year?

The outlook is extremely rugged. Mahomet-Seymour is on the brink of having to move up into the Class AA strife because of its bulging enrollment. Also, Coach King will lose four of his top five performers to graduation.

It's exciting to know that a runner with Mock's ability and potential will be back, but even he will be surrounded by opposition galore, the best that the big schools of Class AA boast.

And here's a hint of how much more formidable Class AA is than Class A in cross country: Peter Muller of Chicago University High won the Class A individual title with a time of 14:46. Jay Torres of Wheeling claimed the Class AA crown with 14:29. Muller's time would have tied for fifth in the AA field. Twenty-fifth place in Class A was clocked in 15:56; 25th place in AA was 15 flat.

Wow! Or should we say, Ow?