

# Cross country team takes fourth at State

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Editor

The Mahomet-Seymour High School varsity boys cross country team took fourth place at last weekend's Illinois High School Association's (IHSAA) State Cross Country Meet held at Detweiller Park in Peoria. Sophomore Josh Mock placed 22nd and senior Phil Alexander placed 23rd, earning them both spots on the All-State Cross Country Team.

"It's just what we thought it would be," head coach John King said after the race. "Our kids ran well."

In addition to Mock's 15:53 22nd place finish and Alexander's 15:54 23rd place finish, Grant Iles placed 56th, Scott Dewitt took 66th, Jesse Schweig was 89th, Ryan Pittman placed 107th and Ryan Clements was 155th with times of 16:25, 16:33, 16:51 and 18:08, respectively.

Unfortunately for the Bulldogs, these times earned the team 154 points, which was good enough for a fourth-place finish. This was unfortunate because only the top three teams are recognized. Many fans predict this year was the last chance for the Bulldogs to earn state team honors before possibly making the jump to Class AA competition next year.

Kewanee High School finished first with 85 points, Breese Mater Dei was second with 104 and Petersburg Porta was third with 128.

Nevertheless, the team's spirits were high after the meet because Mock and Alexander qualified for the All-State Cross Country Team, an honor only earned by runners finishing in the top 25 among individuals.

"It's a good feeling," Alexander said about the senior's last high school cross country meet. He said he is currently thinking about attending the University of Dayton, University of Evansville or Rose Hulman College upon graduation later this year. He added that he plans on running for whichever college he decides to attend.

Mock, too, was pleased with his finish. After finishing in 116th place as a freshman, Mock decided to crack down on himself and get in shape for his second year on the team.

"Last winter, I worked my butt off before track," Mock said.

As for next year's team, Mock said the Bulldogs will face an additional challenge, beyond possibly competing in Class AA. The team also will be losing four of its top five runners to graduation. Alexander, Iles, Dewitt and Schweig are all seniors.

But those are next year's worries. For now, the team has a fourth-place finish and two All-State runners to cherish until the start of next season.



(Top) Josh Mock and Phil Alexander make their push to the finish line at last weekend's State Cross Country Meet in Peoria. Mock finished 22nd and Alexander finished 23rd. The team placed fourth overall. (Bottom left) Both Mock and Alexander made the All-State Cross Country Team and