

Mahomet, Olympia advance

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The Mahomet-Seymour and Olympia high school boys cross country teams continued recent hot streaks Saturday as they overcame bitter cold to advance from the Mahomet-Seymour Class A Sectional.

The host Bulldogs placed third and the Spartans fifth to advance to Saturday's state meet at Peoria's Detweiler Park. It will be Olympia's first state trip in cross country.

No. 5-state ranked Mahomet-Seymour scored 125 points while No. 11-ranked Olympia tallied 144. No. 4-ranked Petersburg Portia won with 108, followed by No. 3 Urbana Uni High with 119. No. 7 St. Joseph-Ogden scored 134 in fourth.

"After a mile, I thought they'd qualify," said Mahomet-Seymour coach John King, whose team advanced for the third straight year. "I was pleased overall. We didn't want to run our best race here."

King is hoping the best is a week away as does Olympia coach Mike Neisler.

"We didn't have the best race," admitted Neisler, who had three runners at less than 100 percent physically. "I thought Portia was the team to beat coming in."

"We know we can run better than we did today. I'm just happy



Matt Kaufman

to get out."

For University High, the meet was a case of a good thing coming to an end. After having qualified nine consecutive years, the Pioneers finished seventh to miss advancing by two places and 54 points.

"We knew we had our hands full," said Pioneer coach Lester Hampton, whose team had shared the longest active string of state appearances with Breese Mater Dei. "We knew one or two teams would have to have an off day. We didn't run overwhelmingly, but we ran OK."

U High all-stater Rinsola Adelekan ran well enough to land one of the seven individual qualifying berths. He ran 14th, covering the 3-mile course in 16 minutes.

"I'm going to go to state and run as hard as I can," said Adelekan, 14th in last year's state meet.

Josh Mock led Mahomet-Seymour and all Pantagraph area finishers by placing 10th in 15:58. Teammate Phillip Alexander was close behind in 13th (16:03).

"I tried to stay with Phil as long as I could and then I encouraged him to stay with me," Mock said.

"I think we ran about average," Alexander added. "I think we could have stuck together better."

Other scorers for Mahomet-Seymour were Grant fles (31st, 16:36), Scott DeWitt (40th, 16:47) and Ryan Pittman (48th, 16:56).

Olympia was led by Michael Melick in 16th (16:09). Joining him in the Spartans' top five were Kenny Holt in 25th (16:28), Kyle Wurmsnest in 27th (16:30), David Dare in 32nd (16:36) and Craig Tackett in 50th

(17:04).

Tuscola sophomore Robert Hanners won in 15:24, six seconds head of Jess Lehman of Moweaqua Central A&M.

They qualified as individuals along with Sullivan's Nick Parks (third) and Luke Standerfer (fourth), Franklin's Jason Courier (sixth) and Delavan sophomore Adam Hendrick (14th, 16:04).

"That's about where I hoped he'd run," said Delavan coach Walt Dare of Hendrick. "I thought he ran pretty good."

Eureka qualifies second

No. 6-state ranked Eureka qualified second from the Oregon Class A Sectional, scoring 92 points to 58 for top-ranked Kewanee.

"I think we performed how we expected," said Eureka coach Brett Charlton. "Our goal was to keep it close with Kewanee and we did that."

Charlton said his team was leading at the mile and 2-mile points, but faded a bit the last mile.

"We know where we have to improve," said Charlton, whose team was led by runner-up Matt Kaufman. "If we can get our fourth and fifth men to move up with our two and three men, which we have done all year, we'll be in a position to beat those guys."

Kaufman clocked 16:13 to trail only Seneca's J.B. Hedges, a transfer student from Normal Community West. Hedges ran 15:40.

"Matt ran a smart race," Charlton said. "His goal was to get the team out of there."

Also figuring in Eureka's score were Chris Hood in 12th (16:58), Jeremy Zacha in 13th (16:56), Jim

Taylor in 25th (17:20) and Nathan Schmidt in 42nd (17:44).

Prairie Central star second

Prairie Central's Ryan Young placed second to Chicago University High's Peter Muller in the Aurora Central Catholic Class A Sectional.

Young clocked 15:05 on the 3-mile course while Muller sped a course record 14:38, breaking the mark set by current Illinois State star Chris Bailey of Westmont. Young and Muller both qualified for the state meet.

Prairie Central placed eighth (237) and Gardner-Dwight 10th (220), but did not advance. The qualifying teams were No. 2-state ranked Aurora Central Catholic (102), Burlington Central (149), Kaneland (163), Wheaton St. Francis (182) and Westmont (188).

"Ryan Young had a great race, said Prairie Central coach Doug Roberts. "He was 10 seconds off the old course record."

Gardner-Dwight coach Larry Lane couldn't complain about his team's effort.

"Our team ran great with our top five finishers and No. 7 man all running personal records or season bests," Lane said.