

M-S uses depth, charges to top

Waldman, Schaap lead pack;
Bulldogs boys finish first

By JUSTIN TAYLOR

For The News-Gazette

MAHOMET — The Mahomet-Seymour girls' cross-country team isn't a one-woman show.

The Bulldogs met a host of talented runners, and another solid day by their top seven to first place with 27 points Saturday at the Bulldog Invitational. Urbana University High took second with 76 points, Rochester was third (118) and Urbana finished fourth (128).

Jackie Waldman, the Bulldogs' top runner, ran a typically strong race and took medalist honors, finishing the 5-kilometer race in 18 minutes, 25 seconds. But M-S' other runners weren't far behind.

Hannah Schaap was second (16:42), Sarah Forbes was fifth (19:14), Josi Parker tied for 10th (19:26), Amanda Rodriguez tied for 18th (19:57) and Megan Helbling finished 23rd (20:13).

"We are deeper than usual," Bulldogs coach Bonnie Moxley said. "We have 10, 11 and even sometimes 12 runners who are bidding for those top seven positions, which makes for great practices and eventually makes for great races."

"Our Nos. 6 and 7 runners have been switching off and on every race, so they're never giving up on the possibility that they may make the varsity lineup."

Forbes was the story of the day for M-S, setting a personal record.

"It felt great. I didn't really feel tired at all during the race," Forbes said. "I really prepared well



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Mahomet-Seymour's Hannah Schaap runs to second place Saturday at the Bulldog Invitational. The hosts cruised to the team title.

for it. I'm so excited for our team. It's nice when everyone can do well."

With the conference meet and sectionals coming up, the Bulldogs might be getting better. Sophomore Amy Clausen, who was M-S' No. 1 runner last season, has battled injuries all year, but she ran in her first meet of the season in the open race.

"They're really keying up and getting themselves ready to go," Moxley said. "They're pret-

ty much running at the top of their game right now."

Monticello's Kerby Waddell was third (18:53), Uni's Michelle Mehnert was sixth (19:23), teammate Shivani Khanna was eighth (19:25) and Urbana's Taneya Tuell was seventh (19:24).

Boys' race. The Bulldogs would not be denied on their home course, taking first place with 78 points. Bloomington Central Catholic was second (80 points), Normal U-High was third (110) and Georgetown-Ridge Farm/Chrisman was fourth (128).

It was a big showing for the Bulldogs, who haven't finished higher than fourth at this meet in the last decade.

"We're doing a lot right; we're a growing program," M-S coach Neil Garrison said. "About five years ago, we were ninth in regionals out of nine full teams, and we're working our way up."

The Bulldogs were led by Justin Sebens, who finished fifth in 15:53. Jacob Mahaffey was 16th (16:31), Troy Pittman was 18th (16:40), Andrew Kumler tied for 30th (17:16), Devin Lyons was 32nd (17:17) and Dustin Kinkelaar was 43rd (17:33).

"Their efforts are good, they've done the off-season training in the winter and struggled through track and have done a good job," Garrison said. "I'm real proud of them."

Matt Feldhake of Effingham St. Anthony won medalist honors in 15:20.

Rantoul's Connor Millar was second (15:42), and Nathan Warstler of Georgetown-Ridge Farm/Chrisman was fourth (15:48).