

Gross country runs two-three

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Citizen correspondent

Mahomet-Seymour boys' and girls' cross-country ran two-three at the East Peoria Invitational Sept. 25, the former besting 18 other teams for second and the latter topping 15 others for third.

Only second-ranked Class 2A Normal University did better than the ninth-ranked Bulldog boys with 31 points to their 137.

En route the Dawgs also topped 15th-ranked Galesburg (seventh), 21st-ranked Bloomington (fifth) and the 22nd-ranked host (ninth). They also beat four Class 3A squads in Pekin (third), Edwardsville (fourth), Normal Community (sixth) and Dekalb (11th).

"This is the highest finish our team has ever had since joining the invitational in 2005," Coach Neal Garrison said of outdoing fifth in 2008. "Our team has continued to improve a little bit each year over the past ten years.

"The boys also beat 10 of the 29 teams from our sectional meet, giving us confidence as we approach the state meet series in four weeks."

Junior Lucas Prather paced Mahomet with a ninth-place finish in 15:52, bettering his third-best area time by 10 seconds.

"Lucas ran our second-fastest time ever on the course at this meet," Garrison said. "Our goal for our team is to get as many runners to run their personal bests as possible. Sixteen of our 20 finishers ran season-best times."

Sophomore Jonathan Schaap posted 16:16, freshman Forrest Smoes 16:25, junior John Butcher 16:27, senior John Prillaman 16:28 and junior Eli Johnson 16:28. Four Bulldogs logged in the 17th minute, one in the 18th, three in the 20th and two in the

It was extremely pleased with the team's effort as it is often hard for



Photo submitted/Mahomet Citizen
The Mahomet-Seymour High School boys' cross country team celebrates on Saturday. Bulldog runners got second place at the Peoria Invitational on Sept. 25.

our boys over the years to adjust from running well at the extremely large Peoria Notre Dame Invitational with 70 teams during the previous week's meet to a meet that has 20 teams," Garrison said. "While 20 teams is still a very large meet, it has often been hard for our runners over the years to adjust to the change."

M-S is scheduled to resume action Oct. 5 at the Normal University Invitational.

Counterparts at the East Peoria course, Mahomet girls were paced by senior Brittany Bohn and sophomore Tessa Hanlon, who placed fourth

(18:24) and fifth (18:41), respectively.

U-High also won on the girls' side with 69 to Edwardsville's 102 and M-S' 115.

"We did have a great day to run," Coach Bonnie Moxley said. "It doesn't get any better than sunny and 70 degrees for a runner."

"We ran OK, but failed to pull No. 4 and No. 5 closer to the top three. This is a lot of pressure for the girls to take on, but with U-High pounding on us as they did, we will have to be much better by the sectional in four weeks."

Junior Rachel Rodriguez ran in 19:15 for 15th place, junior Nikki Lewis 20:16 for 41st and freshman Allie Melchi 20:36 for 50th.

Moxley added: "We will be ranking in the top 10 of the state, but failing to make it into the state meet (as a team) merely because there are six or seven of that top ten assigned to our sectional. With homecoming being this weekend it was easy for the athletes to be somewhat distracted from doing their best."

M-S girls are scheduled to resume action at the Wheaton North Falcon Classic Oct. 2.