Tenth-ranked runners second, fourth at invitationals

By STACEY LAFEBER
Citizen correspondent

The Class 2A tenth-ranked Mahomet-Seymour boys' cross-country squad ran third and fourth, respectively, at the 17-team Normal University Invitational October 5 and 33rd Annual Metamora Runnin' Red Invitational October 9, the latter up five spots from last season.

Second-ranked U-High captured both invites (20, 72). The Bulldogs scored a 66 in the former and 125 in the latter.

"Our team posted its best times in over a decade," Coach Neal Garrison said of the U-High output. "Our boys had a major breakthrough in their times with 19 of the 22 runners having a personal best three-mile time for the season. Volunteer Coach Gary Garrison said this was the best meet he has seen for our team in 9 years.

"In the varsity race we had nine runners represent us. For the first time in 14 years we had three runners from our team run in the 15s."

Junior Lucas Prather "ran the fastest time we have ever had at the U-High Invite" with a 15:34 for fifth. Junior John Butcher and senior John Prillaman also ran in the 15s "for the first time in their careers on a three-mile course" with a respective 15:52 (11th) and 15:55 (13th).

Mahomet also had five runners in the 16s: sophomore Jonathan Schaap 16:03, freshman Forrest Smoes 16:06 and junior Eli Johnson 16:08 along with freshman Ethan Russell and senior Evan Forbes.

Russell and Forbes "ran in the 16s for the first time in their careers."

Garrison added: "It is really great to watch all of our runners running so well at every grade level."

At Metamora only third-ranked Springfield and Class 3A Moline outpaced the Bulldogs.

"We ran very competitively in this invitational," Garrison said. "This is the highest place our team has gotten in this invitational since joining the meet in 2008.

"Our goal for our team was to place in the top four teams to earn a trophy, since there were many great teams in the invitational. We competed against 12 of the 28