

Cross country

3-milers keep regional pace

Both squads place third and advance

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For the second straight week, both Mahomet-Seymour boys’ and girls’ cross-country squads achieved the same meet standing, this time each placing third in the Class 2A regional at Normal’s Maxwell Park October 23 and advancing to sectional.

Ninth-ranked Bulldog boys and runner-up area team posted 89 points to top-ranked Normal University’s 17 points and Morton’s 66.

“Since the top five teams advance to sectional, we didn’t focus on anything but trying to run personal bests at this meet,” Coach Neal Garrison said. “The temperature of the day was nice, but it was raining which hurt our times some.”

Despite the rainy weather, juniors Lucas Prather and John Butcher and senior John Prillaman ran in the 15s and sophomore Jonathan Schaap and junior Eli Johnson ran in the 16s, all “for a solid performance.”

Prather and Prillaman each ran personal bests in 15:27.3 (ninth) and 15:50.5 (16th), respectively. Butcher ran in 15:58.7 for 18th place.

“Lucas’ time is the strongest time we have had at a regional meet for over 15 years,” Garrison noted. “John ran in the 15s for the second time in his career, showing he is right where he needs to be at this point in the season.”

Up-and-comer freshman Curt Kupferschmid also ran a personal best in 17:08.

“One of our top runners was held out of the meet due to an injury, which allowed us to give Curt another chance to race,” Garrison said. “Curt has really been coming on strong in the last half of the season.”

“We had set a goal for him to try to run in the 16s. He continued to improve upon his time, but just missed the 16s. I wish it had been a little better weather as I know he made a sub-17 minute effort.”

Eighth-ranked Bulldog girls and the area’s top team posted 62 points to seventh-ranked U-High’s 43 and

— Coach Neal Garrison

Washington’s 53.

“It was a great meet for our top three runners, but the back fell off and that was the difference,” Coach Bonnie Moxley said. “We were very aware of Washington prior to the race, but figured that since they did not have the front runners we have, we would beat them.”

Becoming the first female Mahomet runner to break 18 minutes in a three-mile race two weeks prior, senior Brittany Bohn broke the 17-minute barrier and her previous top area time of 18:07 with a second-place finish of 17:38.4.

“I am really proud of Brittany’s hard work and tenacity this season,” Moxley said.

With the area’s second best time, sophomore Tessa Hanlon stayed steady at 18:14.5 for sixth place. Junior Rachel Rodriguez improved upon her top-ten area time of 19:10 with a time of 18:40.0 for 11th.

Freshman Allie Melchi placed 21st in 19:55.8; junior Nikki Lewis 22nd in 19:56.4; junior Ceira Nevin 26th in 20:13.3; and junior Lauren Penrose 27th in 20:30.8.

Both Bulldog squads advanced to East Peoria’s Class 2A sectional at Illinois Central College October 30.

Garrison said of the keys to sectional: “The boys had strong efforts at regional, but we know we will need to continue to improve to be able to place in the top five at sectional as a team this year.”

“Our team has not qualified for state since we were single A in 1996. It would be a big boost to the runners and our program if we place in the top five.”

Moxley said of her team’s sectional chances: “We will need to race much better at the bottom to qualify as a team. Our sectional is insane deep with talent, so we will have to bring our game face across the lineup. Hopefully there will be a different end to the story this weekend in Peoria.”