

Prairie Central	24
Pontiac	21
Rantoul	9

Top Returning Runners		
PLAYER, SCHOOL, YR.	VOTES	
Kalla Gold, Eureka, Jr.	5	
Brittany Bohn, Mahomet-Seymour, Sr.	2	
Alex VanHoof, BCC, So.	1	

Okaw Valley Boys (100 points possible)		
SCHOOL	POINTS	
Monticello (10)	100	
Sullivan/Okaw Valley	84	
Shelbyville	78	
Unity	67	
St. Teresa	61	
Maroa-Forsyth/W-L	48	
Clinton	45	
Central A&M	25	
Argenta-Oreana	22	
Tuscola	20	

Top Returning Runners		
PLAYER, SCHOOL, YR.	VOTES	
Steve Schroeder, Monticello, Jr.	8	
Cameron Harvey, Sullivan/OV, Jr.	4	
Clayton Baker, Shelbyville, Sr.	1	

Okaw Valley Girls (100 points possible)		
SCHOOL	POINTS	
St. Teresa (10)	100	
Monticello	88	
Shelbyville	82	
Tuscola	60	
Unity	50	
Central A&M	45	
Argenta-Oreana	40	
Sullivan/Okaw Valley	33	
Maroa-Forsyth/W-L	28	
Clinton	24	

Top Returning Runners		
PLAYER, SCHOOL, YR.	VOTES	
Ellen Devereux, St. Teresa, Jr.	5	
Grace McCormack, St. Teresa, Jr.	5	
Kelsey Hardimon, Monticello, Sr.	2	
Ivy Handley, St. Teresa, So.	1	
Michelle Moyer, Monticello, Jr.	1	

Sangamon Valley Boys (16 points possible)		
SCHOOL	POINTS	
St. Joseph-Ogden (4)	16	
St. Thomas More	11	
Clifton Central	7	
Paxton-Buckley-Loda	6	

Top Returning Runners		
PLAYER, SCHOOL, YR.	VOTES	
Zeke Elkins, St. Joseph-Ogden, Jr.	3	
Matt Dixon, Clifton Central, Jr.	1	

Sangamon Valley Girls (16 points possible)		
SCHOOL	POINTS	
St. Joseph-Ogden (4)	16	
St. Thomas More	11	
Paxton-Buckley-Loda	9	
Clifton Central	4	

Top Returning Runner		
PLAYER, SCHOOL, YR.	VOTES	
Chelsea Blaase, St. Joseph-Ogden, Jr.	3	

Vermilion Valley Boys (25 points possible)		
SCHOOL	POINTS	
Georgetown-Ridge Farm/Chrisman (3.5)	23.5	
Oakwood/Armstrong-Potomac (1.5)	21.5	
Bismarck-Henning	14	
Hoopston Area	11	
Schlarman	5	

Top Returning Runner		
PLAYER, SCHOOL, YR.	VOTES	
Matt Avenatti, G-RF/Chrisman, Jr.	5	

Vermilion Valley Girls (25 points possible)		
SCHOOL	POINTS	
Hoopston Area (3)	23	
Bismarck-Henning (1)	19	
Oakwood/Armstrong-Potomac (1)	18	
Georgetown-Ridge Farm/Chrisman	10	

men, including junior Steve Schroeder, whose offseason preparations included nearly 450 miles of training.

"He gets down to business when it's time to get down to business," Butler said. "He took his running real seriously. He said, 'I'll do something every day and nothing will get in my way.'"

Whether a team state title is a realistic goal remains to be seen.

"If we continue to get better, then it is possible," Butler said, "but we have no control over what the other teams are doing. To be state champions, everybody has to be clicking. Getting a trophy is incredibly difficult."

The Sages have had one setback. One of the top returnees, Petey Biddle, has been sidelined for eight weeks with a stress fracture in his sacrum. He has been keeping aerobically fit with pool workouts and hopes to resume running soon.

"I hope he can get something out of his senior season," Butler said. "He'll have a positive impact whether he is running or not."

Other boys' lettermen besides Biddle and Schroeder are seniors Patrick Hayes, who logged nearly 300 summer miles, and Stu Bauler along with juniors Alex Furcich and Luke Zocher and sophomore Andrew Hanselman.

Hayes has made the most strides in the past season, moving into the top seven this season after not competing in last year's sectional or state series.

"He didn't get bitter, he got better," Butler said. "He had a great attitude and was very determined."

Butler's 17-runner boys' team also includes senior Alex Romine, an 800-meter specialist in track.

"He could be in our top six or seven," Butler said. "He has that look in his eye: 'I'm out here for a reason and I want to get it done.'"

Butler's assistant is his wife, Mary. She volunteered for years and is in her second season as a paid coach.

"She has become more involved every day and that has been really beneficial to me and to the program," Butler said. "It has made our program go to another level. Her influence as a mentor with the girls has been tremendous."

State rankings

The second-ranked Sages are joined in the boys' Class 1A poll by 14th-rated Urbana Uni High.

Among Class 1A girls' teams, St. Joseph-Ogden is ranked sixth. The top two teams are from area conferences: No. 1 Decatur St. Teresa and No. 2 Eureka.

10th and the boys 14th.

"The boys put in more summer miles than I have seen for the past nine years," boys' coach Neal Garrison said. "They should be at least 20 seconds per man faster than last year as a result of their hard work. Many of our boys ran anywhere from 300 to 500 miles."

The athletes recognized individually by dycstat.com are Monticello's Schroeder (11th) and SJ-O teammates Chelsea Blaase and Sidney Long, 19th and 20th, respectively.

SJ-O coach Jon Jamison said Blaase is "the most mentally tough athlete I have coached."

Long (18:16) and Blaase (18:19) have the two fastest times ever for SJ-O girls at the state course in Peoria.

Thunder Run continues

Salt Fork's program has been disbanded, but the Thunder Run invitational, which the Storm hosted, will continue with team winners determined based on the total elapsed times for a school's top five finishers rather than the order of finish for the individuals.

Oakwood/Armstrong-Potomac will take over the administration of the meet, which is Oct. 2.

A decade of volunteerism

Arthur's program celebrates its 10th year of existence, which is the length of time Ryan Whelan has donated his time to coach aspiring runners.

"We've always had a small program here and the kids have always made up a nice little grouping, and since they know they are doing this for themselves and that I'm volunteering my time for them to do it, the general aura is positive," Whelan said.

Senior Mike Rosenbaum and sophomore Allie Singer are expected to be team leaders. Overall, Whelan is working with three boys and three girls.

Tracksters turn to running

Centennial's cross-country squad includes two prominent members of last season's boys' track team: all-staters Demetrius Carr and ToCorey Reed. Carr was a state placer in the triple jump, and Reed earned a medal running on the 800 relay.

That helps offset the loss of two sophomores who moved on, Chris Gillispie (to Michigan) and Jake Hutner (to Ohio). The Chargers' leaders are expected to be juniors Blas Garcia-

Chargers take a hit

What looked like a strong girls' team when last season suffered a blow when the team in 2009, Neli Crawford, made as. Coach Laura Koterba-Eckert a strong group back in August. Hannah Cuttelle, Claire Taylor Staab.

"I think all of the returnees will have career bests," she said.

The team placed 17th at an all-underclassman meet.

Rockets show promise

Unity boys' coach Dike leads to a cautiously optimistic preseason. "Training in the racing is quite another," he said.

Juniors Scott Woodard and Eckert were two of the off-ers. Eckert is a first-time state try runner who moved up last spring (and clocked a third race).

"He has no experience in miles, but it appears in training he has some capability," Stirrett said.

Junior Doran Walsten and man Nick Godsell, a 5-foot-er, could figure prominently in the Rockets' lineup. Stirrett said the team's most improved junior Colby Purcell, a one-time the sport last fall.

Slow start for busy

As a junior, Clinton's M combined football and cross-country fall. He also earned letters in ball, swimming and track.

This year, he's not playing and will get a late start in training. He is recovering from surgery and will be back in mid-September.

Vikings show potential

Danville has the ability to up fast this season. Senior Matt Cleveland and Jovon nearly 600 miles during the and junior high school state Johnny Leverenz (from St. expected to help solidify the Orvis' lineup as will Matt transfer who was one of the ners last year at Richton.

"With good health, we expect three front-runners at ju-

News-Gazette Top 10: Boys

TEAM	COMMENT
1. Monticello	Six of last year's top seven return
2. Mahomet-Seymour	Five of last year's top seven were underclassmen
3. Urbana Uni High	Top two on regional title team were underclassmen
4. Centennial	Projected top three this season are underclassmen
5. Danville	Top two return to join a talented freshman, transfer
6. St. Joseph-Ogden	Four underclassmen ran at state, including team leader
7. Unity	Only one senior in last year's top six
8. Georgetown-Ridge Farm/Chrisman	Only one senior in last year's top seven

Save the date	
EVENT	DATE
Regionals	Oct. 23
Sectionals	Oct. 30
State	Nov. 6
All-Area boys	Nov. 16
All-Area girls	Nov. 18

TEAM
1. Mahomet-Seymour
2. St. Joseph-Ogden
3. Urbana
4. Centennial
5. Monticello
6. St. Thomas More
7. Hoopston Area
8. Unity