

MSHS CROSS-COUNTRY

Boys Corn Belt champs, girls second

By TERRY GREENE

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For the first time in 26 years, Mahomet-Seymour's boys' cross country team can call themselves Corn Belt Conference champions.

Alex Keeble (15:38) finished second overall, and along with other top 10 finishers Jackson Powell (4th, 16:06), William Wolf (5th, 16:09), and Andrew Walmer (8th, 16:21), knocked off six-time league title holder Normal University High. M-S finished the day with 31 points, eight ahead of second place U-High.

The conference meet was held at Rantoul High School on October 19.

Three other Bulldogs, currently ranked second in the state in Class

2A, finished in the top 15: James Williams (12th, 16:31), Gabe Pommier (14th, 16:37), and Ethan Russell (15th, 16:37.5) to secure the team win.

Coach Neal Garrison said defeating a perennially strong team like U-High requires one simple ingredient – hard work.

“Cross country isn't a sport that requires any real skill. It's a sport based almost entirely on endurance,” he said. “The runners on our team have worked tremendously hard in the preseason and during the season to build up that endurance. It isn't easy, but they put in the sacrifices necessary to become one of the state's best teams.”

Beyond his current crop of strong competitors, who have con-

sistently finished at or near the top in every 2013 meet, Garrison can count on another strong group of runners to push Keeble and Company. Mahomet-Seymour's boys' team won the open competition.

“Our runners in the open race really showed just how strong the middle and back of the pack of our team is by winning the open race in a big way,” Garrison said. “Jack Hyde and Trevor Hanlon battled for the top spot. Jack won the open race and Trevor took the runner-up position. Brian Butcher, Ben Craw, and Daniel Middendorf took the next three spots.”

The University High girls won their fourth straight Corn Belt Conference title, scoring 24 points. The M-S girls' team placed second with 45 points. Lauren White-

house (2nd, 18:43) was the top placer for the lady Bulldogs. Other M-S point producers were Abigail Nielson (8th, 20:02), Isabel Pommier (12th, 20:17), Olivia Meyer (14th, 20:31), Mariah McAnally (17th, 20:54), and Twinkle Mehta (23rd, 21:31).

“We placed as high as we could this year. The girls did their job on Saturday. U-High will most likely place in the top three teams at state to bring home a trophy as they did last year, placing second in 2012,” Coach Bonnie Moxley said. “They were unbeatable for us and we needed to hold off Eureka which we did. We will relax a little this weekend with lesser competition at the regional and they gear up for the sectional next weekend.”

Left: Mahomet-Seymour's Lauren Whitehouse placed second in the Corn Belt Conference Meet Saturday morning in Rantoul. The sophomore completed the race in 18:43.2.

Far left: Mahomet-Seymour's Alex Keeble leads the Corn Belt Conference Meet Saturday morning in Rantoul. The sophomore held first place until the final lap's midpoint. Keeble finished second (15:38.3).



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