

# Boys, girls head to state finals

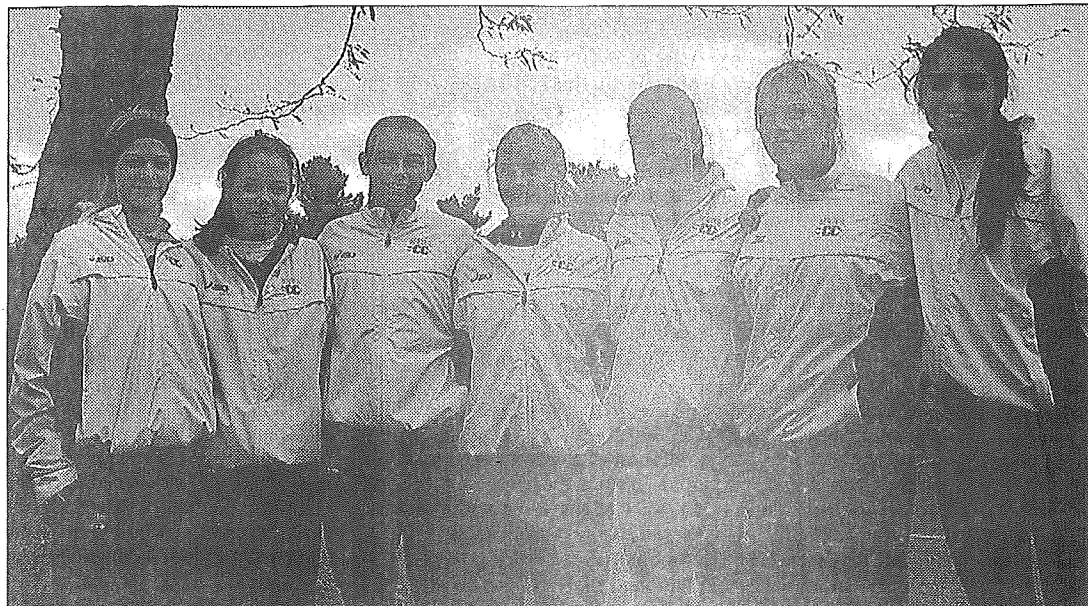
## MSHS cross-country headed to Peoria

By **TERRY GREENE**  
*Mahomet Citizen sportswriter*

One team nearly ran away from the field, while the other scratched and clawed its way to the finish line. And both teams will be headed to the IHSA Class 2A cross country state finals on November 9 at Detweiller Park in East Peoria.

The Mahomet-Seymour boys' team won its second sectional title in a row, and third in school history, on November 2 in Decatur when it outpaced the field to post a convincing 33-point win over second-place Springfield. The girls' team pulled together and rallied to secure fourth place to edge Mattoon. The top five teams advanced to the finals.

Sophomore Lauren Whitehouse nailed down the runner-up spot in the field for the Lady Bulldogs with a time of 17:59. Backing her up were Abigail Nielsen (12th, 18:53), Olivia Meyer (36th, 19:40), Isabelle Pommier (38th, 19:48), Mariah McAnally (39th, 19:48), Madison Buzicky (52nd, 20:14), and Twinkle Mehta (55th, 20:21). Nielsen and Pommier are the



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Members of the MSHS girls' cross-country team celebrate their strong sectional performance.

only seniors on the young M-S squad that moves on to the state finals.

Lady Bulldogs Coach Bonnie Moxley said it took the best efforts from every runner to qualify for the state finals. "Six of our seven runners ran their all-time personal best, which is an incredible accomplishment," she said. "Lauren ran under 18 minutes for the first time, Abigail ran under 19 minutes for the first time, and Mariah ran under 20 minutes for the first time.

It was an amazing effort by an amazing group."

On the boys' side, the Bulldogs made a convincing statement by placing five of its runners in the top 20 finishers to overwhelm the competition. It was Alex Keeble who once again blazed the trail for M-S, posting a 15:24 and placing fourth. But it was James Williams (11th, 15:44), William Wolf (13th, 15:49), Gabe Pommier (15th, 15:53), Andrew Walmer (17th, 15:55), Jackson Powell (32nd, 16:19), and Ethan Russell (51st, 16:36) that provided the depth to propel the Bulldogs to the top spot.

According to Coach Neal Garrison, not all of the M-S runners were 100 percent, and that factored into some of the times and

final results.

"The team ran a solid race, but not a great race for them as a whole. While I am proud of their efforts, I know they have a lot left in them," he said. "Alex and Jackson have been struggling this week with sickness, and that really impacts a runner's endurance. They still ran a good mental race, but it was clear they didn't have the endurance they typically have in the last half of their races."

Can the Bulldogs bring home a state trophy? Garrison thinks his team has a chance. "I think we're in the top six going into the race and they only give three trophies," Garrison said. "Our team has the ability to place in the top three if everything goes well."