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SEARCH

## DyeStat Illinois - Behind the Rankings - 9/9/15

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Sep 9th, 7:04pm



VOTED AMERICA'S #1 SANDWICH

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By Michael Newman  
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### 3A Boys

Four schools entered the rankings this week with Marmion Academy the highest team entering at #19. Even though the Cadets, defeated #18 Downers Grove North at the Leavey Invitational 85-90, part of that was due to the disqualification of Downers #2 runner Robert Prescott. With Prescott in there, North would have had a decisive advantage 56-89.

Minooka enters at #20 based off of a good performance at Hinsdale where they placed fourth. The Indians ran a 54 second split behind the 16<sup>th</sup> place finish of Soren Knudsen. Stevenson enters at #21 and could be one of the surprise teams in 3A. Jared Borowsky has the potential to place in the top 25 at state. The Patriots ran a 77 second split at the Lake County Invitational on 9/2. Their area for potential is their 2-5 split which was at only 32 seconds. The addition of former football players Brett Lucas and Caleb Oh has been a big plus for this team.

St. Charles East was the final team to enter at #25. That was a tight decision. It came down to the Saints, Glenbrook South, and McHenry. We had Fremd at #23 after they won the Crystal Lake South Invitational. There was too much of a gap between them and the next two teams Glenbrook South and McHenry. St. Charles East had a 33 second split on their first five and rated a little higher than those two teams. We also did consider Crystal Lake South who was sixth in their own meet. They did not run sophomore Jack Becker. With him in there, the Gators would have scored between 90-93 points still putting them behind Glenbrook South and McHenry. East Moline, who won at Galesburg, and Downers Grove South, who finished 5<sup>th</sup> at Lyons Township, were teams that we also looked at.

At the top of the rankings, Sandburg holds on but just slightly after they narrowly escaped Lyons Township with a 36-37 host team. Still, the Eagles only had a 17 second split on their first five. They also did not have Dylan Jacobs who won the sophomore race. In Sandburg's first race of the season at Channahon Park, Jacobs was right with Chris Torpy who was 4<sup>th</sup> man and 8<sup>th</sup> overall. Put Jacobs in and you have a team that has a nine second split on five. Ouch!

#2 Lyons Township's performance on their home course demonstrates how close it could be this year in 3A. The Lions have a solid 1-2 punch with race winner Vince Zona followed closely by Connor Madell. They only have a 39 second split on five right now. That will come down as history has shown with this team.

#3 Neuqua Valley is extremely close to Lyons Township and it could have gone either way. But



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remember, it is only the beginning of September. The Wildcats suffered the loss of #2 runner Scott Anderson who is out with a broken fibula. This team is deep with 7-8 runners capable of stepping into the next spot behind Connor Horn. Their split without Anderson would still have been 14 seconds on the first five instead of 11 seconds. Their pack is tight which could cause problems for opponents in future meets. Hinsdale Central is still a team to be reckoned with even though they finished a "distant" second behind Neuqua. Just like Lyons Township, they have a strong 1-2 in Blake Evertsen and Chris Brenk. The Red Devils do have a 31 second gap between Brenk and the rest of the pack. Their 5 runner split at the meet was 52 seconds. There is still time to address that.

Even though Palatine finished 8<sup>th</sup> at Hinsdale, they could still be the sleeper from this meet. Their usual #1 runner Brian Leonard did not run in the meet. In the sophomore race where they only ran 2 miles, Evan Eckels ran 10:05 for the win with Henry Lechowicz ten seconds back. Put those two runners in their top five and this team could contend for the MSL.

Even though Buffalo Grove jumped to #11 in the rankings even though they finished third at Fenton behind #7 Oak Park-River Forest and #16 Hoffman Estates, the Bison were without their top runner Kevin Salvano who was on a college visit to Notre Dame. Put him in and they would have scored near 90 points. With him in there this weekend at First to the Finish, this team could battle for a top three spot in the race.

Irwin Loud looked extremely good running 14:52 on Fenton's curvy course. #7 Oak Park-River Forest did run a 26 second five runner split on 2-5 and 72 seconds overall on five. The Huskies did lose in a triangular to #4 York on September 1 without Loud running. The race was a tempo pace until the end when York's Charlie Kern outkicked OPRF's Kimanti Johnson for the win. York did run a 20 second six runner split off of Kern and were without #2 runner Max Denning. York's first invitational race is at Richard Spring on September 19. We will see how close the split is then.

### 3A Girls

The biggest moving team this week was Barrington who jumped from their pre-season #21 to #7 after winning the Leavey Invitational 50-56 ahead of #8 Batavia. The addition of freshmen sisters Sophie and Eve Hoeltgen. Sophie was the Fillies' #4 runner and part of a 2-3-4 pack that had only nine seconds separating them. Eve was the team's #5 runner at this meet. Jocelyn Long showed she will be one of the top runners in the state when she came from eight seconds back at the half way point to win by thirteen seconds ahead of Batavia's Emma Stephens. Batavia looked strong up front as they put four runners in the first eleven. There was a 62 second split between four and five. Plenty of time to fix that making this team pretty dangerous when we get to the state series.

#14 York was a surprise in third at Leavey. The improvement of Elizabeth Hagstrom, who finished seventh, and the addition of freshman Sarah May, give this team the potential to move into the top ten. #16 Oswego and #17 Geneva dropped in the rankings as they placed fifth and tenth in varsity. Both teams have help from the lower level races. Geneva's Sophia McDonnell won the F/S race and would be in the top five along with Emily Belanger. Oswego freshman Isabelle Christiansen was second in the F/S race and should be in the top five for the Panthers soon. Even though St. Charles East finished fourth in the meet ahead of Oswego and Geneva, the Lady Saints dropped down to #24. Hannah Ewald, who was the #1 runner for the team, had an avulsion fracture in her hip and will be out for the remainder of the cross country season. East still has a good team that is going some injury problems with other runners. Watch for them in October.

The spotlight meet for the Girls last weekend was at Hinsdale. #2 Minooka showed that they are a trophy contender winning by three points ahead of #3 Glenbard West. The Indians have a great top three with Emily Shelton, Ashley Tutt, and Mackenzie Callahan who could finish in the top fifteen in the state. The key still for Minooka is their 1-5 split which is over two minutes. In an 18 team meet like this one, it did not make a difference. In a big meet situation like state, it could still hurt this team. That first three still will make this team tough to beat.

#3 Glenbard West has a good 2-5 pack and it does not hurt when you have Lindsey Payne up front. The sophomore's focus is on cross country this fall after splitting time between this and dub soccer a year ago. That focus paid off as she ran the fastest time in the nation for three miles (16:40) in winning the race. Their pack was only 19 seconds from 2-5. That pack will get closer to Payne as the year progresses.

#5 New Trier demonstrated their pack running putting four runners together within 36 seconds and a 54 second split overall. #6 Palatine finished fourth led by Kelly O'Brien's third place finish and a 2:29 1-5 split. Both teams are at their best in October / November. Don't expect anything different from these two power houses at the end of the year. Hinsdale Central placed eighth in the meet but only moves down #10. They were without their #1 runner Annie Zaher. With her in there, Hinsdale would have placed higher.

I was not surprised that #1 Naperville North easily won the Pleasant Valley Spartan Classic on Saturday in Bettendorf, Iowa with only 33 points. I was not surprised that their split was over two minutes (2:21) for their first five. The Huskies had an eleven second split from 2-4. There was a 46 second spread from 4 to 5. Just like last year, that split will come down as the season goes on. Judy Pendergast's 17:45 on that 5k course is a wow performance. It will be interesting to see how fast she runs at Detweiler this Saturday.

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four schools entered the top 25 this week. Three of the squads came from the John Kurtz Invitational

at Fenton. Glenbrook South and Downers Grove South 96-99 in the meet. The edge goes to Downers Grove South as they are the best entering team at #19. The Lady Mustangs have a solid top two with Katie Stapleton and Mercedes Hackbarth. The addition of freshman Becky Versaskes into the varsity up front gives this team more of a punch. Don't discount Glenbrook South who could quietly move up the rankings. The split between #1 runner Emily Noone and #5 runner Annie Brennan was 51 seconds. Prospect finished sixth in this meet behind the individual win by Brooke Wilson. However, they move into the top 25 at #22 with the performances of three runners in the F/S race. Freshmen Marissa Valenti, Jenna Baltes, and Julia O'Grady all would have been around varsity #2 runner Aileen White. The addition of these three runners could make this team dangerous when they get to the state series.

Lyons Township was the final team in at #25 edging Benet Academy. The Lions won their own invitational putting five runners in the top nine with a 34 1-5 split.

## 2A Boys

#1 Mahomet-Seymour showed why they are the top ranked team in the state easily winning the Charleston Invitational putting their top seven in the first fifteen. Alex Keeble ran a swift 14:52 making him one of the individual favorites for state. The same formula is there for the Bulldogs with a big split between Keeble and the pack. Last meet the gap was 52 seconds with the 2-5 split of 29 seconds. Keep an eye on #17 Danville who placed second in the meet. Carl Way was their #1 runner finishing second overall. The Maroons have a tight pack behind Way with a 2-6 split of only 21 seconds.

#2 Grayslake Central will be extremely tough. They finished 2<sup>nd</sup> last Wednesday at the Lake County Invitational without #3 runner Danny Vincent but still will have the fire power up front with Jack Aho followed by his brother Matt who is still adjusting to this sport in his first year of it. The split behind Jack was only 38 seconds on their 2-5.

Yorkville moved up to #3 after running a good first meet in their own invitational on August 24. The Foxes will need more of a pack concept this year. They showed it with a 28 second split on their first five in that meet. Watch to see where the pack starts on Saturday's race in Peoria. Hinsdale South dropped one spot to #4 but still looked good placing sixth at their home meet at Hinsdale. Springfield also dropped a spot to #5 as they ran a temp pace in the hot conditions at Granite City. The Senators finished eighth overall without their #1 runner Eric Warren who was on a college visit. Springfield will be without Warren again this week at the Halberg Invitational at Springfield's Lincoln Park. Warren will make his seasonal debut at the Richard Spring Invitational on September 19.

Chatham-Glenwood jumped up nine spots to #12 this week winning the meet at Granite City. Landon Skelly led the team with a fourth place finish. Their five runner split for varsity was 71 seconds. If you add freshmen Cooper Peterson and Dathan Maton who finished second and third in the F/S race, their split drops at least 30 seconds. Keep an eye on this squad.

Two teams entered the top 25 this week. Salem jumps in at #23 with some strong early season performances including a win at the FTF meet at Edwardsville at the end of August and their third place finish last week at Granite City. The Wildcats have a strong first four with only 33 seconds separating them. Their gap between 4 to 5 is 108 seconds and needs to be worked on. Dixon enters the top 25 at #24 after their fourth place finish at the Sycamore Invitational on September 1. Juniors Blain and Sean Masterson lead the Dukes who had a 57 second split in that meet.

## 2A Girls

Yorkville, Lemont, and Dunlap have separated themselves from the rest of the 2A pack early in the season. There is a gap between these three teams and #4 Belvidere North after the first couple of weeks. That could change as the season goes on. Yorkville after one performance has distinguished themselves as the team to beat again after their first invitational. Let's put it this way: If Yorkville could run 2 teams at state, they could place both in the top five. In their own invitational on August 24, they ran a 24 second split on their first five. The Lady Foxes are 14 runners deep with three freshmen in their top seven. They will be at Peoria this Saturday but have opted to run in the 3A team race. They were given that opportunity by meet director Brien Dunphy. How will they compare against Naperville North, Minooka, and Lockport?

Even though #2 Lemont lost to 3A #4 Lockport last week at Plainfield Central, this team is definitely a team that could challenge for a trophy even though their split on five was 93 seconds in this meet. It will come down starting on Saturday in Peoria. Dunlap dominated the Galesburg Invitational taking three of the first four places. Frannie Verville and Miranda Krusivvyk are strong up front for this team. There was a gap between 4<sup>th</sup> place Abby Johnson and the pack of 45 seconds. Their next five runners were within eight seconds of each other. Their depth could be the difference when we get to October.

Belvidere North moved to #4 after winning the Sycamore Invitational with Jenna Litzow winning the individual race and then placing third at Crystal Lake South without her. Vernon Hills made a jump up eleven spots to #9 after looking strong in their meets at the Lake County Invitational and at Fenton. The addition of freshmen Payton Makowsky and Hannah Ray along with the front running of Vivian Overbeck will give them the strength to challenge for the top spot with Belvidere North and Crystal Lake Central in the Woodstock North Sectional.

Former 1A powers Rochester and St. Teresa have moved into 2A making their presence known. #7 Rochester has been tough with a win over St. Teresa at Edwardsville at the end of August and then last weekend when they defeated 1A #2 Petersburg PORTA at Rochester's home meet. The distance was changed to 2 miles. Freshman Katherine Petty has emerged as the front runner for this team. We will see how the Rockets compare in the 2A race at Peoria this Saturday. The same applies to St. Teresa. The Bulldogs have a strong front four led by Kelsey Cleary. Last weekend, they finished fifth at Crystal Lake South. Just like Rochester, let's see how they compare to Lemont and Dunlap in this Peoria meet on Saturday.

Four teams enter into the top 25 taking the last four spots. #22 Morton and #23 Rock Island Allemn enter after placing second and third behind Dunlap at the Galesburg Invitational. Danville enters at #24 winning the Charleston Invitational ahead of a surprising Effingham team. Rosary takes the #25 position. Madison Ronzone won the Yorkville Invitational ahead of Yorkville's pack. The addition of Madison's freshman sister Megan Ronzone, who won the Connelly St. Ignatius Invitational last Saturday, could make this squad a team to watch.

### **1A Boys**

There is not much to report in this classification besides the fact that Rockford Christian was moved from 1A to 2A for this cross country season due to an IHSA clerical error. Top ranked Tolono Unity is the team to beat now. They easily won the Kickapoo Kickoff Meet on September 1. At last Saturday's Chrisman Cowchip Classic, the Rockets won six of the seven flights. #2 Shelbyville finished third at Charleston behind 2A's Mahomet-Seymour and Danville. They did not go all-out holding out #5 runner Preston Henze and holding back #1 runner Marcus Skinner in the race due to the hot conditions.

Carlville jumped into #10 after finishing second at both their Early Bird Meet and then the Rochester Invitational behind Taylorville.

We will get a better idea of these teams this weekend at both the First to the finish Meet in Peoria as well as the Paxton-Buckley-Loda Invitational.

Four teams move into the top 25 this week. #18 Breese Mater Dei is the top "newbie" team after they finished fifth at the FTF Meet at Edwardsville two weeks ago. Herrin also moves into #24 after they finished seventh in that same meet. Deer Creek-Mackinaw placed 4<sup>th</sup> at Canton just ahead of #4 Elmwood-Brimfield (who did not run all of their runners in varsity). That was enough to move them into #23. #25 Beecher moves into the top 25 based off of their third place finish at the Seneca Twilight in the Woods Invitational.

### **1A Girls**

Just like the 1A Boys classification, we will get a good idea of the top teams are but over the next two weeks. #2 PORTA will host their own invitational that includes two other 1A top ten teams. It is hard to gauge PORTA right now. Last week's race at Rochester was only two miles. The week before only Adrienne Brauer and Anna Tamroski ran at Edwardsville. #5 Liberty looked good finishing tenth in Memphis at the Brooks Twilight Meet. Kathryn Robbins placed 12<sup>th</sup> in her first high school meet. They would have placed higher without #2 runner Katelyn Obert who is still nursing an ankle injury. #8 Litchfield is sneaky good winning the Carlville Early Bird Meet ahead of 2A Rochester.

It is also hard to gauge top ranked St. Joseph-Ogden who ran in a flight meet at Chrisman last Saturday. Their first meet was run in hot and humid conditions a week ago. We will get a good idea this week at Paxton Buckley Loda's meet and then next week when they face PORTA at the Richard Spring Invitational.

Herrin was the big mover this week when they jumped from #22 to #12 this week. They were impressive at Edwardsville two weeks ago when they placed fifth. They have a big 1-5 split which they will work on as the season progresses. They do have a strong top pack led by seniors Kara Martin and Maura Farrell. The addition of freshman Kaelan Hall, who placed fifth at Edwardsville just behind PORTA's Adrienne Brauer, makes the front pack even stronger. Three all-state runners? Possibly. Herrin got a reprieve after they moved from 1A to 2A in June and then from back to 1A a month later due to the school petitioning the IHSA. The second chance in 1A is a motivating factor for them.

Two schools move into the top 2 this week. Shelbyville moves into #18 after finishing fourth at Charleston. Carterville jumps in at #25 based on their ninth place finish at Edwardsville and also last Wednesday when they finished second at Murphysboro ahead of #12 Herrin who were without Maura Farrell.

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