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DyeStat Illinois - 2015 IHSA 2A Sectional Meet Previews - October

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Weather will play a big part in the 5 2A sectional meets that will take place throughout the state. No one will have a clear advantage. All teams will have to deal with the elements. Yorkville is a good bet to qualify for state from the Wheaton Academy Sectional to defend both their Boys and Girls state championships that they won a year ago. The biggest sectional of the day could be at Woodstock North where ten top 25 schools will shoot for 5 team qualifying spots. 5 of those ranked teams will go home unhappy.

Here is a look at each of the 2A sectional meets that will take place on Saturday.

Woodstock North Sectional
Emrickson Park, Woodstock
Girls – 10:00 AM; Boys – 11:00 AM

Girls teams to watch - #3 Vernon Hills, #4 Belvidere North, #6 Crystal Lake Central, #20 Grayslake Central, #21 Mundelein Carmel Catholic, #22 Lake Villa Lakes, #24 Rockford Boylan Catholic, Freeport, Dixon, Crystal Lake Prairie Ridge, Maple Park Kaneland

Individual girls to watch (In alphabetical order) – Delaney Appino (Boylan Catholic HS, Rockford), Brianna Bower (Kaneland HS, Maple Park), Sabrina Elder (Belvidere North HS), Megan Girmscheid (Grayslake Central HS), Kate Jacobs (Woodstock HS), Lauren Katz (Vernon Hills HS), Jenna Lutzow (Belvidere North HS), Grace McLaughlin (Boylan Catholic HS, Rockford), Margaret McPherson (Sterling HS), Janine Orvis (Crystal Lake Central HS), Vivian Overbeck (Vernon Hills HS), Breanne Retherford (Richmond-Burton HS), Kortney Schardt (Lakes HS, Lake Villa), Kayla Scheira (Sandwich HS).

Outlook – There are 3 teams that are almost locks to make the trip to Peoria. It could be as many as 8 teams that will challenge for the final 2 qualifying spots. Vernon Hills has strength up front with individual race favorite Vivian Overbeck and Lauren Katz in the top 10. Their 3 to 5 pack was only 15 seconds last week. If they can cut the gap from the top 2 to the pack from 70 seconds to under 58 seconds, the Cougars could be the sectional champs. Belvidere North also has the power up front led by one of the individual race favorites Jenna Lutzow. Their split of 36 seconds from 2 to 5 was 36 seconds last week. If #2 runner Sabrina Elder can be within 2 team places of Vernon Hills' Katz in the race with that split on the pack, it could be the Blue Thunder that comes out on top. Crystal Lake Central was within 9 points of Vernon Hills at the Kaneland Regional led by top 5 finishes by Janine Orvis and Katelyn Smith. Their split on 5 was 86 seconds last week. It could be under 70 seconds in this meet. They should get to Peoria with this kind of performance. It could be tough to get ahead of Vernon Hills and Belvidere North.



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It gets interesting in the team standings starting here. Grayslake Central has been up and down this season. Last week's win at the Antioch Regional was paced by #1 runner Megan Girmscheid's 3rd place finish with a 38 second split on the pack behind her. Girmscheid should be in the top 10 in this meet. If they can run similar split on that pack, the Rams could make it to Peoria. Carmel Catholic has been the surprise team in this sectional with their top 5 comprised of freshmen and sophomores. The Corsairs ran an under a 60 second split at their conference meet. Last week, the split on 5 was 94 seconds. A split near 60 seconds with either Zella Stockhausen or Aileen Hull in the top 15 could mean a top 5 finish in this meet. Lakes finished ahead of Carmel at Antioch behind Kortney Schardt's individual win. Schardt should be in the top 5 in this race. Their pack needs to cut their split to 40 seconds from regionals and be within 45 seconds of Schardt in order to make it to Peoria. Rockford Boylan has top 10 runners with Delaney Appino and Grace McLaughlin. Their splits between the top two and the pack and then the pack splits are big. That could hurt their chances of qualifying for state as a team.

Freeport inserted 6 freshmen / sophomores into their regional lineup which resulted in a 3rd place finish last week at Belvidere. Their top 5 split of 38 seconds could cause problems in the team race but that pack needs to move up just a bit. Dixon ran a 69 second split off of Kira Goral's 10th place finish last week. This team could be a surprise if Goral places in the top 20 with their overall split under 60 seconds. Prairie Ridge has freshmen and sophomores all over their top 7. This is a team is a year away from great things but could be close to the top 5 on Saturday if their split is under 90 seconds with Chloe Gale in the top 20. Brianna Bower should be in the top 10 in this race. The Knights could sneak into the top 5 if they cut their split from over 2 minutes to anywhere from 95 to 100 seconds.

There is so much talent in this individual race. Vivian Overbeck is on a hot streak over the past month and will be one of the favorites in this race. Delaney Appino has defeated Jenna Lutlow in their last two races. Both runners will be up front in this race along with Appino's teammate Grace McLaughlin. Kate Jacobs, Breanne Retherford, Brianna Bower, and Kortner Schardt are some of the other runners that will challenge for one of the top 5 places.

Boys teams to watch - #2 Grayslake Central, #6 Belvidere North, #11 Crystal Lake Central, #13 Maple Park Kaneland, #15 Vernon Hills, #16 Rockford Christian, #19 Dixon, #20 Crystal Lake Prairie Ridge, #22 Sycamore, #24 Sterling.

Individual Boys to Watch (In alphabetical order) – Jack Aho (Grayslake Central HS), Matt Aho (Grayslake Central HS), Cole Barkocy (Crystal Lake Central HS), Luke Beattie (Woodstock HS), Jacob Gebhardt (Sterling HS), Jon Landis (Sterling HS), Nick Monkemeyer (Rockford Christian HS), Jacob Oury (Hampshire HS), Filip Pajak (Prairie Ridge HS, Crystal Lake), Stephen Poorten (Sycamore HS), Matt Richtman (Kaneland HS, Maple Park), Weston Sterchi (Crystal Lake Central HS), Eli Walker (Belvidere North HS), Shane Williamson (Vernon Hills HS), Eryk Yunk (Belvidere North HS).

Outlook – It is really hard to see anyone challenging Grayslake Central for the sectional championship. The Rams have the power up front with Jack Aho vying for the individual race championship and his brother Matt in the top 10. The emergence of Jack Battaglia in the top 3 along with a 40 second split from their #2 to #5 runners makes this team tough to beat.

Belvidere North will be one of the teams to challenge for the title. Eryk Yunk will be up front looking for the sectional win with teammate Eli Walker challenging for a top 10 spot. Their split on their top 5 last week was 84 seconds. Their split came down from 98 seconds at their conference meet race. Watch for that gap to lower a little more this week. #11 Crystal Lake Central edged Kaneland by 1 point in last week's regional meet at Kaneland. The Tigers will be paced by top 10 finishes of Weston Sterchi and Cole Barkocy. Their key is keeping their 3 to 5 pack within 30 seconds of each other and within 40 seconds of their front 2. That could get them a state meet appearance. Kaneland is similar to Central with Matt Richtman and Austin Kintz possibilities in the top 10. A split on 75 seconds on their top 5 could get them into the top 5 in this meet. Vernon Hills had an off race last week and will look to bounce back this Saturday. Shane Williamson will be one of the runners up front. Their pack needs to stay within 30 seconds of each other and within 55 seconds or Williamson in order to qualify.

Rockford Christian and Dixon have been within 2 points of each other the past 2 weeks. Rockford Christian lives off of running a tight pack and will need that again in this race. Nick Monkemeyer could finish in the top 10 in this race. If their pack can stay within 20 seconds of each other and within 20 seconds of Monkemeyer, then the Royal Lions can make their transition from 1A to 2A with a state appearance. Dixon will have freshman Collin Grady leading the way for them. The Dukes also have a tight 2 to 5 pack with only 29 seconds between them. Dixon will be in the hunt for a top 5 spot if they can have Grady in the top 10 and their pack ahead of that of Rockford Christian's.

Prairie Ridge will have Filip Pajak vying for the individual championship. Their pack needs to cut their split on 5 from 86 seconds at regionals to close to 50 seconds for the Wolves to make it to state. Sycamore has "super soph" Stephen Poorten up front. Their split on 2 to 5 is a good 51 seconds but could not be good enough to get them into the top 5 especially in a loaded sectional like this one. Sterling has Jacob Gebhardt and Jonathan Landis that could place in the top 10 in this race. Their split on 3 to 5 is 25 seconds. If that pack can get closer to Gebhardt and Landis, this team could be a surprise in the top 5.

Just like the team race in this sectional, the individual race is severely loaded. Jack Aho enters as the favorite. At the Fox Valley Conference Meet 2 weeks ago, he won by 20 seconds ahead of Filip Pajak. Emrickson Park is hilly causing us to think we could get a similar outcome in this affair. Pajak is tough. He did finish third at Palatine at the end of September. Eryk Yunk has run under 15 minutes at Detweiller this year and will be in the front pack. Luke Beattie, Shane Williamson, Stephen Poorten, and

Cole Barkocy are some runners that could be in the front pack. Just like the team race in this sectional, there will be some great runners that will not make it out of this sectional.

West Chicago Wheaton Academy Sectional

Kress Creek Farms Park, West Chicago

Girls – 10:00 AM; Boys – 11:00 AM

Girls teams to watch - #1 Yorkville, #7 Lemont, #10 Lombard Montini Catholic, #12 Chicago Marist, #18 Aurora Rosary, Glen Ellyn Glenbard South, Riverside-Brookfield, West Chicago Wheaton Academy

Individual girls to watch (In alphabetical order) – Tyler Campos (Lemont HS), Maddie Dearborn (Yorkville HS), Abby Fiorese (Aurora Central Catholic HS), Alexis Grandys (Yorkville HS), Nicole Greyer (Yorkville HS), Hailey Jurgens (Riverside-Brookfield HS), Karina Liz (Aurora Central Catholic HS), Emma Makowski (Montini Catholic HS, Lombard), Summer Pierson (Yorkville HS), Madison Ronzone (Rosary HS, Aurora).

Outlook – This is a repeat of what we said last week in our regional preview. The question will be who will finish second behind high powered Yorkville in this sectional. The Lady Foxes are the overwhelming favorite in this race. It would not surprise me if Yorkville places 5 runners in the top 10. There could be more.

Lemont was the winner of the Marist Regional last week and could be the top team to be close to Yorkville. Their top 3 led by Taylor Campos last week was within 16 seconds of each other. Their split of 84 seconds on their top 5 should come down a little in this race almost guarantying them a spot in the top 5. Montini Catholic has powered up front with Emma Makowski, Gianna Salzbrunn, and Lauren Denmark. All 3 runners could be in the top 10 in this race. If they could lower their split on 5 to 80 seconds from 105 seconds, the Lady Broncos could be returning to Detweiller Park. Marist moved down to 2A this season which could result in a trip to Peoria. Their split was 71 seconds on 5 last week. Led by Maryclare Leonard, this team could finish in the top 5.

Rosary finished 4th at Marist behind Madison Ronzone's individual win and her sister Megan's top 15 finish. Their split on Madison last week was over 2 minutes. They will need a 2 to 5 split off of Megan to be at least 45 seconds or faster for this Rosary team to make it to state. Last year, the Royals did not make it out of their regional meet. Even though Glenbard South finished 5th at Marist, the Raiders are improving at the right time with a chance to make it to Peoria. The reemergence of Diane Lipa to their squad has been a big plus. The former all-state runner was their #1 runner last week. Lipa, along with Abby Schlenker, could finish in the top 15 in this race. South will also need a top 5 split of 75 seconds or faster to make it to Detweiller Park. Riverside-Brookfield cruised to the team win in their own regional behind Hailey Jurgens individual win. Their split of over 2 minutes on their top 5 from last week needs to come down in order for the Bulldogs to finish in the top 5. Wheaton Academy had a good split of 46 seconds on their scorers as they took the final qualifying spot at Marist. They will need to move the pack led by Gretchen Pearson forward for the Warriors to jump into the top 5.

Madison Ronzone and Abby Fiorese finished 1-2 last week at Marist. They should be fighting for the individual title in this race. It could be one of any of the Yorkville runners (Alexis Grandys, Olivia Borowiak, Nicole Greyer, Summer Pierson, and Maddie Dearborn) along with the Montini duo of Emma Makowski and Gianna Salzbrunn close challenging for the top 5.

Boys teams to watch - #3 Yorkville, #4 Darien Hinsdale South, #18 West Chicago Wheaton Academy, #23 Chicago Lindblom Academy, Riverside-Brookfield, Glen Ellyn Glenbard South, Chicago Marist, Wheaton St. Francis.

Individual Boys to Watch (In alphabetical order) – Roman Drabchuk (Hinsdale South HS, Darien), Mauricio Galvan (Kennedy HS, Chicago), Jonah Jones (Wheaton Academy, West Chicago), Alex Nauman (Yorkville HS), Charlie Nodus (Hinsdale South HS, Darien), Mateo Nunez (Riverside-Brookfield HS), Jacob Robleski (Wheaton Academy, West Chicago), Walmer Saavedra (Lindblom Academy, Chicago), Trevor Wills (Yorkville HS).

Outlook – This is an intriguing pre-state match-up between 2 of the top 5 teams in 2A. Hinsdale South has the strength up front with Charlie Nodus and Roman Drabchuk favorites in the individual race. Watch the split between them and #3 runner Brett Haffner. A split under 40 seconds could be a good thing for the Hornets. Their 94 second split on 5 needs to come down this week in order to win. Yorkville has a great pack that will dominate this race. Trevor Wills has a chance to finish in the top 5 in this race. Their split if their top 5 is usually 30 seconds or faster in every meet this season. If that pack can start with Wills ahead of Haffner, Yorkville will leave West Chicago with the sectional championship.

Wheaton Academy held out #3 runner Jimmy Ridge from last week's regional meet. Their split on 5 with Ridge in the lineup has been near 70 seconds. The Warriors could get top 12 finishes by Jacob Robleski, Jonah Jones and Ridge. That would assure them of another state trip.

Only 4 points separated Lindblom Academy and Riverside-Brookfield at last week's Riverside-Brookfield Regional. Lindblom will have Walmer Saavedra among the top 3 in this race. If they can keep their overall split to near 90 seconds, then this school could make their first state meet appearance ever. Riverside-Brookfield will have Mateo Nunez fighting for a spot in the top 10. The Bulldogs could make it to Peoria if they can keep the split from Nunez to the pack near 42 seconds and their 2 to 5 split within

30 seconds. Michael King and Andrew Sundberg are the top runners for Glenbard South. The Raiders have a good 3 to 5 split of near 10 seconds. If that pack can stay within 55 seconds of their top two, it could be the Raiders making the Peoria trip.

Marist has a tight split from 20 to 25 seconds on their first 4. Their split on five needs to come down if they want to finish in the top 5. St. Francis could make it back to Peoria but will need Nick Brouch to finish in the top 15 and their split on 5 to be near 93 seconds for that chance.

Roman Drabchuk and Charlie Nodus will team up running against Walmer Saavedra for the individual title. There could be a gap between these three and then a pack led by Trevor Wills, Jonah Jones, Jacob Robleski, and Mauricio Galvan in the front in this race.

Normal University Sectional

Maxwell Park, Normal

Girls – 10:00 AM; Boys – 11:00 AM

Girls teams to watch - #2 Dunlap, #9 Washington, #11 Peoria Notre Dame, #14 Normal University, #15 Mahomet-Seymour, #16 Morton, #19 Metamora, Rock Island Alleman, Geneseo.

Individual girls to watch (In alphabetical order) – Nicole Beebe (Canton HS), Grace Breitbach (Notre Dame HS, Peoria), Mercedes Elliott (Danville HS), Maryjeanne Gilbert (Notre Dame HS, Peoria), Josie Hermann (Washington HS), Rachel Hickey (LaSalle-Peru HS), Advika Kamatar (Normal University HS), Miranda Kruswyk (Dunlap HS), Kari Lalumander (Metamora HS), Teagan Lyke (Lincoln-Way West HS, New Lenox), Meagan Moreno (Morton HS), Frannie Verville (Dunlap HS), Lauren Whitehouse (Mahomet-Seymour HS).

Outlook – Dunlap got ready for this week's sectional race by resting their top 5 in the regional meet. The Eagles enter this meet as the team favorite. The pack up front, with Franny Verville, Miranda Kruswyk, and Abby Johnson, has been running within 5 seconds of each other. That could be top 5 finishes for this team. Their overall split of 40 seconds at their conference meet could get larger in this race. Even with that happening, Dunlap could still put 5 in the first 15 in this race.

Washington won the Notre Dame regional running their typical pack. They will do the same thing this week as they qualify for the state meet. Josie Hermann, Kara Jacobs, and Cassidy Dexheimer are interchangeable up front for the Panthers. The team split near 35 to 40 seconds on their top 5. Washington advances if they have a runner in the top 10 with that split. Peoria Notre Dame has Maryjeanne Gilbert up front which guarantees the Irish a 1 spot up front. Grace Breitbach could also finish in the top 10 in this race. The pack behind these two typically runs a 30 second split. Put that all together and Notre Dame will make the short trip to Detweiller Park next Saturday.

Normal University and Mahomet-Seymour were separated by 1 point in finishing 2nd and 3rd at the East Peoria Regional. The two teams should be close on Saturday. U-High ran a 55 second split off of #1 runner Advika Kamatar in that race. A similar split with Kamatar in the top 15 could mean a top 5 finish. Lauren Whitehouse placed 3rd last week in leading Mahomet-Seymour. She stayed back with #2 runner Brisa McGrath in that race. Their usual split is near 50 seconds. Whitehouse should be up front in this race. The Bulldogs will need to keep their split under 100 seconds off of Whitehouse's front running in order to make it to state. Morton won the regional last week ahead of these two teams after finishing 4th at the Mid Illini Conference Meet. Megan Moreno should be among the top runners in this race. Their split improved from 91 seconds at their conference meet to 73 seconds last week. That kind of split could put them into the top 5.

Metamora finished 4th behind the above 3 teams led by Kari Lalumander's individual win. Their split on 5 last week was over 2 minutes. That will need to come down in order to make it state. Addie Pulley leads Rock Island Alleman team that could make it into the top 5. They will need a split under 90 seconds in order to make it to Peoria. Geneseo, led by freshman Josie Brown, will need her in the top 20 this weekend along with a split under 80 seconds in order to advance to the state meet.

Defending state champion Maryjeanne Gilbert is running faster than a year ago. Her 16:14 race at conference meet was within 2 seconds of her personal best on the Detweiller Park course. She will be the favorite in this race. Franny Verville, Miranda Kruswyk, Lauren Whitehouse, and Kari Lalumander will lead the pack behind Gilbert.

Boys teams to watch - #1 Mahomet-Seymour, #5 Normal University, #8 Metamora, #10 Peoria Notre Dame, #14 Rock Island Alleman, #17 Danville, #21 New Lenox Lincoln-Way West, Geneseo, Bartonville Limestone, Normal Community West

Individual Boys to Watch (In alphabetical order) – Patrick Bruch (Notre Dame HS, Peoria), Matt Carr (Limestone HS, Bartonville), Michael Church (East Peoria HS), Victor Fortin (Notre Dame HS, Peoria), Jack Franklin (Normal University), Jake Gillum (Metamora HS), Aaron Golding (Alleman HS, Rock Island), Alex Keeble (Mahomet-Seymour HS), Evan Mitchell (Lincoln-Way West HS, New Lenox), Andrew Walmer (Mahomet-Seymour HS), Carl Way (Danville HS).

Outlook – Mahomet-Seymour kept a few runners out of last week's regional lineup but still won 41-53 over Normal University. The 2 teams will face off for the third straight week. The Bulldogs placed 5

runners in the first 7 against U-High in their conference meet two weeks ago with a 38 second split off of #1 runner Alex Keeble. Watch for a similar type of performance this week as they gear up for the state meet as 2A's top ranked team. Jack Franklin leads the Pioneers that ran an 81 second split off of Franklin's individual win. That split should come down in this race. Metamora will have Jake Gillum possibly in the top 5 on Saturday. The Redbirds will need their 2 to 5 pack with a split under 40 seconds and within 41 seconds of Gillum to secure a top three finish.

Notre Dame could run a 70 second top 5 split off of Patrick Bruch and Victor Fortin up front. Top ten finishes from the two in this race could have the Irish in the state meet. Rock Island Alleman has a strong top 3 led by Aaron Golding. The Pioneers will need their top 5 split of between 90 to 95 seconds in order to get into the top 5. Danville could be the surprise in the top 5. Carl Way could be in the top 10 in this race. The Vikings will need to have William Powell in the top 20 with their split in 5 at near 44 seconds in order to make it to state.

Lincoln-Way West will have Evan Mitchell among the top 5 in this race. The Crete-Monee regional champion will need to keep their split under 43 seconds to get a spot on the starting line at Detweiller Park. Geneseo has a split under 60 seconds on their top 5. They will need to get 2 runners in the top 25 to give them the chance to make it to Peoria. Limestone will have a runner up front with Matt Carr possibly in the top 10. Their overall split needs to go under 2 minutes for this team to challenge near the top 5.

Jack Franklin and Alex Keeble will challenge for the individual championship. Keeble won by 8 seconds at their conference meet 2 weeks ago. Franklin returned the favor winning by 5 seconds last week. It should be close again in this race. Jae Gillum, Evan Mitchell, Patrick Bruch, and Victor Fortin will be among the runners in the front pack. If the race becomes tactical because of the expected rainy weather, it could be one of these runners taking home the top prize.

Decatur MacArthur Sectional
Hickory Point Golf Club, Decatur
Girls – 12:00 PM; Boys – 1:00 PM

Girls teams to watch - #5 Rochester, #8 Chatham-Glenwood, #13 Decatur St. Teresa, #17 Springfield, #23 Troy Triad, #25 Highland, Mascoutah, Springfield Sacred Heart-Griffin, Waterloo.

Individual Girls to watch (In alphabetical order) – Libby Cultra (Urbana HS), Katie Curry (Chatham-Glenwood HS), Lauren Evelt (St. Teresa HS, Decatur), Ali Goff (Springfield HS), Shelby Kallem (Marion HS), Anna Lowry (Taylorville HS), Natalie Motor (Springfield HS), Katherine Petty (Rochester HS), Abigail Richter (Triad HS, Troy), Jenna Schwartz (Waterloo HS)

Outlook – Rochester's move up to 2A has been pretty much of a success climbing into the top 5 in 2A. Part of that has to do with the emergence of Katherine Petty who will be the favorite in this race. Rochester has a 60 second split on their 2 to 5 pack. #2 runner Madeline Campbell needs to be ahead of Chatham-Glenwood's top runner to secure a sectional championship. Chatham-Glenwood has a freshman Katie Curry leading them. The future success for this team is pack running. Their split last week was 63 seconds. You can expect it to be lower on Saturday.

Decatur St. Teresa is also on the verge of making it to state after being in 1A a year ago. They easily won the Taylorville Regional led by Lauren Evelt and Kelsey Cleary. Both runners are capable of being in the top 10 in this meet. The split for the Bulldogs last week was 83 seconds on 5. That kind split will advance them to Peoria next week. Springfield has the power up front but will need their pack to tighten up in order to finish in the top 5. Aly Goff and Natalie Motor will be in the top 5 in this race. Sophia Gullo could finish in the top 18. The split between the trio and their 4-5 runners is close to 79 seconds with an overall split near 3 minutes. The Senators could be at Peoria next week but will need that split to tighten up.

Troy Triad edged Highland by 3 points to win the Highland Regional last week. These two teams should be fighting for the final qualifying spot. Abigail Richter should be in the top 10. Maddie Miller could be in the top 20 for Triad. Their split near 150 seconds needs to come down in this meet. Highland defeated Triad by 5 two weeks ago at their conference meet. They will need that kind of performance again. Allison Zobrist and SaraBeth Wiegman ahead of Traid's Miller could secure a state berth. A split of under 65 seconds on 5 will also be a big help. Mascoutah has a 15 second split on their top 3 led by Mackenzie Dixon. They will need a split under 82 seconds to make it into the top 5.

Katherine Petty should be the big favorite in this race after running 17:02 on Jacksonville's 2.9 mile course. Aly Goff and Natalie Motor, who finished 2-3 last week behind Petty, should be in the same positions this week. Jenna Schartz, Abigail Richter, Lauren Evelt, and Libby Cultra could be among the runners chasing the first three.

Boys teams to watch - #7 Springfield, #9 Chatham-Glenwood, #25 Charleston, Mascoutah, Mt. Vernon, Mattoon, Taylorville, Carbondale

Individual Boys to Watch (In alphabetical order) – Colton Bell (Charleston HS), Josh Cable (Rochester HS), Micah Cherry (Carbondale HS), Lawrence Curtin (Taylorville HS), Chris Durr (Chatham-Glenwood HS), Nate Fierstos (Sacred Heart-Griffin HS, Springfield), Ben Flowers (Jerseyville HS), Atlantis Green (Carbondale HS), Ethan Price (Mascoutah HS), Landon Skelly (Chatham-Glenwood HS), Luke Sloan (Taylorville HS), Heath Warren (Springfield HS), Dawson Webster (Salem HS), Zach Young (Marion

HS)

Outlook – Central State Eight conference rivals have been separated by less than 10 points in their last two meets. It could be that close again in this race. Springfield ran a 50 second split on their top 5 last week winning by 2 over Chatham-Glenwood. The Senators will have Heath Warren in the front of the race. Their 2-5 split needs to remain between 20 to 25 seconds to win this meet. They are almost a lock to qualify. Chatham-Glenwood also is almost a certainty to make it to Peoria. The team ran a 40 second split on 5 last week. Landon Skelly and Chris Durr led the way with only 7 seconds separating them. A split of 32 to 36 seconds with Skelly and Durr close together could give the Titans the sectional win.

I think it is wide open with 6 teams vying for the final 3 state qualifying spots. Charleston leads the way. They won the Taylorville Regional with the top 3 teams only separated by 4 points. The Trojans run close together up front. Colton Bell, Ross Osterday, and Joe McKirahan are interchangeable up front with usually an under 10 second split separating them. Their key is the overall split of 80 to 85 seconds. If they can put their top 3 in the top 15 with a split under 70 seconds, Charleston could be running at state. Mattoon ran a 57 second split on 5 led by Mitchell Kremer who could finish in the top 12. The key for the Green Wave is getting 6 runners in before Charleston gets 4 across the finish line. Taylorville was only 1 point behind Mattoon last Saturday. Lawrence Curtin and Luke Sloan were 1-2 in that race. Their split needs to be near 65 seconds to make it to Peoria.

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Mt. Vernon won the Highland Regional with only 7 points separating the first 3 teams there. The pack powers the Rams with Haas and Schneider their front runner. Their split on 2 to 5 last week was only 8 seconds. If Schneider places 4 or better with that kind of split, they will advance to Peoria. Atlantis Green and Micah Cherry lead Carbondale who was only 2 points behind Mt. Vernon last week. Both runners should be among the top 15 on Saturday. Their 3 to 5 pack, which was 22 seconds last week, needs to be within 40 seconds of their front 2 runners for the Terriers to qualify for the state meet. Keep an eye on Mascoutah. The Mississippi Valley Champs ran a 65 second split in winning that meet. Last week, they were 7 points behind Mt. Vernon in 3rd at Highland. Their split on 5 last week was 93 seconds. Ethan Price will need to be in the top 10 along with the split being near 60 seconds to get into the top 5.

Ben Flowers has been tough to beat in the races that he has been in this year. He should be the favorite in this race. Flowers defeated Heath Warren by 7 seconds at last week's Jacksonville Regional. Landon Skelly was another 4 seconds back and should be in the front pack mix in this meet. Micah Cherry, Atlantis Green, and Lawrence Curtin could be among the top 5 in this race.

Chicago University Sectional

Washington Park, Chicago

Girls – 9:00 AM; Boys – 10:00 AM

Girls teams to watch – Chicago Payton, Chicago Latin School, Chicago University, Deerfield, Chicago Mather, Arlington Heights Saint Viator, Elmwood Park, Bensenville Fenton.

Individual Girls to watch (In alphabetical order) – Alanah Chandler (Payton Prep, Chicago), Elsa Erling (Chicago University HS), Laura Katunas (Latin School, Chicago), Lucy Kenig-Ziesler (Chicago University HS), Aingel Matos (Elmwood Park HS), Kelley Osborn (Deerfield HS), Yarely Robledo (Mather HS, Chicago).

Outlook – There are no ranked teams in this sectional. It could come down to 6 teams chasing after the 5 qualifying spots. Payton Prep has been the top team in this sectional. They finished 3rd at the Chicago City Championships 2 weeks ago. Their top 4 pack, led by Alanah Chandler, is only separated by 30 seconds. There is another 75 seconds split between 4 and 5. That will not matter in this meet. Latin School was 11 seconds behind Payton last week. Laura Katunas leads a top 3 split of 52 seconds. Their top 5 split is just over 2 minutes. Their strength up front is better than the rest of the teams here. They should advance.

Chicago University scored a perfect 15 points in a weak De La Salle Regional. They will still make it out led by Elsa Erling, Isabella Khan, and Lucy Kenig-Ziesler finishing in the top 12. Deerfield and Mather tied with 51 points last week at Fenton. Kelly Osborn leads a Deerfield team that has over a 3 minute split on 5. The Warriors could still advance to Peoria on that split especially with Osborn up front. Mather will have Yarely Robledo in the top 10. They will need to place their top 4 ahead if Deerfield's 3rd runner for a chance to qualify. Saint Viator's 113 second split on 5 could get them to state. Payton McDonnell will need to place in the top 15 in the race with that kind of split. Fenton has a similar split on 4, but it could be tough with their 5th runner almost 2 minutes back. Elmwood Park has Aingel Matos and Jayleen Pagan that could be in the top 15. Their split on five could make it sticky for them to advance.

Kelly Osborn should be the favorite in this race. Laura Katunas should be the next closest runner up front to Osborn.

Boys teams to watch - #12 Oak Park Fenwick, Deerfield, Bensenville Fenton, Arlington Heights Saint Viator, Elmwood Park, Chicago Mather, Chicago Payton.

Individual Boys to Watch (In alphabetical order) – Jack Darrow (Fenwick HS, Oak Park), Matt

Gold (Deerfield HS), Alex Marks (Fenwick HS, Oak Park), Jacob Meyer (Chicago University HS), Jessie Resendez (St. Patrick HS, Chicago), Simon Ricci (Latin School, Chicago), Jose Vazquez-Perez (Fenton HS, Bensenville), Robel Yemane (Mather HS, Chicago)

Outlook – Fenwick will have an easy time in this meet. The Friars could place all 5 scorers in the top 10 in this meet led by Alex Marks and Jack Darrow. Deerfield should also qualify after winning at Fenton. Sophomores Matt Gold and Henry Shore lead an under 60 second split for the Warriors. Fenton has a good runner up front with Jose Vazquez-Perez. The Bison could make it to Peoria if they can get their split under 90 seconds. Saint Viator ran a 60 second split in getting 3rd behind Fenton last week. A similar performance this week earns the Lions a Peoria trip. Elmwood Park could be the final team in. If they can place their top 3 runners in the first 15 with keeping their split under 55 seconds, the Tigers will make the state trip.

Jose Vazquez-Perez has been running hot the last 3 weeks and should be the favorite in this race. Alex Marks and Jack Darrow should be close along with Jacob Meyer, Robel Yemane, and Simon Ricci.

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