

JUNIOR HIGH CROSS-COUNTRY

Boys', girls' teams move on to state

By JASON BROWN
For The Mahomet Citizen

The Mahomet-Seymour Junior High cross-country teams ran well enough in the Class 3A Normal Parkside Sectional on Saturday to advance and again return to Normal Parkside to compete in the IESA state meet this Saturday.

"We knew going into it that it would take some great races and a lot of determination to earn one of the top three team spots that advance to state," coach Lisa Martin said.

The girls' team placed second out of 14 teams with a score of 53 (behind Normal Kingsley's 46), and the boys' team ran third out of 14 teams with 99 points (behind Normal Parkside's 46 and Bloomington Evans' 64).

Despite strong winds, the girls' team placed three (out of 96) runners in the top 10 spots, which would have earned them a trip to state even if the team had not qualified.

Elizabeth Sims (12 minutes, 24 seconds for the 2-mile course) finished fourth, Delaney King (12:36) placed seventh and Grace Lietz (12:47) placed ninth.

"Our fourth through seventh runners ran stellar races and put us in the position to qualify the whole team for state," Martin said.

These Bulldog runners included Klein Pow-

ell in 13th (13:01), Emily Bednar in 20th (13:16), Ella Scott in 21st (13:19) and Chloe Allen in 26th (13:22).

"It was a very rewarding experience to see the hard work of these young ladies pay off," Martin said. "Their drive and determination was unmatched."

For the boys' team, Kyle Nofziger (11:27) placed 10th, automatically qualifying for state as an individual.

At the starting line, Martin gave one final pep talk.

"The last discussion was about how we were physically ready, now we just had to add in the power of the mind in order to reach our goal of going to state," Martin said. "Well, they did just that with many of the runners finishing with personal-best times."

The Bulldogs placed their next five (out of 96) runners in the top 35, helping the team to qualify for state.

Those runners included Justin Straub in 14th (11:34), Joseph Scheele in 22nd (11:45), Anthony Ramirez in 23rd (11:46), Gabe Difanis in 30th (11:50), Kai Jones in 33rd (11:52) and Taylor Fan in 44th (12:01).

The girls' team is scheduled to race on Saturday at 12:30 p.m. with the boys' race set for 1:15 p.m. at Normal Parkside.