



[1A Regionals - October 19, 2018](#) (Today, 1:01pm)



[Put Your Hand on Seven - Chapter 14 - 2018](#) (Today, 12:00pm)



[XC Zone Regional Top Ten Team Lists - Boys - October 18, 2018](#) (Yesterday, 8:06pm)



[XC Zone Regional Top Ten Team Lists - Girls - October 18, 2018](#) (Yesterday, 8:05pm)

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By Michael Newman

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This Saturday's top regional race should take place at the Normal University Regional held at Normal's Maxwell Park where the regional is loaded with some of the top 2A teams and individuals.

Here is a look at five regional meets (one from each sectional) and the storylines to keep an eye on this Saturday.

Normal University Regional races are loaded

Both the team and individual races Saturday in this 2A regional at Maxwell Park should be dynamite. Five ranked teams are in the Boys race headed by three teams ranked in the 2A top six.

Bloomington, who is the 2A top ranked team in the ITCCCA Coaches Poll, should have four runners in the top eight led by **Nick Doud**. Washington won the Mid-Illini Conference meet behind solid pack running from **Chris Hurd** and **Ben Learned**. The Panthers could get close to Bloomington if they could get a runner in the top ten with a split of 45 seconds or better on their top five. Metamora is slowly improving with the return of 3200-meter state champion **Adam Gilbreath-Glaub**. The junior ran close to teammate **Jacob Gray** in last week's race. Metamora could challenge Bloomington but will need five runners in the top 15 with Gilbreath-Glaub in the top five and Gray and **Ian O'Laughlin** in the top 10.

Mahomet-Seymour is young with three freshmen in the top seven. The Bulldogs should bounce back in this race from a second-place finish a week ago at the Apollo Conference. **Mathias Powell** leads that top seven and should be the individual favorite challenged by Doud, Gilbreath-Glaub, and Morton's **Sam Lange**.

The Girls race is just as strong with six ranked teams in the race. Mahomet-Seymour, Morton, and Normal University lead that group and are closely matched. The margin between these three teams could be under 15 points.

Mahomet-Seymour should have **Brisa McGrath** and **Elizabeth Sims** in the top 10. The Bulldogs will need to have their other scorers in the top 20 to have a regional title in their sights. Normal University will be on their home course and could come away with the team win with **Ella Bittner** and **Macie Madix** finishing in the top five. Finding five runners in the top 17 could get the Pioneers the team win. Morton has the power up front with **Aspen Gordon**, **Meagan Moreno**, and **Emma Skinner** among the top 10. Their fourth and fifth runners need to be within 75 seconds of Skinner to be in reach of the team title. Metamora, Washington, and Bloomington are the other ranked teams in this race and should advance to East Peoria next week if they just run their average race.

Aspen Gordon is the runner to beat in this race. She could be one of the state favorites in two weeks after running 17:00 at Detweiler at the end of September. She could win by 30 seconds or more with her teammate Meagan Moreno and U-High's **Ella Bittner** her closest competition.

Fox Valley Conference rematch at Woodstock Regional

Crystal Lake South shot up towards the top of the 2A rankings with a strong win at Peoria at the end of September. Last weekend, Prairie Ridge had the edge finishing second ahead of the Gators in the Fox Valley Conference Championships. The two face each other again trying to get Crystal Lake bragging rights and sectional bragging rights. Next week's sectional on this Emricson Park Course with four of the top 2A teams in the field.

Prairie Ridge could win the regional title, but will need **Chelsea Gale**, **Michaela Pieroni**, and **Carsen Forte** finish in the top 10. The Wolves' split on five needs to be 70 seconds or better for this team to win. **McKenzie Aldridge**, who won the FVC title last week, and **Olivia Beckwith** could be among the top five in this race for South. If their third through fifth pack can stay within a minute of their front two could get the Gators to the top of the leaderboard.

Gale, Aldridge, and Woodstock's **Kylie Hagmann** are some of the runners to watch in the front.

It could be close between Woodstock, Crystal Lake Central, and Richmond-Burton for the Boys Regional title. Marian Central Catholic's **Ryan Jones** and Crystal Lake Central's **Keegan Smalley** will be the runners to watch in the front.

How fast does Surtz go at Burlington Central?

Rosary freshman **Lianna Surtz** has been nearly perfect this fall winning six of the seven invitationals that she raced in. Her only "setback" was when she finished sixth at the Richard Spring Invitational mainly against 3A runners. Surtz has been undefeated against 2A runners with that record remaining the same. Kaneland's **Rachel Richtman** should be Surtz's chief competition and she could be 60 seconds behind. Surtz's best three-mile time was the 17:02 that she ran at Detweiller Park.

It could be a tight five team battle for the regional title led by Burlington Central and Rosary. 15 to 20 points could separate the first five teams, so I would not count out Wheaton Academy, St. Francis, and Kaneland from winning this race.

Two top ten 2A teams head the field in the Boys race. Benet Academy could have the slight edge with **Connor O'Keefe** and **Ben Grundman** finishing in the top five. The Redwings getting their top five runners in the first 12 with a split under 43 seconds could be a key to them winning. Kaneland will be close led by **Daniel Occhipinti** who should be in the top five. The Knights keeping their split under 50 seconds and simply getting their top five in before Benet's gets in clinches the win.

It should be a great individual race with O'Keefe, Occhipinti, **Anthony Farmer** of Burlington Central, and **Daniel Chen** of IMSA all expected to be in the front challenging for the individual win.

Taylorville Regional offers top five showdown in Boys race

For some reason, the IHSA sent Centralia up to the Taylorville Regional instead of the Troy Triad Regional, a regional that they have been assigned to for the past few years. What it does set up is a great team battle between top ranked Chatham-Glenwood, #5 Centralia, and #9 Springfield in the Boys race.

Chatham-Glenwood could be feisty for a win in this meet after finishing third last week at the Central State Eight Championships. The Titans were without **Graham Turk**, one of their top three runners in that race. Turk, along with **Dathan** and **Drey Maton** could sweep the first three places. Glenwood getting their top five runners in the first 13 secures the regional win.

Centralia has been a surprise to some this season slowly moving up the rankings. The Orphans will need a tight pack with a split under 33 seconds for the scorers to the win. They will also need **Crede Correll** to break up the Glenwood pack in the front with five runners in the top 11 to be close for the win.

Springfield finished ahead of Glenwood last week and does have the power up front with **Kyle Boughter** and **Will Formea** that could finish in the top five. Their top five in the first 15 makes this a close three team battle for the regional title.

Chatham-Glenwood should roll to the win in the Girls race with the possibly of getting their scorers in the top eight. Springfield, led by **Ruth Edwards**, should be the closest team to Glenwood. **Nia Gibson** of Glenwood should challenge Centralia's **Cheyenne Finley** for the individual title.

Top two sectional ranked teams face off at Elmwood Park

The Fenton Sectional did not have a ranked team in the ILXCTF Top 25 this fall. The top two teams in the sectional rankings, Solorio Academy, and Elmwood Park, should challenge for the regional win on Elmwood Park's campus course.

This race could become a dual meet with only four teams projected to field full teams in this small seven team field. Elmwood Park has the slight edge being on their home course as well as having a good presence in the front led by **Carlos Sanchez** in the front. The Tigers finished second in the Metros Suburban Blue meet on this course last week. Solorio Academy is looking to get to their first state meet in the program's history. They have the athletes to accomplish that with **Adonaliz Hernandez** leading the way. Hernandez missed the Chicago Public League Championships last Saturday due to a bike accident he was involved in last Friday.


The math is simple in this race. Hernandez will need to finish ahead of the Elmwood Park pack of Sanchez, **Tyler O'Campo**, and **Khristo Vencio**. Solorio Academy placing their top seven runners in ahead of Elmwood Park secures the win for the Sun Warriors. Elmwood Park could place four in the first six to secure the regional win if their fifth runner places 13th or higher.

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