



# Young Bulldog Cross Country team ends on high note, girls' basketball still going strong



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One of the youngest cross-country teams in the history of the Mahomet-Seymour girls' junior high school program is also one of the best.

With six seventh-graders and one eighth-grader making up the roster for

last Saturday's IESA Class 3A state meet at Normal's Maxwell Park, the Bulldogs captured eighth place in the 27-school event.

In the 41 years of the state finals, just two M-S girls' teams have produced higher finishes at state. The 2012 team was seventh and the 2001 squad was sixth. M-S has had other eighth-place finishes in 2004 and in 2000.

This year marked the 17<sup>th</sup> time that an entire M-S girls' team has qualified for the IESA state meet.

Class 3A team champion Chatham Glenwood ended with 110 points. M-S compiled a point total of 298.

The top two M-S runners each ran their second miles quicker than their first ones at state.

Seventh-grader Avah Turner placed 38<sup>th</sup> in a field of 230 participants. Her 2-mile time of 12 minutes, 25.8 seconds included a closing mile of 6:08.

Eighth-grader Ava Boyd ended in 43<sup>rd</sup> place. Her time of 12:28.0 featured a 6:12 split for her final mile.

The Bulldogs' next five competitors – all seventh-graders – entered the finish chute within 55 seconds of one another, led by Reese Gallier in 90<sup>th</sup> place with a 12:48.9 clocking.

The times and placings for the school's other state runners were: Emmaline Culp (95<sup>th</sup> in 12:51.4), Ava Jansen (128<sup>th</sup> in 13:07.1), Phoebe Truax (153<sup>rd</sup> in 13:17.2) and Chloe Bundren (197<sup>th</sup> in 13:43.6).

The second-mile splits for both Culp and Jansen were within one second of their opening-mile time.

M-S head coach Lisa Martin was ecstatic with the team's results.

"After getting bounced around at the start of the girls' race, the team fought back to regain some lost time that was the result of a big crowd of the state's fastest runners all vying for top honors," Martin said. "In fact, they fought back so much that they earned eighth place.

"This is the highest finish we have had as a team since joining the ranks of the Class 3A competition in 2013."

The performance continued an upward trend for state finishes by M-S.

The 2017 team placed 16<sup>th</sup> at state. The 2018 team ended in 14<sup>th</sup> place. This year's squad cracked the top 10.

"Our girls' team is full of young runners who know what it will take to bring home some hardware in next year's state meet and they are eager to do so," Martin said. "Our girls all ran with heart and when heart is the biggest motivator, great things happen. That is what we saw.

"Earning eighth place in a tough 3A state meet took a true team effort. We are excited to see what next year will bring for those on our team moving on to high school and for those sticking around to run with us. Good things are happening in the Bulldog running programs right now."

The strength of the sectional tournament in which M-S competed one week earlier at Urbana was demonstrated at state when two of those programs (Dunlap and Normal Kingsley) secured final state placements among the top four teams.

### **Mahomet-Seymour Junior High Boys' cross-country**

Eighth-grader Davin Tietz was the Bulldogs' lone representative in the boys' Class 3A race.

He started with a 5:46 opening mile and completed the 2-mile course in 12 minutes, 16.2 seconds. Tietz finished in 193<sup>rd</sup> place.

This year marked the 33<sup>rd</sup> in succession that the M-S boys' program has produced a state-qualifier.

"Davin got out to a great start and found himself in a crowd that pushed him hard early in the race, which led to him finding his race pace a little later than normal," Martin said. "Davin's athleticism is what got him to this point and we look forward to seeing how he will do with running this spring in track, as we hope he continues to build on the solid base he found in cross-country."

### **Mahomet-Seymour Junior High Girls' basketball**

For the third game in a row, the M-S seventh-grade girls' basketball team held an opponent to less than 10 points on Thursday in a 50-6 decision over Edison in Champaign.

Reese Gallier hit a team-high nine points. Chipping in with six points apiece were Reese Didier, Talia Francom and Kylie Waldinger.

The seventh-graders then extended their winning streak to eight games with back-to-back wins at home to start this week.

On Monday, M-S topped Normal Chiddix 36-19 in a game it led 17-16 at halftime. Chiddix went scoreless in the third quarter as the Bulldogs took command.

Ellie Dallas led the Bulldogs with eight points. Grace Binkley and Kendyl Petro each scored six points.

On Tuesday, the seventh-grade Bulldogs (13-2) defeated Clinton 24-14. Waldinger led the winners with eight points. Binkley scored six points.

During its current winning streak, all eight victories have been by double-figure margins.

The eighth-grade team registered a 36-18 win over Edison last Thursday.

Claire Seal with 13 points and Sidney Young and Sydney McKinney with seven points apiece were the top M-S point-makers.

On Monday, Chiddix handed the Bulldogs a 40-17 setback. Young was the top M-S scorer with six points. Seal contributed five points.

On Tuesday, the eighth-graders (10-5) bounced back and beat Clinton 32-22. Young hit 11 points and Seal chipped in with 10 points.

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