

2020 2A Boys Preseason Preview: Morton Is Ready For #1 Spot

Illinois XC 2020: Preseason Preview Series

Carson Vittorio
Aug 23, 2020

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Kaneland was the team to beat last year as the #1 Knights steamrolled their way through the post-season. The video also illustrated the individual battles- notably preseason favorite [Charlie Smith](#) (Antioch) and [Sam Lange](#) (Morton) dueling all the way from start to finish.

Morton will be tabbed the favorite this season. The Potters is loaded with quality returners as well as unproven but talented youth. 2020 will be an interesting affair indeed.

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10. [Crystal Lake Central](#)

Head Coach/coaches: Bill Eschman

Last Year's Finish: 6th place- Belvidere Sectional

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Key Returners: [Austin May \(Sr.\)](#), [Thomas Landt \(Sr.\)](#), [Karson Hollander \(So.\)](#), [AJ Camacho \(Sr.\)](#)

Projected Top 7: May, Landt, Hollander, Camacho, [Julian Ryerson \(Sr.\)](#), [Daniel Hamill \(Jr.\)](#), Ryan Atkinson (Sr.)

Key Additions: Unknown

Unexpected Losses: Unknown

Carson's Thoughts: This is the final team we will see before we see the teams that will really be contending for a state trophy. The Tigers will be led by Austin May who will look to try and go all-state this season followed by An experience supporting cast, they will be a strong team in the 2A classification.

9. [Wheaton \(St. Francis\)](#)

Head Coach/coaches: Scott Nelson

Last Year's Finish: 14th place- State

Key Returners: [Chris Covone \(Jr.\)](#), [Luke Orwig \(Sr.\)](#), [Tom Enland \(Sr.\)](#), [Daniel O'Connell \(So.\)](#)

Projected Top 7: Covone, Orwig, England, O'Connell, [Sam Andrzejewski \(So.\)](#), [Sam King \(Sr.\)](#), [Christopher Spahn \(Jr.\)](#)

Key Additions: Unknown

Unexpected Losses: Unknown

Carson's Thoughts: A very different looking Spartans team from last year with the graduation of Dan Weizeorick which has turned the team to have a very pack running approach this upcoming year. I'm expecting big seasons from sophomores O'Connell and Andrzejewski who will help bring the 1-5 split to about 15 around the 15:50-16:05 range. If that happens you can see these guys challenge for a top 5 spot.

8. [Springfield](#)

Head Coach/coaches: Dan Devlin

Last Year's Finish: 12th place- State

Key Returners: [Anthony Peralta \(Jr.\)](#), [Matthew Johnson \(Jr.\)](#), [Jack Casey \(Jr.\)](#)

Projected Top 7: Peralta, Johnson, Casey, Arnav Earve (So.), [Ethan Sommers \(Jr.\)](#), Nick Hannig (Jr.), Drake Rutledge (Jr.)



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2A
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Are the Morton boys xc squad ready for the 2A#1 spot? Find out here: bit.ly/3j8Ksag #ihsaxc20



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Key Additions: Unknown

Unexpected Losses: Unknown

Carson's Thoughts: This could be the traditional Senators team that we have seen in recent years which consisted of a strong pack running. With their oldest member of their top 7 only being a junior this is a team that has the potential to break out, they should have about a 30 second 1-5 split and possibly the team to watch to win the state title in 2021.

7. Bartonville (Limestone)

Head Coach/coaches: Brain Glaza

Last Year's Finish: 8th place- Bloomington Sectional

Key Returners: [Wilson Georges \(Jr.\)](#), [Kieran Baurer \(Jr.\)](#), [Kole Dusek \(Sr.\)](#), [Cole Leach \(Sr.\)](#), [Edwin Monroe \(Sr.\)](#)

Projected Top 7: Georges, Baurer, Dusek, Leach, Monroe, Reece Dusek (So.), Ashton Horchem (Jr.)

Key Additions: Unknown

Unexpected Losses: Unknown

Carson's Thoughts: The Rockets find them high in the rankings despite not making it to the state meet last season. Led by superstar junior, Wilson Georges this will be a team that will surprise many as they also have a strong 2-5 pack that should be about 15 seconds from each other at the 16:00-16:15 range.

6. Lisle (Benet Academy)

Head Coach/coaches: Kevin Renicker

Last Year's Finish: 9th place- State

Key Returners: [Sean Donnelly \(Sr.\)](#), [Niklas Anderson \(Sr.\)](#), [Jack Tams \(Sr.\)](#)

Projected Top 7: Donnelly, Anderson, Tams, [Sage Osborne \(Sr.\)](#), [Jack Robinson \(Sr.\)](#), [Dominic Ullmer \(Jr.\)](#), [Sean Kingston \(Jr.\)](#)

New Additions: Unknown

Unexpected Losses: Unknown

Carson's Thoughts: This is the last team that will be seeing that is in a state trophy picture at

the present time. Led by a strong front two in Sean Donnelly and Niklas Anderson this may be a team that after some development can move into a trophy picture, but with a 50 second 1-5 split the Redwings will still need some work to get there.

5. Mahomet-Seymour

Head Coach/Coaches: Neal Garrison

Last Year's Finish: 11th place- State

Key returners: [Hayden Grotelueschen \(Jr.\)](#), [Nick Mies \(Sr.\)](#), [Kyle Nofziger \(Sr.\)](#), [Joseph Scheele \(Sr.\)](#), [Jonah Singer \(Sr.\)](#)

Projected top 7: Grotelueschen, Mies, Nofziger, Scheele, Singer, Joe Taylor (Sr.), Taylor Fan (Sr.)

New additions: Finn Randolph - incoming 9th-grade student

Unexpected losses: Josh Wilcoski - retired

Coach Garrison's Outlook: We are hoping to make it back to State. With the restructuring of the regional and sectional meets, this may not happen. Our regional and sectional have been very hard for us to get out of the past 2 years. In fact, we didn't make it out of the sectional 2 years ago as our sectional has been full of excellent XC programs lead by some of the most experienced coaches in the State. Thinking that our sectional could be even tougher this year makes me set a realistic goal of trying to get our team to have a chance to qualify for State.

4. Mascoutah

Head Coach/coaches: Darren Latham

Last Year's Finish: 18th place- State

Key Returners: [Kristian Knecht \(Sr.\)](#), [Avery Cozzi \(Sr.\)](#), [Noah Jensen \(Sr.\)](#), [Joshua Sturgill \(Sr.\)](#)

Projected Top 7: Knecht, Cozzi, Jensen, Sturgill, [Jordan Eddy \(Sr.\)](#), [Lance Miller \(Jr.\)](#), [Josh Copher \(Sr.\)](#)

New Additions: Sam LaJoye

Unexpected Losses: Unknown

Carson's Thoughts: Mascoutah is a school as you never know who is transferring in and out of it as it is located near a military base. Pending no unexpected losses, the Indians will look to be right into the mix for a state trophy come late October. Led by Kristian Knecht and Avery

Cozzi, those two will be looking to go all-state this year with the 3-5 pack being right at the 16:00 barrier.

3. Chatham-Glenwood

Head Coach/Assistant Coaches: Mike Garber / Caleb Cox, Gloria Esarco

Last Year's Finish: 6th place- State

Key Returners: [Thomas Herbst \(Sr.\)](#), [Cameron Smith \(Sr.\)](#), [Aidan Peterson \(Sr.\)](#), [Drew Verenski \(So.\)](#)

Projected Top 7: Herbst, Smith, Peterson, Verenski, [Sampson Desalines \(Jr.\)](#), [Nathan Michael \(Sr.\)](#), [Caden Settlemoir \(Jr.\)](#)

New Additions: For the first time I've been able to pull a soccer player to come run with the Cross Country team. Garrett Kroeschel is a unique track talent that found his love for long-distance again. He was part of an IESA State Championship team in his 8th Grade year and is returning to the XC course with some big goals in mind. He could make an almost immediate impact on our Top 7.

Unexpected Losses: None

Coach's Outlook On The Team: We are ready to train and race. The team has a constant dialogue with each other about what summer should look like and how to keep each other motivated. Lots of accountability on our squad...and it isn't just upperclassmen pushing the crew to get fit. We have a very fluid structure to our leadership. It works for us. These guys are chomping at the bit to get back in a race. I can't wait to coach them!

2. Chicago (St. Ignatius)

Head Coach/Assistant Coaches: Ed Ernst / Steven Bugarin, Heraldo Morrison, Tim Wesley

Last Year's Finish: 3rd place- State

Key Returners: [Liam Linnen \(Sr.\)](#), [Zach Kiley \(Jr.\)](#), [Brian Moore \(Jr.\)](#)

Projected Top 7: Linnen, Kiley, Moore, [Theo Conroy \(Jr.\)](#), [Nick Kiley \(Jr.\)](#), [Sam Hansen \(Jr.\)](#), [Henry Gilbert \(Jr.\)](#)

New Additions: We ran with a team of four less experienced sophomores last year. Now they are experienced juniors, and we have hopes that they will develop into more mature and consistent runners.

Unexpected Losses: none

Coach Ernst's Outlook: We were top three last year, and we return 14 of our top 16. We assume that we will have the deepest 2A team, but it is possible that we don't have a really low stick at the top of our lineup. We do have some guys who could be a surprise that way, however.

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