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2021 IHSA Class 2A XC Regional Preview

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2021 IHSA Class 2A XC Regional Preview

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The road to Detweiller Park starts at 12 regional sites across the state on Saturday. Here is a glimpse of what to watch for in these regional meets.

The first six (6) placing teams and the first five (5) runners who are not members of the advancing teams in each regional will advance to sectional competition at the site to which they are assigned.

Fenton Sectional

Marist Regional

Girls – The first of two sectionals held at Midlothian Meadows on Saturday. Marist should score under 25 points and be the big team favorite in this race. **Yesena Aguirre** of Lindblom and **Emma Karczewski** of Marist will be the runners to watch to win the individual race.

Boys – Not too many surprises coming out of this regional race either. **Jake Phillips** of Marist is the only runner that has run under 15-minutes for three-miles this season in this regional. He is also the only other runner that has gone under the 16-minute mark. He should roll to the win in this race. #30 Marist, HL Richards, and Brother Rice should be within 10 points of each other up front. St. Laurence, Kenwood, and Evergreen Park are almost certain locks to also advance to Fenton.

Mather Regional

Girls – This should be a dynamite team race with #5 Latin School, #9 Payton, and #23 St. Ignatius Prep all being separated by 13 points or less. Latin School has the individual favorite in **Ava Parekh** with teammates **Mia Kotler** and **McKenna Fellows** finishing in the top five. Their fourth and fifth runners need to be in before 17th place for this team to grab the win. Payton will need 5 runners in the top 12 led by **Josephine Dzedzic** to capture the regional win. St. Ignatius has **Meghan Semmer** leading a pack that could challenge Payton if they get their scorers in the top 15.

Boys – Chicago Public League Schools' Payton Prep and Mather should be ahead of the rest of the pack in this meet. Payton Prep could have 5 runners in the top 10 led by **Ritvik Viniak** and **Griffin Braunreiter**. Mather will be on their home course and should be within under 10 points to Payton with individual race favorite **Muhyadin Ali** leading the way. St. Patrick will be close to 70 points behind these two teams and should be a solid third in this meet.

Kaneland Regional

Girls - #22 Nazareth Academy comes off last week's win at the ESCC Championships and should be the favorite in this race. They should place 5 runners in the top 10 led by **Sarah Owen** and **Collette Kinsella**. #30 St. Francis should be the top team challenging Nazareth Academy with **Ava Swiatek** leading the team. The next four teams are within 13 points of each other but also solid locks to qualify for Fenton with Fenwick, Kaneland, Hinsdale South, and Riverside-Brookfield. **Bella Daley** of Fenwick ran a personal best of 17:59 to finish second at GCAC last week and should win this race.

Boys – There should be no surprises on who qualifies for the Fenton Sectional with the top six teams all ranked. #2 Fenwick won the CCL championship last week without their top runner **Grayden Rill** who has not raced the past two meets. A healthy Rill could mean the Friars score under 35 points. No Rill means Fenwick could still win but scoring 50 points. #8 Glenbard South has a solid pack led by **Caleb Walker** that could have the edge for the second spot. #9 Riverside-Brookfield has a solid top two with **Paul Proteau** and **Cooper Maars** that could sweep the first 2 spots if Rill does not run. Their three through five pack needs to move up for this team to finish second. #10 Kaneland is led by freshman **Evan Nosek** who could finish in the top 10. The Knights need 5 runners in the top 23 for this team to flirt with a second-place finish. #11 St. Francis ran a solid pack last week at the MSC Meet led by **Andrew Hernandez** and could challenge for a spot in the top five. #21 Marmion Academy should not be threatened for a qualifying team spot.

Decatur MacArthur Sectional

Highland Regional

Girls - #14 Waterloo is the team to watch for in this race that could have 4 runners in the top 10 led by individual favorite **Angelynn Kanyuck** and her teammate **Danielle Mudd**. #24 Mascoutah, #25 Highland, and #29 Troy Triad should qualify along with Bethalto Civic Memorial and Carbondale.

Boys - #6 Highland ran their best race of the year last week in winning the MVC title. They will need to equal that effort with **Dallas Mancinas** finishing in the top five. #27 Marion and #29 Mascoutah could be close to Highland, especially in a smaller field. Bethalto Civic Memorial should advance to next week. There could be some suspense for the fifth and sixth qualifying spots with Carbondale Troy Triad, and Waterloo with the talent to be in one of those two spots. There should be no suspense in the individual race with **Alex Partlow** of Carbondale the class of the field. He could win by 45 seconds or more ahead of **Joe Schwartz** of Waterloo and **Jackson Collman** of Bethalto Civic Memorial leading the pack.

Jacksonville Regional

Girls – **Becca Heitzig** of Lincoln and **Colleen Zeibert** of Rochester are the runners to watch that could win the individual title. #3 Chatham-Glenwood has a 15 second gap on their first four runners led by **Nia Gibson** and **Ava Gorrie**. Their top five split should not matter in this meet with fewer runners in the field. The Titans could still put 5 runners in the first 11 to win this regional title. #20 Mt. Zion should have 5 runners in the top 15 and will be the closest team to challenge Glenwood.

Boys - #15 Springfield and #25 Chatham-Glenwood were separated by only one point with Springfield winning last week at the Central State Eight Meet. Springfield will look to go for their second win in a row against their conference rival. Mt. Zion leads Taylorville, Lincoln, and Rochester as solid team qualifiers in the first six places. **Brenden Heitzig** of Lincoln will be challenged by **Julian Baker** of Mt. Zion and **Cale Smith** of Decatur Eisenhower for the individual title.

Olney Richland County Regional

Girls - #12 Mahomet-Seymour is the team to watch in this regional with the possibility of placing all of their top 7 in the first 14 places. Sophomore **Ava Boyd** and freshman **Chloe Bundren** have stepped up as the team's top runners. They should also be the individual favorites in this race. Champaign Centennial and Champaign Central are locks to advance to sectionals. Charleston, Urbana, and Effingham are also solid choices to be the fourth, fifth, and sixth-place teams in this regional.

Boys - #4 Mahomet-Seymour should be on their way to Decatur next week with a win in this regional. **Joseph Scheele**, **Kyle Nofziger**, and **Jonah Singer** are solid up front for the Bulldogs and could be in the top five in this race. Watch for their runners behind the pack. Getting 6 runners in the top 15 could happen in this race. Urbana, led by Sam Lambert, and Champaign Central are choices for the next two spots with Mt. Vernon and Richland County following. It could be up in the air for the final two spots with three teams, Champaign Centennial, Effingham, and Mattoon, challenging to run another week. The two Mahomet runners, Scheele and Nofziger, Urbana's Lambert, and Brock Davee of Mattoon are the individual runners to keep an eye on for the individual win.

Metamora Sectional

Galesburg Regional

Girls – A loaded regional race with four ranked teams leading the way. #2 Dunlap has good pack running demonstrated by their wins at Peoria and last week at Mid-Illini that should get them in the lead for the win in this regional race. **Kate Robertson**, a freshman, has stepped up as the team's #1 runner and should finish in the top five. #7 Normal University has front runners **Delaney Fitzgerald** and **Zoe Carter** providing them low points in this race. The Pioneers will advance but could win with 5 runners in the first 18. #13 Peoria Notre Dame, with **Teagan Cover** as their #1 runner, and #18 Morton, with **Emma Skinner**, will be challenging for top four finishes. Geneseo and East Peoria should not be pressured in qualifying for next week. U-High's Fitzgerald has been running with more confidence after her win at Peoria at the beginning of the month. Fitzgerald and her teammate Carter should be the runners to watch in the front in this race.

Boys – Top ranked Morton should be ahead of the rest of this field in winning this regional race. 5 runners in the top 8, led by **Yonas Wuthrich**, **Cade Zobrist**, and **Josh Weeks** make this team a lock to win. #18 Peoria Notre Dame, #20 Dunlap, and #28 East Peoria are certainties to make it to the Metamora Sectional. Geneseo and Limestone should also advance. No surprises in the team top 6. **Wilson Georges** of Limestone is the big individual favorite in this race

LaSalle-Peru Regional

Girls – It should be up close in the individual race of this regional as **Addysen Clark** of Normal West and **Olivia Nordhielm** of Washington challenge for the win. #16 Normal West, led by Clark, and #17 Metamora, led by **Katie Lalumandier** and **Audrey Heil**, should be within 11 points of each other for the team championship. #28 Washington could be lurking around and should be in the top three or challenging for one of those two top spots. Morris is an up-and-coming team and could be a surprise on Saturday. It is a mystery in the final two spots with Bloomington, Ottawa, and Providence Catholic the teams to watch for.

Boys - #13 Washington has been running great as of late and will challenge #23 Metamora for the regional championship The two teams could be separated by 10 points or less. Normal West has a solid pack to challenge those two teams but will need a runner in the top 10 and 5 in the top 18 to make a top two finish a reality. Bloomington, Morris LaSalle-Peru, and Providence Catholic are four teams fighting for the final three qualifying positions. **Jackson Ward** of Washington continues to improve and should be the runner to watch in the front along with his teammate **Fisher Rinkenberger**, along with **Ryan Hartman** of LaSalle-Peru and **Kaden Welch** of Morris.

Thornridge Regional

Girls – Lemont is the team to watch led by individual race favorite **Casey Kittridge**. Oak Forest and TF North should challenge for the second spot. Marian Catholic and Bremen should find their way into the top five. It could be up to four teams, led by Hillcrest and Thornton, which will challenge for final spots to advance to the sectional race.

Boys – There is mystery up front for the regional team title. Marian Catholic has high hopes to make it to state and could take that step in winning this regional. Lemont and Oak Forest have the runners to challenge for the win. All three teams are close and could be separated by 10 points in the final standings. **Diego Duran** of TF North won the individual race title last week at SSC-Blue. He could pick up another win in this race with **Daniel Kasperan** of Marian Catholic and **TJ Polen** of Lemont challenging for that top spot.

Woodstock North Sectional

Burlington Central Regional

Girls - There is not much suspense in the team or individual races at this regional site. **Elia Ton-That** of Northside Prep is coming off a huge CPL championship race and should be just as strong up front on Saturday. **Emma Smith** of Dixon and **Lucia Ton-That** of Northside Prep should be Ton-That's chief competition. #6 Northridge ran great last week in their Chicago City win and will need to duplicate that effort in this race placing 5 runners in the first 13 to accomplish that. #19 Dixon is solid in the second spot and could catch Northside. Burlington Central and Trinity are next and could challenge for second in this race. Sycamore and Sterling are solid in the fifth and sixth positions.

Boys - #19 Sycamore and host Burlington Central should be the teams to watch up front for the win. Northside Prep makes the 40+ mile drive to this regional and could be a surprise in the second spot. Sterling is close to a lock also to advance. Dixon and Rochelle could be challenged by Ridgewood for one of the final two qualifying places. The individual race should be a good one with **Yusuf Baig** of Burlington Central challenged by **Dale Johnson** of Sterling for the individual win.

Lakes Regional

Girls – This could be the top regional in Class 2A with good individual and team races expected to happen. **Mary Grace Hegberg** of St. Viator has already gone under 17-minutes for three-miles this fall and should be the class of what is a loaded field. **Bella Domier** of Grayslake Central, **Isabella Marasco** of Lake Forest, and Vernon Hills' **Reina Hill** and **Anna Todd** should be part of that pack that will be chasing after Hegberg. #4 Vernon Hills has the edge for the team title with Todd, Hill, and **Rose Sheridan** all finishing in the top 10. #10 Grayslake Central has been without one of their top five runners **Katie Armstrong** not in their lineup since the Palatine Invitational on September 25. The Rams could be close to Vernon Hills in this race is Armstrong is in this race. Central does have Domier and **Sara Armstrong** that could be in the top 10 in this race. #11 Lake Forest could be close for the second spot led by Marasco and **Sophia Lane** in the top 10. #15 Lakes and #26 Deerfield are good teams to advance to Woodstock North. Carmel Catholic and St. Viator will challenge for the sixth and final sectional qualifying place.

Boys - #3 Deerfield and #17 Grayslake Central should be the top teams in this race. Deerfield is coming off a great race at the Central Suburban League race led by **Cole Bernstein** and **Lucas Moskovitz** that could finish in the top five in this race. Grayslake Central has a great trio in **Trey Sato**, **Bryan Vale**, and **John Vagnoni** that need to be in the top 10 to be close to Deerfield's pack. Vernon Hills and Lakes have been solid down the stretch and should advance to Woodstock North. It could be wide-open for the final two qualifying spots with St. Viator, Niles Notre Dame, Antioch, and Lake Forest the teams to watch. **Michael Schumacher** of St. Viator is the runner to watch in this race.

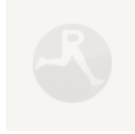
Woodstock Regional

Girls – It could be the Crystal Lake schools that will have a run on the top spots in this race. Top ranked Crystal Lake South has the edge led by **Isabella Gonzalez**, **Abby Machesky**, and **Addie Frisch** that could have 5 runners in the top 14 in this race. #8 Crystal Lake Central has improved throughout the season and could challenge for the win led by **Hadley** and **Annie Ferrero**. #21 Prairie Ridge was without their top runner **Rachel Soukup** last week when they finished seventh in the Fox Valley Conference Meet. Prairie Ridge should still qualify out of this regional without Soukup. Having their #1 runner in the lineup gets this team closer to the other Crystal Lake schools. Boylan Catholic, Wauconda, and Cary-Grove should not be challenged for the final three qualifying spots. A healthy Soukup would be the choice in the individual race. This field is deep with **Hadley Ferrero**, **Isabella Gonzalez**, **Addy Machesky**, and Cary Grove's **Jocelyn Onstot** all capable of winning this race.

Boys – Solid pack running has gotten #7 Belvidere North to their current ranking. The champions of the NIC-10 should be the team to watch led by **Evan Horgan** in the front with **Caden McNulty** and **Brandon Massman** leading the pack. A good race gets them 5 runners in the top 10. An average race plus 5 in the first 15. **Karson Hollander** was not in the lineup last week for #16 Crystal Lake Central. Hollander up front along with **Daniel Hamill** puts the Tigers in contention for the win. #12 Prairie Ridge has individual favorite leading the Wolves and should put the team in the sectionals. #26 Woodstock had an easy win at the Kishwaukee River Conference Meet and has the talent to challenge for a top 2 spot in this meet. #22 Cary-Grove and Boylan Catholic appear the teams that should take the final two sectional spots. Gelon, Horgan, Cary-Grove's **Ian Barnes**, and Crystal Lake Central's Hamill and Hollander are all worthy of winning this individual race.

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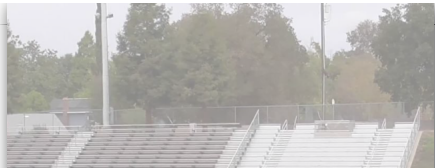
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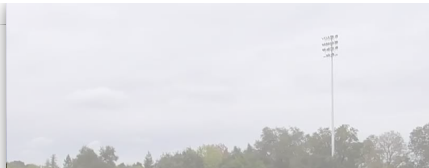
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