**By Michael Newman**

We found out in last Saturday’s First to the Finish Invitational that the conditions were almost perfect on the Detweiller Park course.

**Danny Kilrea** of Lyons Township produced the fastest time ever (14:02.3) for an invitational race during the regular season on this fabled layout.

The Boys race at 11 a.m. should be wide open. Defending state champion teams Neuqua Valley in 3A and Mahomet-Seymour in 2A lead a loaded field that includes Wheaton-Warrenville South, York, and Hersey. The individual race could be a fast one as Sandburg’s **Dylan Jacobs** and Arthur-Lovington’s **Logan Hall** should set the pace.

**Boys Varsity – 11 a.m.**

**Teams** - 3A (11)- #2 Neuqua Valley, #4 Wheaton-Warrenville South, #6 York, #7 Hersey, #10 Plainfield South, #14 St. Charles East, #15 Sandburg, #21 Palatine, #22 Barrington, #23 Naperville Central, #24 Lake Zurich; 2A (6) - #1 Mahomet-Seymour, #2 Normal University, #4 Chatham-Glenwood, #9 Springfield, #11 Deerfield, #24 Hinsdale South; 1A (3) - #4 Freeburg, #8 St. Joseph-Ogden, #15 Monticello;

O’Fallon, Oswego East, Oak Park-River Forest, Naperville North, Geneva, Plainfield East, Oswego, Bartlett, Loyola Academy, Lane Tech, Grayslake Central, Taylorville, Wheaton Academy, Marist, St. Thomas More, Paxton-Buckley-Loda, Niles Northridge Prep

**Outlook** – The dynamics of the team race in this meet are fascinating in the Boys Varsity level. Neuqua Valley is the top ranked team in this field led by **Zach Kinne** and **Ryan Kennedy** who could be among the first ten. The key is the pack behind these two runners. The team’s five-runner split at Hinsdale was 38 seconds off Kinne. Watch in this race to see this team pack it up even more.

Neuqua Valley’s DVC rival Wheaton-Warrenville South has a good pack going this season. They had their first three runners within three seconds of each other last week at Wauconda with **William Hauenstein**and **Scott** & **Sean Maison** leading the way. Their top four split has averaged 18 seconds in their two invitational races. The Tigers could win this meet if they have their top five runners within 40 seconds of each other. Last week at Wauconda, it was at 56 seconds.

The York camp has been tight-lipped whether **Charlie Kern** will make his season debut. Even without him in the lineup, York has displayed some strong pack running and could be a threat in this race. The Dukes had a 16-second split on their top four last week at Joliet led by **Sean MacGregor** and **Tim Stevenson.** **Jackson Bode,** who missed last week due to ACT testing, will be back and should be with his two teammates. A split of 30 seconds or under on the top five could give York the win in this meet.

Hersey is the one team to keep an eye on in this race. This team finished second at Fenton behind Glenbard West but ran **Max Svienty** and **Josh Methner** in the Frosh/Sop race. Their pack in the varsity race, led by **Ryan Buch, Nate Mayo**, and **Ryan Thiesen,** had an eight second split on their top four. That split could spread out in this meet with more competition in the race. The Huskies do have six runners that could finish in the top 20 that could cause problems for the rest of the teams in this field.

There could be a side battle in this competition with three of the first four teams in 2A in this field. Top ranked Mahomet-Seymour did not have their #5 runner **Evan Burge** in their lineup as they finished second behind Mundelein at Springfield. The Bulldogs have a strong first two with **Ryan Hodge** and **Mathias Powell** leading the way. The key is lowering their five-runner split in the 30- to 35-second range. That could get them into the top five in the team standings. Normal University was on this course last week winning the 2A race at First to the Finish. We will see how the Pioneers match up to Mahomet led by **Jared Schuckman.** Chatham-Glenwood did not have **Drey** and **Dathan Maton**running last week at Springfield. Add those two runners in along with **Cooper Petersen** and the Titans could be among the top ten teams in this race.

Plainfield South, led by **Christian Knowlton**, showed how good they are with a 39-second split on five and winning at Joliet ahead of York. This team could be a surprise in this race if they can keep their five-runner split under 34 seconds.

I see the individual race coming down to a great dual between Sandburg’s **Dylan Jacobs** and 1A Arthur Lovington’s **Logan Hall** for the win. Jacobs looked good in running 14:34 at Lyons Township two weeks ago but was a world away from **Danny Kilrea** so it seemed in that race. Hall has been undefeated this season and is running with confidence from last track season when he ran 9:05 for 3,200 meters. This is a different Hall than we saw at this time at this meet last year.

It is anyone’s guess who could be in the top ten since there are so many talented runners. **Nick Lanning** of Barrington looked strong in winning the Lake County Invitational more than two weeks ago. **Zach Kinne**was in charge of his race at Hinsdale and could be towards the front with Jacobs and Hall.

**Josh Rodgers** of Geneva has been running good early in the season and could be in the top ten along with Mahomet-Seymour’s **Ryan Hodge** and **Mathias Powell**. York’s **Sean MacGregor, Jackson Bode**, and **Tim Stevenson** could all be towards the front along with Wheaton-Warrenville South’s **Sean** & **Scott Maison** and **William Hauenstein,Ryan Kennedy** of Neuqua Valley, **Ryan Buch** and **Ryan Thiesen**of Hersey, **Charlie Parrish** of Freeburg, **Jared Shuckman** of Normal University, **Thomas Shilgalis** of Naperville Central, **Patrick Burns** of Lake Zurich, **Matthew Vietzen** of Oak Park-River Forest, **Wyatt Wolfersberger** of St. Joseph-Ogden, **Garrett Dixon** of Monticello, and **Cole Adesso** of St. Charles East.