The next two weekends are the time-period that Illinois High School runners gear their focus to during the summer. It is two meets that get you to need to be on your game to get you to Detweiller Park in November and your assigned spot on the starting line for the IHSA State Meet.

The 15 2A regional meets that take place on Saturday, to be honest with you, will not have that much drama. There will be some meets that only a couple of runners will be eliminated after their race of advancing. There will be some meets where it will be tight for the sixth and final qualifying team spot.

In the 2A Regional Meets, the first six teams will qualify for next week’s sectional championships. The first five individuals not on a qualifying team will also advance to next Saturday.

Here are five 2A meets to keep an eye on this Saturday.

**1 – Metamora Regional @ Black Partridge Park, Metamora**

Six ranked teams are in what could be the toughest Boys 2A regional in the state. #1 Normal University and #2 Mahomet-Seymour will face off fir the first of three straight races. U-High will have individual race favorite **Jared Shuckman** leading them. The pack behind him needs to be within 25 seconds of each other as well as all of them finishing in the top 15. It was a plus at last week’s Apollo Conference Meet that **Riley Fortune** was close to **Mathias Powell** and **Ryan Hodge** for Mahomet-Seymour. Keeping Fortune close to Hodge and Powell as well as their other two runners in the top 25 keeps them close to Normal University. #8 Bloomington used a 16 second split from their second through fifth runners to help them win the Big 12 Championships last Saturday. Getting **Nick Doud** in the top ten as well as 5 runners total in the top 25 could get them close to the front. #12 Normal West and #13 Metamora could be close to Bloomington. #21 Washington should be the final qualifying team.

It will be a tight race as well in the Girls race as #4 Mahomet-Seymour and #5 Normal University face off. U-High could have the edge if their top two runners **Lyndsey Wolters** and **Emmy Mussey** are in before Mahomet Seymour’s first runners cross the line. Mahomet could win if they have their top 5 within the first 19 places. #10 Washington could be a surprise in this race if their pack behind front-runner **Jadyn Jacobs** stays within 50 seconds of her. #18 Normal West could be close but will need their first three runners in the first 15 led by **Mara Smith**. Morton and Metamora should be the other two team qualifiers. The individual race is up for grabs as Morton’s **Aspen Gordon,** Washington’s **Jadyn Jacobs**, and U-High’s **Lyndsey Wolters** challenge for the win.

**2 – Burlington Central Regional @ Plato Township Park**

Both individual and team races should be great in this meet. #6 Kaneland leads three ranked teams in the Girls race with **Rachel Richtman** the individual favorite. #21 Crystal Lake South has been a surprise this season and they could finish second in this meet if they can keep their top 5 runners in the first 15. #20 Crystal Lake Central edged South last week at the Fox Valley Championships and could be on the rise led by **Katelyn Smith**. Burlington Central and Sycamore could also challenge for top five spots. Richtman will be the favorite but will be challenged by Sandwich’s **Kayla Schiera** and Hampshire’s **Sophia Oury**.

The individual Boys race could be a mini-preview of the 2A state meet with Kaneland’s **Matt Richtman, Stephen Poorten**of Sycamore, and **Jack Becker** of Crystal Lake South all challenging for the win. **Daniel Chen** of Illinois Math & Science Academy could be a surprise in this race. #4 Kaneland edged #3 Sycamore for second place by five points at the NIB-12 Championships on Monday. It could be just as close between the two teams in this meet. #11 Illinois Math & Science Academy have not run against top competition most of this season. They could be closer to these two teams than people think. Burlington Central, Crystal Lake Central, and Hampshire will challenge for the fourth spot.

**3 – Highland Regional @ Fireman’s Park, Alhambra**

Both races at this meet should be wide-open. At last week’s Mississippi Valley Conference Championships, #15 Troy Triad won the conference title by four points ahead of #16 Waterloo. It should be that tight on Saturday. Triad had a good 46 second split on their top five runners led by freshman **Alyssa Kowalski.** They will need to duplicate that in this meet. **Jenna Schwartz** should win this meet and lead Waterloo. Last week she won the conference title by 70 seconds. The key for them is to get their pack closer to Schwartz. Mascoutah was third in that conference meet. Keep an eye on them. They did run a 29 second split on their scorers in that race. They just need to move them closer to the front.

It should be close in the Boys race with three teams contesting for the regional title. #5 Waterloo has been running better over the past month and should be the team to watch led by MVC conference champion **Adam Robson.** Waterloo placed 5 runners in that meet with a 36 second split on their top five. Keeping those runners close together again will ensure a regional win. Mascoutah ran a 60 second split on their top 5 at last week’s conference meet with **Casmir Cozzi** close to Waterloo’s Robson. #10 Mascoutah had a 29 second split on their second through fifth runners. They just need to move that pack closer to Cozzi. #14 Marion will have **John Bruce** challenging for the individual title in this race. In their South Seven Conference win, Marion had a 60 second split on their second through fifth runners. That could be problems in this meet especially with the packs that Waterloo and Mascoutah have. Getting one more runner in the top ten as well as their top 5 in the first 17, Marion could be a surprise in the front.

**4 – Riverside-Brookfield Regional @ Sundown Meadows, Countryside**

Not much drama in this regional but it is the best of the regionals in the Wheaton Academy Sectional complex. #19 Riverside-Brookfield won the MSC-Blue Championship 34-37 over Wheaton Academy led by the individual win by **Tara Janney**. With the addition of Montini and St. Francis in this meet, that outcome could change around. Wheaton Academy, led by **Julia Robleski**, needs to offset the front running ability of Riverside-Brookfield. Both are even in the front. Wheaton just needs to get their top 5 runners in the top 15 to secure the win. Riverside had their fourth and fifth runners come in after the Wheaton Academy pack. That needs to change in this meet. Glenbard South, St. Francis, and Montini Catholic will all challenge for the third spot.

#6 Riverside-Brookfield should be the team to watch in the Boys race as they could get their five scorers in the top 12. Watch for Jacob **Wardzala** to lead three Bulldog runners in the top five. St. Francis could be the team closest to RB if they can get Alex Hernandez and Dan Weizeorick in the top 10. Montini’s Jacob Mondeschean could be the individual to watch in this race.

**5 – Fenton Regional @ Fenton HS, Bensenville**

The toughest of the three regionals feeding into the Chicago University-High Sectional. St. Viator was ranked state for a time this season and could be a favorite in the Girls race. The Lions could place 6 runners in the first 10 led by **Katie Castelli**. Deerfield looks to be the chief competition to St. Viator led by their top two runners **Hope Leman** and **Kelly Osborn**. The Warriors could be within 5 points of St. Viator if they can their top 5 runners in the first 12 as well as three runners in before St. Viator’s third runner crosses the line.

The Boys field has six schools that will be challenging for five sectional spots next week. Deerfield has the edge in this meet led **Matt Gold** and **Henry Shore**. The Warriors could win it they can keep three runners in the first six as well as their top 5 in the first 20. Fenton is always dangerous on their home course and could be the team to move ahead of Deerfield. The Bison had a 50 second split on their top five in their conference meet. Getting two runners in the top 10 as well as their fifth runner across the line between 18th and 20th could be a key. Notre Dame is coming on strong and could play a factor if they can keep their split under 40 seconds and their top 5 in the first 22. Elmwood Park, St. Viator, and Mather should be close or ahead of Notre Dame. The three through six spots could be separated by less than 20 points. Deerfield’s **Matt Gold**will be the individual to watch in this race.

Read more: [Mike Newman - News - Five meets to watch in the 2017 2A IHSA Cross Country Regionals](http://mike-newman-ilxctf.runnerspace.com/profile.php?member_id=42240&do=news&news_id=497164#ixzz4w50H1Vb1)