

Flowers leads area sectional cross country qualifiers to next step

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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Here is a look at Saturday's IHSA Class 2A and 1A cross-country regional meets in Jacksonville (2A) New Athens and Franklin (1A)

CLASS 2A JACKSONVILLE REGIONAL

Jersey's Ben Flowers, arguably the top runner in the St. Louis area this year, ran a 14:49.59 race at Community Park in Jacksonville to take the IHSA Class 2A Jacksonville

Regional boys cross-country race. Flowers' finish helped the Panthers to a fourth-place team finish to advance to this Saturday's Decatur MacArthur Sectional.

Springfield took the team title with 39 points, edging Chatham Glenwood by two points. Springfield Sacred Heart-Griffin was third with 111 points, followed by the Panthers' 119, the host Crimsons' 140 and Springfield Lanphier's 149 for the final team qualification spot. Civic Memorial finished eighth as a team with 212 points.

Flowers finished seven seconds clear of Springfield's Heath Warren, who had a 14:56.86. Chatham Glenwood's Landon Skelly was third at 15:00.28, Rochester's Josh Cable was fourth at 15:02.55 and Chatham's Chris Durr was fifth at 15:07.87.

Nick Reynolds ran a 16:15.14 for Jersey, followed by Mike Roach's 16:31.37, Mark Wendell's 16:43.30 and Nick Loepker's 16:52.58 to finish out the scoring. Drew Bartman ran a 16:58.23 and Christian Cazier had a 17:09.91 for the Panthers.

CM's Cohl Callies did qualify for the sectional as an individual with a time of 16:30.97. Other scoring runners for the Eagles were Frank Trost (16:41.69), Jarrett Lacquement (18:03.78), Weihua Li (18:07.48) and Drake Stephenson (19:15.56).

On the girls' side, neither the Panthers nor the Eagles qualified as a team for the sectional. Rochester took the team title with 40 points, followed by Chatham Glenwood (44), Springfield (66), Springfield Sacred Heart-Griffin (120) and the host Crimsons (147). Jersey finished eighth at 232 points and CM ninth at 245.

The Eagles' Alex Singleton and the Panthers' Kiara Chapman and Kaleigh Grace all advanced as individuals; Singleton was the fastest individual qualifier at 19:20.42, while Chapman had a 20:55.96 and Grace a 22:11.12 to move on to Decatur.

Other Eagles who figured in the scoring were Monica Baker (20:03.69), Alexis Enke (25:20.38), Lydia Peal (26:14.60) and Sonny Dickerson (30:22.37). Other scoring Panthers were Kayla Sheldon (23:01.31), Morgan Cook (21:13.41) and Megan Fraley (23:20.06).

Rochester's Katherine Perry won the race in 17:02.81, followed by Springfield's Aly Goff (17:31.53) and Natalie Motor (17:39.35), Chatham's Katie Curry (17:40.45) and Rochester's Madeline Campbell (17:46.41).

CLASS 1A NEW ATHENS REGIONAL

East Alton-Wood River's Brendan Springman ran a 17:19, good for seventh place, to lead the Oilers to a third-place team finish in the Class 1A New Athens boys regional, advancing the team to Saturday's Metro East Lutheran-Madison Sectional at SIU-Edwardsville's cross-country course.

The Oilers scored 117 points, with the Knights right behind in fourth at 136. Roxana, however, just missed qualifying as a team, finishing seventh at 181 points, while Piasa Southwestern was ninth at 247 points. Freeburg won the team title with 22 points, followed by Breese Mater Dei with 59 points, followed by the Oilers and Knights, then came Lebanon with 139 points and the host Yellowjackets with 149.

Matthew Shea ran an 18:20 for the Oilers, followed by Andrew Noack (18:57), Chase Wallendorf (18:59) and Ryne White (19:07) to round out the EA-WR scoring. Jacob Mustian (19:19) and Liam Welch (19:29) also ran for the Oilers.

Javon Watkins ran 17:23, good for ninth, to lead MEL-Madison. He was followed by Darion Brooks (17:40), Joshua Jacobson (19:01), Jonah Wilson (19:24) and Christian Englebrecht (20:28) to round out the scoring; Elijah Culbert (21:06) and Nathaniel Perry (31:14) rounded out the Knight runners.

Roxana was led by James Henseler, who covered the course in 18:02, good for 17th place. Cree Stumpf (19:20), Will Cotter (19:35), Dakota Stumpf (20:00) and Zach Frey (20:50) rounded out the scoring for the Shells, with Jazz Richardson (21:06) and Devin Thomeczak (21:23) also running for RHS.

Piasa's Caden Bohn ran a 18:17 to advance to the sectional as an individual. Other Piasa Bird runners included Grant Seniker (20:03), Jimm Evans (21:36) Evan Lowis (21:43) and Tyler Dorris (24:38).

Both Marquette Catholic and McGivney Catholic had individual runners taking part; none qualified for the sectional. The Explorers were represented by Adam Sanders (19:59), Chris Hellrung (25:50), Brent Buenger (31:05) and Garrett Hawkins (31:06); the Griffins were represented by Jarod Silhavy (21:33) and Elijah Burns (21:56).

Freeburg's Charlie Parrish (16:17), Alex Mack (16:28), Carson Smith (17:07) and Blake Hatter (17:08) finished 1-2-4-5, with Breese Mater Dei's Luke Goebel (16:54) taking third.

The girls race saw **EA-WR's Haley Kerpen**, running as an individual, cover the course in 19:45 to take top honors on the day. The Oilers did not have enough runners to field a team for the meet, however.

Roxana finished third in the team standings to advance to Decatur, scoring 97 points. Mater Dei took first with 34 points, followed by Freeburg (46), the Shells, Lebanon (102), Belleville Althoff (113) and New Athens (148). Marquette was eighth with 228, Piasa Southwestern ninth at 241 and MEL-Madison 10th at 272.

Kryston Scifres took second in a time of 19:58 to pace the Shells, with Michaela Tarpley (21:27), Victoria Tarpley (22:01), Shalyn Edwards (22:16) and Alexis Stumpf all scoring for RHS. Sarah Stover (23:32) and Jaidyn Peebles (23:54) also ran for Roxana.

Marquette's Natalie Halliday took eighth in 20:35 to qualify for the sectional as an individual; other Explorers taking part were Natalie Brown (24:07), Bekka Johns (25:51), Lilly Kostecki (28:26) and Kennedie Koetzle (28:51). The Piasa Birds' Ashley Moore, in 22:54, reached the sectional as the last individual qualifier, with Erin Laubschter running in 24:54, Isabelle Wolfe 24:58, Amy Duty 25:10 and Galaxie Vail 25:15 to round out the Southwestern scoring.

MEL-Madison had Kate Weber (24:44), Kathryn Butler (24:52), Maddie Stewart (25:32), Kristina Robinson (28:02) and Jaria Hardaway (28:18) scoring, with Suzannah Jezek (31:38) also taking part. McGivney had three runners taking part as individuals, with Mira McAtee (22:55) leading the way; also running for the Griffins were Megan Schilly (24:32) and Abby Podshadley (26:57).

Freeburg's Ashley Gilmore (19:56), Mater Dei's Elyse Faust (19:59) and Belleville Governor French Academy's Sarojani Hunter (20:02) rounded out the top five.

CLASS 1A FRANKLIN REGIONAL

Carrollton was the lone area representative in the Class 1A Franklin Regional, and the Hawks, running as individuals, saw **Lily Baumgartner turn in a time of 21:12** for a 15th-place finish to advance to the Elmwood Sectional Saturday.

Mitchell Frederickson was the only Hawk boy to participate, turning in a 20:47 time over the course. Pleasant Plains, Liberty, Auburn, Athens, Mason City Illini Central and Riverton advanced as teams, while the top five runners were Pleasant Plains' Tyler Johnson, Athens' Wyatt McIntyre, Illini Central's Emilio Rivera, Pittsfield's Eli Ten Eyck and Liberty's Lucas Booher.

Maddy Custer and Ashley Vandersand also represented the Hawk girls, Custer running the course in 22:07 and Vandersand 27:35. Liberty won the team title, followed by Petersburg PORTA, Springfield Lutheran, Quincy Notre Dame, Williamsville and Auburn. The top five individuals were Adrienne Brauer and Maria Brauer of Petersburg

PORTA, Brigid Tournoux and Bernadette Tournoux of Springfield Lutheran and Jacki Graham of Liberty.

In all sectionals, the top five teams and top seven individuals on non-qualifying teams will advance to the IHSA state meet at Detweiler Park in Peoria.