

1998 Regional meet...

Runners head to Hedges-Boyer Park

'Equalizer' course hosts regional

By **MICHAEL PIDANICK**
Staff writer

Running in a regional race with Seneca East, Cardinal Stritch and Woodmore, St. Joseph Central Catholic's girls cross country team has a simple mission for the Division III regional race Saturday at Hedges-Boyer Park in Tiffin.

"We're going to go out and pull an upset," said Crimson Streaks coach Gary Logsdon. "We'll have to run a good race, but hey, they have to beat us too."

The Crimson Streaks were one of four area girls teams to qualify for the regional meet, joining Woodmore, Oak Harbor and Bellevue. Lakota, Clyde and Woodmore advanced in the boys competition.

Seven individual boys will also participate in the regional: Jeremy Framstad of Fremont Ross, Mike Chapman of St. Joe, Jason Balsizer of Gibsonburg, Jeremy Riehm of Old Fort, Jason Kehres of Margaretta and Bellevue teammates Robert Orr and Erik Kath.

The top three teams in the regional advance to the state meet Nov. 7 at Scioto Downs in Columbus. In the most recent coaches poll, Seneca East is second, Woodmore is fourth and Cardinal Stritch is fifth.

"This is the time you have to step it up a notch," Logsdon said.

The top 15 individuals also move advance. Senior Keri Oxley, the Crimson Streaks' top runner, made it to state a year ago, and has a shot at returning.

In the boys race, Chapman, a junior, will be St. Joe's lone representative. Chapman, who ad-

Regional qualifiers

Teams

BOYS — Lakota, Clyde, Woodmore

GIRLS — St. Joe, Woodmore, Oak Harbor, Bellevue

Individuals

BOYS — Jeremy Framstad, Ross; Mike Chapman, St. Joe; Jason Balsizer, Gibsonburg; Jeremy Riehm, Old Fort; Jason Kehres, Margaretta; Robert Orr, Bellevue; Erik Kath, Bellevue.

vanced to state last season, was second in Saturday's district meet at Terra with a time of 16:23.

"I'd like to see my time improve a little bit," Chapman said. "I'll be ready."

Logsdon calls Hedges-Boyer Park an "equalizer course."

"There are a lot of short hills," he said. "With a lot of runners, you

have to get into that front pack. If you get caught in the middle or the back, you might get blocked out."

Clyde and Lakota will participate in a tough regional beginning at 11:25 a.m. Van Wert, Bay Village, Olmsted and Port Clinton will be among the toughest teams.

"I think we have the toughest regional in Ohio," said Fliers coach Sonny Workman. "There are 12 teams and we'd like to finish in the top six."

If the Fliers don't advance as a team, senior Josh Cook has an excellent opportunity to reach state for the second straight year.

"Josh is going to be right there," Workman said. "But with so many good teams, and only 15 advancing, there isn't a lot to fool around with. He's going to need to run his fastest time of the year."

The Raiders, coming off a dis-

trict championship, are looking to be the first Lakota cross country team to reach state since 1993.

"We're going into in with same attitude as district," said Lakota coach Don Windom. "We're hopeful, and we know we need to run a good race."

Framstad, a freshman, was 13th at the Div. I district at Oregon's Pearson Park in a time of 17:19. His brother Jon advanced to state, last year.

Balsizer, a senior, is the lone Golden Bears representative. He was fifth at district in 17:11 to lead Gibsonburg to an eighth place finish.

Riehm will compete in the first Div. III race, and will not run head-to-head with Chapman, who he ran against six times this season. Riehm was second at district in 16:33, and looks for his second straight trip to state.

Framstad lone Division I runner

Jeremy Framstad of Fremont Ross was the lone individual runner in the Division I race, finishing 60th in 17:50. Ross coach John Elder said his freshman runner learned a lesson in the race.

"He went out real fast, but I think it was too fast," Elder said. "He paid the price, which is fine. It's a great, great experience for him."

"He learned that to get to state, you've got to fly, and that's the biggest thing. You've just got to scoot. I think he realizes, too, in the long run, that you need that experience, mental toughness. Three miles is a long way, and it goes by fast."

Framstad, who along with freshman Adam Swope and junior Ryan Werling will comprise the core of Elder's 1999 team, gives his coach reason to be optimistic.

"We're pretty excited about the future, about the young kids coming up," Elder said.