

Solomon breaks 15:00 as Plymouth repeats as regional boys cross country champ

Brad Emons, Hometownlife.com

Published 5:03 p.m. ET Oct. 27, 2018 | Updated 9:58 p.m. ET Oct. 28, 2018

Salem, Northville also headed to MIS for state finals in Brooklyn



(Photo: SUBMITTED PHOTO)

With Carter Solomon setting the pace, Plymouth remains right on course in its quest for an MHSAA Division 1 boys cross country championship.

The Wildcats, placing five in the top 11, scored 29 points on Saturday at New Boston's soggy Willow Metropark to repeat as Regional 6 champion.

Meanwhile, runner-up Salem (79) and third-place Northville (83) also punched their tickets to Michigan International Speedway next Saturday (Nov. 3) for the state finals.

Solomon, a junior, broke the 15-minute barrier for the second time this season clocking a 5,000-meter time of 14 minutes, 59.4 seconds. Novi Detroit Catholic Central junior Luke Perell was runner-up in 15:35.8.

Related: [Plymouth pays back Brighton to rule KLAAs boys cross country meet \(https://www.hometownlife.com/story/sports/2018/10/18/plymouth-repeats-klaa-boys-cross-country-champion/1689349002/\)](https://www.hometownlife.com/story/sports/2018/10/18/plymouth-repeats-klaa-boys-cross-country-champion/1689349002/)

Related: [D-1 runner-up Plymouth poised for another boys cross country run \(https://www.hometownlife.com/story/sports/2018/09/13/well-seasoned-plymouth-runners-strong-again-boys-cross-country/1284394002/\)](https://www.hometownlife.com/story/sports/2018/09/13/well-seasoned-plymouth-runners-strong-again-boys-cross-country/1284394002/)

"I think it's awesome, we've been talking about it, we did it once and we said have to do it again before 'states' to have a shot to do it again 'states,'" Plymouth coach Jon Mikosz said of Solomon. "I think there have only been three D1 runners in the history of the state meet ever break it (15 minutes) at 'state,' so that's the goal we're focusing on."

The Wildcats' other four scorers included sophomore Patrick Byrnes, third (15:41.4); senior Brandon Boyd, fourth (15:56.3); senior Jarrett Warner, 10th (16:08.6); and junior Tyler Mussen, 11th (16:10.6).

Plymouth's non-scorers were Bassil Syed (36th, 16:57.5) and Conner Davis (69th, 17:56.2).

After their strong regional showing, the Wildcats appear poised to be make a run at the state title that eluded them by just three points a year ago against Ann Arbor Pioneer.

"They're not necessarily happy how the race went today, but I am," Mikosz said. "And our goal is to just get through here, stay healthy, be ready to go. We're right where we need to be, so we've just got to keep it going for one more week and hope for the best."

Rounding out the 14-school field was Novi Detroit Catholic Central (99), Ann Arbor Huron (118), Novi (147), Canton (198), Livonia Stevenson (202), Livonia Churchill (203), Livonia Franklin (256), Oak Park (310), Berkley (366), University of Detroit Jesuit (385) and Garden City (451).

Senior Luke Haran paced Salem's effort with a fifth-place finish in 15:57.7. Other scorers for the Rocks included sophomore Hezekiah Williams, 12th (16:20.5); sophomore Talha Syed, 14th (16:22.1); senior Christo Jeffers, 17th (16:33.6); senior Shane McKimmy, 31st (16:49.5).

"Christo Jeffers was our number four and came through big time," Salem coach Steve Aspinall said. "He had a season best by nearly 20 seconds, so he ran a great race. He was the one who tilted it in a good way for us. We knew it would be close between us and Northville for second and third, but at that point you're top three and you're just happy to be there and get one more race as a team."

Salem's non-scorers were Evan Wheeler (52nd, 17:15.5) and Bryce Paine (64th, 17:36.9).

"Always fun to qualify, we're one of the best regionals in the state of Michigan with six or seven teams that are really solid," Aspinall said. "You've got to run well on race day. Outside of Plymouth, there was nobody constant going in that was going to be one of those three teams. We had four guys in the top 20, so when we saw that I was confident that we were going to be at least top three."

The Rocks hope to improve upon last year's 20th place finish at the Division 1 finals.

"Next week the goal at the state finals is to go out and compete like we did today," Aspinall said. "We could probably be anywhere from eighth to 12th or 13th if we run well. Luke Haran is our number one. His goal a couple of years ago was to be top 30. Top 30 is All-State and he can be right in that conversation. Then a couple of sophomores behind him who ran low 16:20s today who were close to the top 10 could have a great day next Saturday."

Northville was paced by returning All-Stater Nicholas Couyoumijian, a senior, who placed sixth (16:04.08). He was followed by sophomore Sean McKee, 15th (16:22.5); senior Raymond Jiang, 19th (16:35.3); senior Alex Flegal, 20th (16:35.5); and junior Josh Morissey, 23rd (16:37.9).

The Mustangs non-scorers were junior Ben Steinig (34th, 16:55.7) and Josh Hardy (49th, 17:12.7).

"There would be a couple of teams shooting for second and third place today and whoever ran the fastest was going to move on to the state finals, and I'm just happy how our seven kids competed today," Northville coach Tim Dalton said. "We had two kids step up in senior Alex Flegal and junior Josh Morissey, who ran huge career P.R.'s to be our fourth and fifth guys. The other stat was our fourth runner (Flegal) was in 20th place, so four in the top 20 locked the door for you there."

It turned out to be a happy day for Northville, which was disqualified last year from going to the state finals because of an MHSAA uniform rules violation at the regional.

"The goal next week is to go in and compete," Dalton said. "I believe we're a top 10 team in the state and just happy to get those seven kids there. We talk all the time that if you're not having fun in the sport we're doing something wrong, so go out, compete and have fun, and good things will happen."

Other additional individual state qualifiers in addition to Perelli headed to MIS by virtue of a top-15 regional finish include Matt Whyte (Novi), seventh (16:06.6); Karsin Dass (Ann Arbor Huron), eighth (16:07.8); Alexander Dugas (Detroit CC), ninth (16:08.2); and Joseph Michalak (Canton), 13th (16:21.8).

Contact Brad Emons: bemons@hometownlife.com. Follow him on Twitter: [@BradEmons1](https://twitter.com/BradEmons1).

