

The Hinsdale Central girls cross country team takes pride in running some of the program's best races at Peoria's Detweiller Park.

When the Red Devils return there for the Class 3A state meet Saturday, Nov. 4, they'll have plenty of experience and momentum on their side.

The team qualified for the seventh straight year and 15th time in the past 16 seasons by placing third at the Hinsdale Central Sectional Oct. 28 at Katherine Legge Memorial Park.

The 3A girls state race is at 1 p.m. followed by the boys at 2 p.m. Awards are at 3 p.m.

"Our primary goal at sectionals is to qualify for state for so we achieved that. (And) we had some really races," Hinsdale Central coach Mark McCabe said.

"(At state) we'll be happy if we walk out of there and can look at each other and look ourselves in the mirror and say we were the best we could be on that day."

Senior Grace McCabe, whose 18:09.09 was a strong second to Argo sophomore Abigail Lopez (17:48.43), and sophomore McKenna Revord (5th, 18:20.38) earned all-sectional honors with top-five finishes.

Senior Reilly Revord was sixth (18:29.37), followed by sophomore Lucy Fischer (19th, 19:02.15) and juniors Bella Pisani (40th, 19:46.11), Caitlin Chval (49th, 20:10.54) and Kayla Byrne (61st, 20:39.69).

The Red Devils (71 points) finished behind Lyons Township (58), which put three in the top 10, and to Downers Grove South (71) on a sixth-runner tiebreaker.

McCabe, McKenna Revord and Fischer were named the team's Athletes of the Meet for excelling under various circumstances Saturday.

McCabe finished 6.71 seconds ahead of third-place LT junior Emily Henkel (18:15.80) and built upon her team-best, third-place finish at the LT Regional Oct. 21.

McKenna Revord returned to her outstanding form after collapsing at the finish line of regionals following a week of illness. Still finishing sixth in the race, Revord soon was taken to nearby LaGrange Hospital as a precaution for observation and to receive fluids through an IV. Fischer continued her ascent as one of the most improved runners in the state.

"(Grace) had an outstanding race and I think she's just ready to go (for state)," McCabe said.

"McKenna I'm very proud of because she's coming back from the sickness and she missed a couple of days of practice. I knew she'd be fine, but she wasn't so sure of that. She'll be back at full strength (by state). Lucy was outstanding. I'd say she's been rock solid all year long as our No. 4.

"If everybody just runs a solid race and runs the race that got them there next week, we'll be in good shape."

The Red Devils have been ranked among the top 10 in 3A all season and should contend at least for the top five.

Last season, the Red Devils were disappointed in finishing 13th (325), 43 points from the top 10, after being a top-10 rated team and finishing fifth in 2016 and fourth in 2015 – the program's second streak of consecutive top-five finishes other than 2005-08, which included

the 2006 Class AA state championship.

“We’re not talking about last year. They’ve been there before years before where we’ve run well,” McCabe said.

Grace McCabe and Reilly Revord return to join a select group of Red Devils who have competed at the state meet all four years. Each have been top-25, all-state finishers once. Everyone else in the sectional lineup has run at state once, except for Fischer. Also part of the state roster are juniors Melanie Chafin, who competed at regionals, and senior Sophia Horowicz.

Revord finished a team-best sixth at state in 2015 (16:44) with the No. 3-fastest Detweiller time in program history, 10 seconds behind Jill Hardies’ 16:34 at 2010 state. Last season, Revord was a team-best 30th (17:26), three seconds from 25th, after being 55th at the 2.0-mile mark. She also was 58th as a freshman (17:53).

McCabe was an all-state 20th in 2014 (17:17), the program’s No. 6 Detweiller best time. In 2015, she was 28th (17:23), seven seconds from 25th, and 71st in 2016 (18:04).

McKenna Revord (85th, 18:11), Byrne (105th, 18:26) and Chval (156th, 18:52) also competed at 2016 state. Pisani competed at the 2015 state meet (197th, 19:15).

During the regular season, the Red Devils first two invitationals were the biggest of those Saturdays – the Hornet-Red Devil at KLM Sept. 2 followed by their annual trip to Detweiller for the First to the Finish Invitational Sept. 9.

The Red Devils edged Glenbard West 84-86 to win their HRD.

With all but one of the then-top 10 teams at FTTF (Glenbard West), the Red Devils were fifth, losing on a sixth-runner tiebreaker to Edwardsville. The only others to finish ahead were Naperville North and Yorkville – last year’s respective state champion and runner-up – and Downers Grove South, a program-best fourth at 2016 state.

Those were the among toughest regular-season meets along with the Twilight Invitational Oct. 4 at Naperville North, where the Red Devils (147) were sixth against most of 3A’s best – six points behind fifth-place Glenbard West and 17 from third-place Downers South.

“(Besides our state experience) it also works in your favor when you run the hardest schedule and meets in the state,” McCabe said. “I told them before at sectionals, it’s going to play out a lot like the (Hornet-Red Devil) with the depth and quality of the field.

“I’ve told them (state) will be like First to the Finish with (the addition of) Glenbard West and a bunch of individuals. We’ve done that with the competition and quality of the field and there are no surprises.”