

Romeo wins MAC Red boys jamboree

PREP CROSSCOUNTRY

By George Pohly

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Keen competition brought out the best in Jack Pennewell.

The St. Clair runner was in third place with 300 meters left in the MAC Red Division cross country jamboree, but the junior's steady strides enabled him to take the lead with about 200 to go, and he went on to finish first on a windy and sunny Friday at Romeo High.

"I honestly didn't know I had it in me," Pennewell said after he finished in 15:39.6.

"The competition is great. I'm proud of my teammates and I'm proud to be in the MAC Red with all these competitors. It's the most competitive league, for sure."

St. Clair, a former MAC White team making its Red debut, is ranked No. 1 in the state Division 2 poll by MichiganCross-Country.com.

The Saints finished second to Romeo, a Division 1 team, in the jamboree.

"Being in the MAC Red with Romeo, Utica, Dakota and others — they're such great programs," Pennewell said.

"Our team never really believes in rankings. Obviously, it's cool to be No. 1, but we know there's a lot of work left to do and a lot of good teams to stay sharp for. There are a lot of good teams that haven't gotten many meets in yet."

Grosse Pointe South finished third, Dakota fourth and Utica fifth. Grosse Pointe North, Eisenhower and Stevenson rounded out the finishing order for a race that ended on the Romeo track inside the football stadium.

Zander Cobb, who was second in 15:42.1, and Jack Kelke, third in 15:42.3, led Romeo.

Joseph Rinke, Owen Sharnas and Jack Wallace also scored for the Bulldogs.

"We've got to take it day by day and see what we can do," Kelke said. "We've got plenty of time."

Carson Nicoletti of Utica finished fourth in 15:50.6 and Preston Navarre of Grosse Pointe North was fifth in 16:04.2.

Rinke, Jacob Harberts of Dakota, Sharnas, Wallace and Andrew Parr of St. Clair took places 6-10.

Sam Vitale, Lucas Danko and David Harris also scored for St. Clair.

The girls jamboree will be Saturday morning on the same course.



Zander Cobb, right, and Jack Kelke lead Romeo to first place in the MAC Red jamboree at Romeo High on Friday.

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“We’re all using each other to push ourselves,” said Kelke, a junior.

The Bulldogs are ranked No. 2 in Division 1.

“It was really tough between all the guys, a really good race,” Kelke said. “We all started a little quick.”

Romeo is the defending Macomb County champion.

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