

## Linn-Mar is a prep superpower

Written by Mark Dukes

Sunday, 05 June 2011 20:25 - Last Updated Sunday, 05 June 2011 20:53

---



Not many people will be quick to anoint Linn-Mar as the next superpower in high school sports. But judging by the school's performance in 2010-2011, you have to wonder if that may not be true.

Linn-Mar, once one of the smaller schools in the Metro area, has grown by leaps and bounds in enrollment over the years and success in athletics has improved correspondingly. It now is behind only Kennedy in Metro area high school enrollment, and trails only Kennedy, Iowa City West and Waterloo West in Mississippi Valley Conference student population. Enrollment doesn't necessarily translate to more extra-curricular success, but in large part it helps. The more students, the more athletes, the more depth, the more competition, the more good things happen.

Going into this week's soccer regional tournaments, Linn-Mar has a chance to be represented at the state level in every girls sport. All eight other Linn-Mar girls teams either qualified or had individuals qualify at the state level. The Lions play Washington, a slightly higher-ranked team, Monday in a regional match with the chance to advance to state.

In all, Linn-Mar has had state representation in 15 of the 19 boys and girls sports offered by the state associations. That is phenomenal balance in an athletic program. Linn-Mar won the state boys basketball championship this school year and it has placed in the top 10 in the state in boys track, bowling, and cross country, and girls bowling, cross country, volleyball and golf. The girls basketball team made it to the state semifinals.

Not far behind are the MVC mainstays of Washington and Kennedy, both of which have enjoyed terrific seasons with state championships yet to be decided in girls soccer, baseball and softball.

## Linn-Mar is a prep superpower

Written by Mark Dukes

Sunday, 05 June 2011 20:25 - Last Updated Sunday, 05 June 2011 20:53

---

Washington has enjoyed state participation in 13 of 19 sports, with top 10 finishes in boys cross country, swimming, track, basketball and soccer, and girls basketball, tennis and track. Kennedy has had state representation in 12 of 19 sports, with top 10s in boys golf, soccer and track, and girls volleyball and bowling.

In fact, the MVC has done quite well in winning state championships this season with five boys and three girls titles. In addition to Linn-Mar's basketball title, MVC championships have been won by Xavier in boys soccer, Prairie in boys cross country, Cedar Falls in boys track and girls golf, Iowa City West in dual meet wrestling and volleyball, and Iowa City High in girls track.

The Central Iowa Metropolitan League has six total state crowns, the Mississippi Athletic Conference three and the Northeast Iowa Conference one in the big-class ranks.

As far as other Metro schools, there has been varying measures of success. Xavier captured the boys state soccer title without allowing a goal last weekend, and had top 10 finishes in volleyball and girls golf. Prairie notched the boys cross country title and was sixth in boys track. Marion advanced to the boys state basketball Final Eight and was fifth in boys cross country. Jefferson had a state champion in wrestling, made the boys state basketball tournament and finished sixth in girls bowling.

But it is Linn-Mar that has emerged as a big player at the state level. Although the school won state titles as a member of the East Central Iowa Conference, it has been an evolution on Marion's north side. The school will celebrated its 25th year in the MVC next season and it has developed into a major player in the league.

With a new stadium that will host football, track and soccer, a proposed baseball and softball complex, and talk of a new swimming pool on campus, Linn-Mar could be positioning itself for many more years of athletic success.

*(Mark Dukes is former sports editor of the Cedar Rapid Gazette. He is co-host of The Gym Class radio show weekdays from 2-3 p.m. on KGYM-AM 1600.)*