

# Sports

## LBMS track team sets record

**Jason McMillen**  
IVN Contributing Writer

The Lorna Byrne track teams had their first competition Wednesday, April 5 and despite being deprived of outdoor practice because of foul weather they did admirably well. Butte Falls, Shady Cove and New Hope attended the event and the weather was fair. "The whole team actually did fantastic

... They exceeded our expectations," Bob Clark, assistant coach, said. However, Clark is still pushing the relay runners to practice their handoffs because, according to him, "Winning is done on the handoff."

Despite Clark's emphasis for past and upcoming practices, the girls' 4x100 relay team set a record at Lorna Byrne. Unfortunately, the competition was stiff as they still only made second place in the event. The names of the new and celebrated record

setters are: Kiana Rodrigues, Alyvia Miller, Lucy Mayhem and Alexis Gomez. The team beat the school record by over two seconds.

In addition, the boys relay team also beat the school's record by about half a second. The members of the team are: Tristen Konrad, Andrew Mendoza, Skylar Larkin and Dequan Barkon.

While a great many Lorna Byrne students placed second and third in various events, those who took first place are as follows:

Skylar Larkin, in the boys' 100 meter; Celecial Poydak, in the girls' 200 meter; Alexis Gomez, in the girls' 400 meter; and Celecial Poydak, in the girls' 1500 meter.

"All of the coaches are looking forward to the rest of the season," Clark said, amazed at the students' performance, "We're very uplifted by what we saw Wednesday and we're encouraged that the kids are having fun and they're ready to do some more."

## Lorna Byrne scores IVHS grad as track head coach

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Savannah Baez has recently filled the head coach position for the girls' track team at Lorna Byrne Middle School (LBMS) at the impressive age of 18. Baez has lived her whole life in the Illinois Valley with most of her time having been spent living in Cave Junction though she now resides in Selma. She graduated from Illinois Valley High School (IVHS) last year and is now enrolled full-time at Rogue Community College (RCC). She is working toward getting certified as a personal trainer.

Baez's main responsibility as head coach is deciding what the team will do every day as well as organizing and running practices. "It's new still," Baez said, explaining that she's still

trying to figure everything that she's responsible for, "I'm still learning how to do it but I'm liking it so far. I really like working one-on-one with people in their events—like fixing their form so that way they can get better at it."

Explaining how she got the job, Baez said that she was originally going to train a girl one-on-one but when that plan fell through the child's mother informed her that LBMS was looking for a track coach. Baez sent word to the school thinking that she would just come and help out a little bit. Shortly thereafter Baez was unexpectedly offered an interview for the position of head coach. "I don't know. It was just cool how it all worked out. I never thought that I was ever going to be a head coach," Baez said modestly.

Unfortunately, Baez's first

season as coach has gotten off to a rocky start because of the unusually rainy weather. "The first couple of weeks of practice we couldn't go out to the track," Baez explained, "We were just inside so that was really tough..."

Baez was involved with the IVHS track team for her sophomore, junior and senior year. During her junior year she made it to the state competition and, in addition, earned a spot in the IVHS record book with the second highest jump in the school's history.

Interestingly enough, Baez reported that she almost dropped out of track after sophomore year because she was no longer interested in the events that she had tried over the season. However, her friends managed to convince her to give track another shot and shortly thereafter she found her passion

for the high jump event. "I loved it," Baez concluded, "It was a lot of fun."

In addition to competing at track events, Baez also played high school basketball for four seasons. Her junior and senior year was spent on the varsity team. During her senior year the team went undefeated in league and went to the state competition but, unfortunately, the team lost their playoff game by one point in double overtime.

"I miss competing and I wish I still was competing," Baez said, explaining that RCC doesn't have a track team. Baez admitted that she could go to a school elsewhere but, at the same time, she doesn't want to move out of the Valley. Perhaps in the future she will find a way to get the best of both worlds and rekindle her competitive spirit.



(Courtesy photo for the Illinois Valley News)

Savannah Baez

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