

Brooks shines at state track meet

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IVN Contributing Writer

Four Illinois Valley High School student athletes competed in the OSAA 2A State Championships May 17-18 at Western Oregon University, with two graduating seniors overcoming injuries to make it to the state meet.

IVHS senior Aarika Brooks placed third at state in the javelin throw, with a top distance of 127 feet, 7 inches, a personal record. She also placed seventh in the 200M finals. To secure her places on the podium, Brooks had to cope with a serious lingering hamstring injury that she sustained at the previous year's track meet.

Brooks has been one of IVHS' most successful athletes in the past three years, said coach Scott Thornhill. In her three years in the IVHS track & field program, Brooks has participated in three consecutive state meets, where she made it on the podium each year in the javelin, and secured podium finishes in the 100 meter and 200 meter.

A graduating senior, Brooks is heading to college at Oregon Institute of Technology, in

Klamath Falls, where she has signed on to the track & field program.

Cullen Beery, the other IVHS senior at the meet, qualified for state by finishing second in the district track meet after overcoming a mid-season groin injury. Beery made a strong showing in the district meet, but failed to qualify for the finals of the 100 meter at the state meet. It was his first full year in the Track & Field program.

Beery is set to attend College of the Siskiyous in Weed, California, where he plans to major in art and participate in track & field.

The two other student athletes at state were Isabella Idoine, a junior, and Ellie Rigby, a sophomore. They both qualified for the pole vault event at the district meet. At state, Rigby set a personal record by vaulting over the 7-foot bar.

Coach Thornhill praised the attitudes and work ethics of Rigby and Idoine.

"They both tried pole vault for the very first year and worked real hard," Thornhill said. "We're expecting big things from Isabella next year in the 400 meter and the 4x400 relay. And the sky is the limit with Ellie."



Aarika Brooks (right) during the 200 meter event at the state meet Friday, May 17.

ROTARY ...

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Negotiations and planning over the two-year period resulted in many changes to the program, but they kept at it as they could clearly see how it would be good for the communities and the youth looking for this type of support. Maler said they finally got everyone to sign off on it and "it's time to celebrate! Now when a student comes to their guidance counselor and says 'I want to be a veterinarian' (or other vocation), the counselor will have access to a database in Josephine County of Rotarians and other community leaders who are willing to provide mentorship. We are very excited to have this program launch in Fall 2019 so that when students return to school they'll have this

resource!"

With nearly 250 Rotarians in Josephine County, it is expected that at least 100 will participate in the program starting in the fall 2019 session. After the initial rollout with Rotarians, the program will open to the numerous other service organizations within the county. Initial funding was underwritten and matched via a \$4,000 Rotary District 5110 Grant. This project is a wonderful example of Rotary In Action by people who are driven to make a difference. According to Maler, "The initial group of Rotarian Mentors will be the inspiration to help connect and strengthen the community. This is the first program of its kind in the state, and after getting it up and running successfully in Josephine County we hope to roll this out further and be a catalyst for programs like this in the entire state!"

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