

# Three Sandy runners ready for state meet

by SCOTT NEWTON

At the district cross country meet last year Sam Romey and Steve Metelak ran together, and when they'd catch up to a runner from another school, they'd pass him, one on one side and one on the other.

"When you see two Sandy guys go by you, just that easily, it hurts so much," Romey said last week, laughing at the thought of it.

"We were thinking, 'Okay, we can do another one.' It was fun, and we just kept working up. It did us good."

With a bit of regret in his voice, he adds, "I just wish I would have trained harder last year."

Last year, you see, Romey missed qualifying for state by two-tenths of a second, having been beaten at the line.

It's probably easier to talk about it now, being that he is the Timber Valley League-District champion, having won the 5,000-meter race in 16:01, six seconds ahead of the second-place finisher.

Besides being district champion, the SUHS sophomore also holds the record for the fastest time turned in,

ever, on Sandy's course.

Can Romey, 16, keep this up? "I'm going to try," he said, pointing out that male distance runners peak at 28.

"I'm going to try and keep dropping my times. Next year my goal is a 14-flat on our course—if they don't change it."

Romey ran the course in 15:29 to set the record. Coach Scott McMullen has talked about changing the course as it is not quite 5,000 meters.

Romey jokes good-naturedly about McMullen telling people how his brother Andy, a freshman, is beating his old times.

Andy did turn in a faster time on Sandy's course than Sam did as a freshman, but Sam ran the course at the first of the season, while Andy ran it late in the season.

"See, I'm trying to set records that he can't get, and he's trying to break 'em," Romey said.

"And then he's going to have my other brothers coming up trying to break his records."

Romey has nine brothers and two sisters. Five of his brothers, and one of his sisters, are younger than he is.

From watching one workout last week, one would get the impression there's no one on the team that can push him.

He was doing interval work, and would run eight 400-meter sprints by the end of the workout. One time McMullen had one Sandy runner race him the first 200 meters, and then had another take over fresh for the second 200 meters.

McMullen said later that he doesn't do that often, but at the moment it was obvious he was pleased with the Romey's time.

Asked if people on this team could push him, Romey said, "Oh, yeah. Phil Burks, he pushes me. And Brian Buhler, he pushes me."

Metelak used to push him too, but he's out this season with an injury.

Other people provide inspiration, like Brian Reich. "He's on day, what is it, I think it's 176 now, non-stop. Every day."

"I told him when he gets 300 I'll take him out to dinner."

Unlike Reich, Romey didn't run regularly this summer. He was working long days in the canneries in Alaska, and his running was primarily

limited to Sundays.

About Alaska, where he's lived in the past, he said, "It was a good money-maker. A nice place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there."

When he got back, in the middle of August, he started training, working himself up to about a 45-mile-per-week average. He averaged 15 to 20 miles per week as a freshman.

His longest week as a freshman was 30 miles. This year he logged one 72-mile week.

Romey liked John White, last year's coach, and said he was shocked when he found out he was leaving. But, about the change, he said, "The team's really accepted the new coach well. He's different. He likes to work us. I'll tell you, those intervals..."

His voice trails off, and he moans at the thought.

McMullen's timing of the interval workouts seems to have been well planned. A team does speed workouts to drop runners' times. They run distance to build stamina.

Romey said, "We were doing all distance, and then you get sick of distance, and you start doing speed work, and you go, 'Okay, we're going to go somewhere now.'"

"And you see your times really start dropping, and it helps. It really gets you going."

Romey, for example, was averaging 5:20 per mile. They began interval training about two to three weeks before the district meet, where his average was 5:04.

Romey, who is also sophomore class president and on the cast of West Side Story, competed in the state track meet last year. He suffered a major disappointment, having followed his coach's strategy but failing to qualify for the finals, again by a fraction of a second.

He feels he's gained some insight from his experiences last year. He knows it's not luck that got him qualified.

"Now I know I can run, and I'm just going to try. I'm just going to go down and run my hardest," he said.

Sophomore Sharon Jensen and senior Darby Binder also plan to give their best efforts Saturday at the state meet in Eugene.

Thursday of last week they were talking about finishing in the top 20 at state. By Friday they had decided that they could make the top 10.

McMullen was pleased, listening to Binder tell how she and Jensen had upgraded their goals.

"She has the heart," he said about Binder after she'd left. "She's really getting enthusiastic."

It will be Binder's third trip to the state meet. She finished fifth in the district meet, having run the 3,000-meter course in 11:23.

McMullen was pleased with her time, and Binder admits to having been surprised.

She missed most of the interval workouts. She's been plagued with an Achilles tendon injury most of her high school days. Last summer one leg was in a cast because of her Achilles tendon, the other because of a sprained ankle.

Don't think that it slowed her down, though. Even with a cast on each leg she managed to ride her bicycle, and cause her neighbors some concern by wrecking it.

She's so determined, said McMullen, that she'll run herself into an injury.

Binder herself will admit that she goes pretty hard at times. The summer after her sophomore year she ran 898 miles. "I kind of overdid it," she said with a characteristic smile.

She wants to keep running after high school, and has talked to a representative of the University of Portland about that possibility.

"I want to get to nationals," she said.

About McMullen, she said, "Coach is great. He's a real good coach, and he's a really neat person. It's fun to have him around."

One would expect that Sharon Jensen, who finished second at the district meet with a time of 11:07, had a real good day a week ago Tuesday.

"No, I felt terrible the whole race," Jensen said. "I got a second wind, though, about halfway through, and I started to feel better then."

"But the whole beginning (of the

race) I felt terrible. And I felt really terrible at the end, but I guess you always do at the end."

Jensen credits several people with helping keep her working towards her potential, including McMullen, White, Mike Blair, Lynn Harris, Randy Hutchinson and John Smith.

"All of them were always there to talk to whenever I wanted."

"They have faith in me. They think I can do it. They thought I could do it before I thought I could do it."

Jensen admits being disappointed that the entire girls team isn't going to state, but adds, "I'm sure that every single person on the team ran the best they could on that given day."

McMullen said, "It's been so much of a team thing, and then all of a sudden you're just out there doing these intervals, and no one's pushing you. It's just you. It's part of maturing, being on your own instead of with the team."

McMullen added that Laura Stringham ran well at the district meet. "We had three really strong people," he said about the girls team. "It was really rewarding watching them run."

The course at the state meet has about a 600-yard straightaway, and then there is a hill, which goes up maybe 50 feet, then levels out and turns.

McMullen said that if one isn't near the front when the group gets to the hill, that they'll be stuck behind the medium to slow runners.

He said, "You have to be a good sprinter, and recover well mentally. (You have to) make it there, up and over, recover, hold on and then really hold through that pace."

"That'll make you a champion."

About the state meet, which is held at Lane Community College every year, Binder said, "It looks like the whole world's out there at the starting line. Everybody's always trampled and pushed around, spiked. It's really a mess."

In the same breath she adds, "It's great, a lot of fun."



Sam Romey, Darby Binder, Scott McMullen and Sharon Jensen

Staff photo

## Pioneers bumped from state playoffs by Reynolds, 34-13

The Pioneer football team was unable to keep up with Reynolds on the scoreboard, but Coach Greg O'Meara was pleased with the way they played the 10-0 Lancers.

"I think some of our kids, after we got going, did a real good job against them," O'Meara said. "We started handling them in the line."

Although Sandy lost the first-round

state playoff game 34-13, they gained 231 yards. Reynolds had a total of 295 yards.

Junior Chuck Kearney gained 60 yards on 22 carries. Junior Stu Hoffman added 46 yards on 10 carries and senior Mitch Paola contributed 85 yards, completing six of 11 passes.

Reynolds took control offensively in the first half, scoring on its first

three possessions.

A 21-yard run by Kearney, following his recovery of a Melvin Renfro Jr. fumble on a Reynolds punt return, set up a 20-yard Paola to Marvin Schaffer touchdown pass. Steve Contreras made the kick, and Sandy was down 14-7.

After a third Reynolds score, the Pioneers threatened again, but were

unable to punch it in.

A couple of penalties after the time had run out in first half allowed Reynolds to get into field-goal kicking range, with them getting a 23 yarder. A half, or a game, can't end on a penalty.

That gave the Lancers a 24-7 halftime lead.

Some good runs by Kearney got the

Pioneers in scoring range in the third quarter, with Paola scoring on an 11-yard run. That put the score at 24-13.

Renfro ran the ball back 80 yards on the ensuing kickoff. The Lancers added a 27-yard field goal in the fourth quarter to get the score to 34-13.

O'Meara described Reynolds as physical, pretty quick and well disciplined, and he was pleased that they played them competitively.

"I feel we've had a real fine year. We had some individuals that did a real fine job," he said.

"We've got some kids that I'll hate to lose."

Junior Scott Skipper and senior Dan Martin played well, O'Meara said.

He was also pleased with center and defensive end Randy Carmony, and Kearney.

"As a team I felt they really came together," O'Meara said. "Mitch did a good job running the team."

The Timber Valley League all-stars were announced earlier this week. Martin, a guard and line backer, was on the first team of offense and defense, and Carmony was first team on offense.

Dale Rasmussen and Locke Christman made the second team of-

fense. Rasmussen is a tackle and Christman is a guard.

Kearney was also on the second-team offense.

Carmony and senior Cal McKinnis, a defensive lineman, were on the second-team defense.

## Hawkins in district meet

Sandy Union High School senior Janice Hawkins qualified for the District Gymnastics Tournament in the balance beam last week.

Hawkins made it to the sub-district finals in the beam, floor exercise and parallel bars. She was sixth in the finals in the balance beam, which qualified her for district competition at West Linn today.

Coach Molly Knudson said that several team members turned in top performances, but added that the competition was tougher than expected.

Knudson said she was also pleased with Lori Bouck, who missed making the finals in the vault by .05 of a point.

Sandy finished fourth in the five-team sub-district.

## Sandy volleyball team makes state playoffs

The Pioneer volleyball team turned in an uneven performance against Molalla, but the win qualified them for the state tournament.

"The main thing is that we won," Coach Ron Grantz said about the 15-13, 5-15 and 15-2 win.

The victory Saturday at Canby over Molalla makes Sandy the Timber Valley League's second (Sweet Home won the league)

representative in the state tournament.

There are 20 teams left, with eight teams playing for the final four spots in the 16-team tournament. Sandy is one of those eight teams. They'll have to beat South Albany Saturday to earn a berth in the tournament the weekend after next.

Grantz said that they'll be at a disadvantage in that the game is

there, and that they'll be playing in front of unfamiliar referees against a team they know little about.

On the other hand, the Pioneers will have the edge as far as playoff experience.

Molalla downed Oregon City Saturday to earn the right to play Sandy for the playoff spot. Grantz said that Molalla played well, and that they

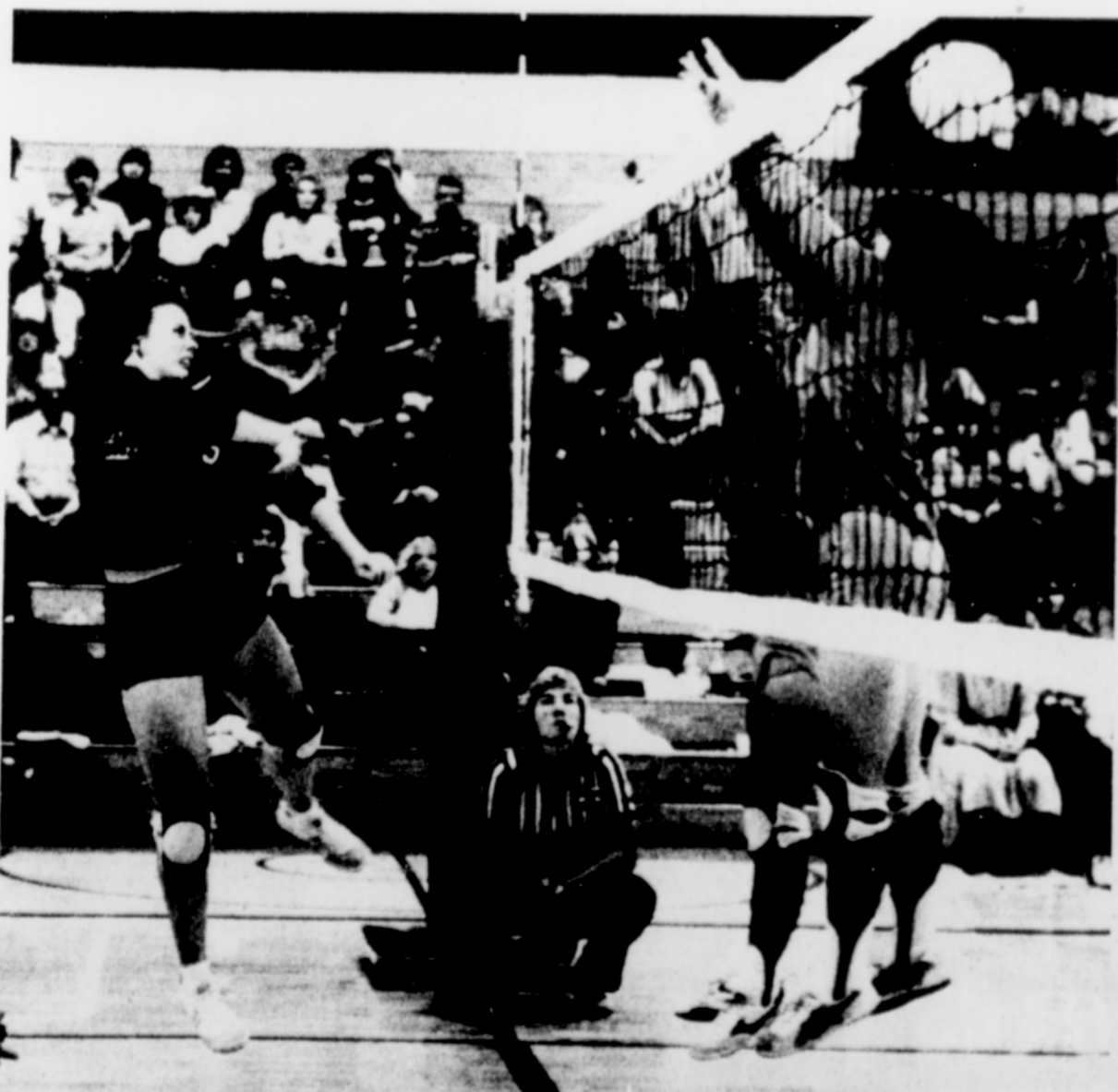
have improved a lot since the last time he saw them.

He said that Molalla's play, as well as the accident last weekend, probably had something to do with Sandy's up-and-down performance.

"Julie Coleman had probably one of the best matches she's had all year," Grantz said. "As a matter of fact, I think her performance Saturday really kind of sewed up her all-league spot."

Coleman and Dawn New both were on the first team all-TVL team, which was announced earlier this week.

"Paige Daugherty played very well," Grantz added. "It was probably one of her better matches."



Paige Daugherty hits one during Sandy's win over Molalla.

Photo by Scott Newton



Chuck Kearney in the process of gaining yards for the Pioneers.

Staff photo